

DISCUSSION GUIDE  
*VOYAGE OF MIDNIGHT*



1. From the time his mother died, Philip longed to be loved as part of a family. What were some of the life-changing decisions Philip made in his quest for family? Were these decisions ultimately hurtful or helpful?
2. Philip admired Uncle from the first time they met. What was it about Uncle that Philip admired? What were some of the more negative traits of Uncle's personality? What were the circumstances in Uncle's life that led him to be captain of a slaving vessel?
3. In the book, Philip states that the "scales fell from his eyes," and he saw his Uncle clearly. In what ways was Philip deceived about his Uncle's character? Do you think Uncle was "all bad"? Do you think Uncle cared for Philip?
4. When Philip was first given Pea Soup, how did he feel about it? What was your response to Philip's response? What aspects of Philip's childhood led him to not question slavery?
5. Suppose that no one on the *Formidable* was struck by blindness. Suppose that the voyage was uneventful and that the vessel arrived safely at port and the slaves were sold for enormous profit. How would this have altered Philip's life journey? Do you think he would have continued in the slave trade? Why or why not?
6. Many people today believe that, were they immersed in the same era, under the same circumstances, they would not have owned slaves. Do you think that's a valid statement? Why or why not? Are there similar injustices today? What is the response of the average person toward those injustices?
7. What experiences in Philip's life caused him to ultimately reject slavery? Is there a difference between rejecting slavery and actively standing up against it?
8. In the end, Philip returned to the Gallaghers, embracing them as his family. Had Philip's understanding of "family" evolved? What, then, defines family?