

**Curative Reading Questions**  
***The Requirement***  
**By Wendell Berry**

***Notes About Answering Questions Curatively:*** *These questions are meant to deepen your understanding of the story and its curative aspects for you, others, and the world around you. Curative Reading goes beyond understanding a story from a literary perspective to a place where your imagination gets to reshape a meaning that supports you and inspires you to make a positive transition in your life. There are no right or wrong answers, only curiously curative ones.*

According to Oxford Languages the word curative is defined as “able to cure disease” or “a remedy”. Think of dis-ease in terms of being ill-at-ease with any situation you may be facing right now that feels challenging. Write a line or two about that situation and what kind of positive change you would like to see happen with it. Hold the situation in the back of your mind as you read this story.

“The people who died when I was young were all about old. Their deaths didn’t interrupt me much, even when I missed them. ... and then it was different. I began to feel it was changing me” Have you experienced a death that either did not interrupt your life much, or one that changed you? If so, write a line or two about either one of these experiences.

Define what you feel *The Requirement* is for Burley, our main character.

Have you experienced something like a requirement in your own life with someone passing? If so, write a line or two about this.

We learn about Big's character strengths and weaknesses in a few short stories Burley shares with us from their longtime friendship. Write a line or two about the kind of person Big was and the life you imagine he lived.

Think about someone you love who has passed and recall a short story about them that would capture the essence of who they were and the kind of life they lived. Take a moment to write the highpoints or an outline of this story. Consider telling this story to someone you know.

“So nothing was what they did. That was the way Big solved most of his problems.” How would you say your loved one who has passed solved most of their problems? How do you solve most of yours?

How did Big help Burley to fulfill The Requirement?

Find a passage from the story that you especially like and read it aloud to yourself. If you can, share this passage with someone else and tell them why it resonates for you.

How has reading this story been curative for you? Has it shed a new light on your challenging situation? If so, how?