The Art of Racing in the Rain – Garth Stein

Chapter Questions 1-7

1. Describe the health of Enzo at the beginning of the novel.
2. Why does Enzo envy people’s tongue and thumbs?
3. How did Eve change Enzo and Denny’s lives?
4. Who were Maxwell and Trish? Why did Enzo call them the Twins?
5. What were two negatives about Denny’s big race in Daytona, Florida?
6. At the end of Chapter 7, what discovery did Enzo make about Eve?
7. From whose point of view is this story told?
8. What is different about the soul of this particular dog?
9. Describe Enzo’s theory that Man’s closest relative is the dog.
10. What does Enzo realize he can never be? What does he realize he can be?

Chapters 8 – 12

1. In Chapter 8, Denny shows his racing tapes and gives examples of how to race in the rain. What simple concept did Enzo learn from these tapes?
2. What did Enzo mean when he said Eve was his rain?
3. Why was Enzo alone and locked in the house?
4. Describe the incident with the stuffed zebra. What does the zebra represent?
5. Why did Denny hit Enzo for the first time?
6. List at least three ways things have changed around the house due to Eve’s illness?
7. What does Denny mean when he says, “That which you manifest is before you.” How does this statement apply to the title of the book? How does it apply to Enzo’s life?

Chapters 13 – 17

1. What lead to the hot dog/chicken nuggets situation? How did it end?
2. How does Maxwell feel about Denny? List three examples to support your answer.
3. Hiking and playing at Denny Creek started out as fun for the whole family? Then what happened? What is your prediction for Eve?
4. How does the saying “your car goes where your eyes go” apply to life?
5. Do you find yourself looking at your own dog, or dogs in general, differently while reading this book?

Chapters 18 – 24

1. What did Enzo learn happens to a dog in Mongolia when he dies? Why do they do this?
2. What does Enzo have to say about humans and listening?
3. What did Denny and Enzo do on their weekend off? Why did this feel wrong?
4. What was symbolic about Zoe and the Barbie doll in the backyard?
5. Why does Enzo think the hospital made Eve sicker?
6. In chapter 23, the day Eve came home, share Enzo’s involvement with
	1. Zoe in the backyard
	2. Denny when leaving for the night
	3. Night nurse during the night
	4. Eve’s needs throughout the night
7. What was the reaction of the father at Zoe’s school bus stop when Denny’s wife was recovering from brain cancer?

Chapters 24 – 27

1. What does Enzo mean when he says, “A true hero is flawed”?
2. “For me to relate the history of Denny, who is a true champion, without including his missteps and failings would be doing a disservice to all involved.” Why is this an example of foreshadowing?
3. What does Enzo mean by the statement, “The zebra keeps dancing”?
4. Who is Annika and what happened with her? How could Denny have handled her differently?
5. Describe Enzo’s experience at Thunderhill. Use at least three specific evens in your answer.
6. In Chapter 27, explain the following:
	1. Zoe said, “Sometimes things change, and we have to change too.”
	2. Eve said to family, “Today is the first day I’m not dead.”
	3. Eve talking to Enzo, “Everyone wants me to be the next Lance Armstrong.”

Chapters 28 – 32

1. How was Eve’s death a freeing moment for all involved?
2. Why did Enzo feel the need to run when he heard of Eve’s death?
3. Why did Enzo eat the squirrel?
4. Why did Maxwell and Trish think they should have custody of Zoe? List three reasons. Why do you think they chose to ambush Denny at this moment with a custody battle?
5. Do you think the police officers “are working for” Maxwell and Trish? Do you think it was simply coincidence that they chose Denny’s workplace, in the lobby, during the afternoon, to make an arrest?
6. Do you think its possible that Denny was set up from the get go? Do you think it’s possible that Eve’s parents had a game plan long in advance of Eve’s death in order to get Zoe?
7. Which rules of racing have we learned so far that could be given to Denny as advice during this dark time in his life?
8. Who is Mark? What is his job? His mannerisms? Your opinion of him?
9. Describe the situation at the garage with the policeman. Give three examples.

Chapters 33 – 39

1. “No races have been won in the first corner, but many have been lost there.” How does this apply to Denny’s life right now?
2. What health problems does Enzo suffer from?
3. What does Enzo notice about Zoe the afternoon he spends with her?
4. How was being a prisoner of the state affecting Denny?
5. “That which you manifest is before you.” This statement was introduced at the beginning of the book. How does it apply to Denny’s life now?
6. How does Enzo spending the weekend with Zoe make Denny feel better?
7. What does Enzo learn while spending the weekend with “the twins”?
8. Can you imagine the novel being told from Denny’s perspective? How would it make the story different?

Chapters 40 – 46

1. Why does Enzo feel bad for Zoe?
2. What reaffirmed Enzo’s faith in the balance of the universe?
3. How does Enzo say that Denny sustains himself for the duration of the custody ordeal?
4. What did Mark Fein say was the solution to Denny’s custody problem?
5. “Does the end always justify the means?” How does this phrase apply to Maxwell and Trish suing Denny for child support?
6. Who is King Karma?
7. Why was this winter a difficult one for Enzo?
8. How do you feel about the ideas of reincarnation and karma as Enzo defines them?
9. How do you think Enzo getting hit by a car will affect his future?

Chapters 47 – 53

1. Why did Ayrton Senna not have to die?
2. How did Enzo know that it was not his time to die?
3. What is the breaking point that makes Denny feel like he is done and cannot go on?
4. What does the zebra on the pen make Enzo realize about the demon zebra?
5. How does Enzo convince Denny not to sign the settlement papers?
6. What job opportunity is offered to Denny?
7. Why has Luca taken such an interest in Denny?
8. Describe Denny’s parents.
9. Why was the money given to Denny?

Chapters 54 – End

1. How must a driver have faith?
2. What do we learn about Denny and his life thanks to Mike’s continued questioning?
3. What is the significance of Enzo’s courtroom dream?
4. What does Enzo mean when he says the following: “One can never be angry at another driver for a track accident. One can only be upset with himself for being caught in the wrong place at the wrong time.”
5. How did Denny surprise Enzo?
6. Why did Luca take such an interest in Denny?
7. What does Enzo know about racing in the rain?
8. Why does Enzo now believe that to be a champion you do not have to be selfish?
9. Explain why Enzo resurfaces.
10. In the first chapter, Enzo says: “It’s what’s inside that’s important. The soul. And my soul is very human.” How does Enzo’s situation – a human soul trapped inside a dog’s body – influence his opinion on what he sees around him?