

### Group Questions—"Speaking of Courage"

1. Discuss the metaphor of driving around and around the lake. What does this central motif suggest? What about the lake itself? Brainstorm some symbolic connotations the lake might have (the lake itself is most fully discussed on pp. 138-39).
2. Talk about Sally Kramer, now Sally Gustafson. What is she like? What does Norman think she would say about the war? See especially p. 139, 140, and bottom of 145. Does Norman ever actually talk to Sally? Why is this important?
3. Discuss Norman's relationship with his father. Do we ever see Norman actually talking to his father? What is Norman's imagined father like? What is Norman's real father like? Look back at p. 36 in the story "Spin" and talk about what we learn about Norman's father there. Does this affect your reading of "Speaking of Courage"?
4. Talk about the strange scene at the A&W stand near the end of the story (pp. 151-152). What's unusual about the language that comes over the intercom? How are we to understand this? Are we to believe this scene is real, or is it a fantasy like the hallucination in "The Rainy River"?
5. Think about the very end of the story as Norman watches the fireworks. Why do you think the story is set on the Fourth of July? What does it mean that he walks into the lake? How does the next story, "Notes" affect your reading of "Speaking of Courage"?