

## Tasks:

I. Before you read the story find the information about the author (for example some interesting facts from author's biography)

### II. Answer the following questions based on the author's biography:

1. Where did Muriel Spark work?
2. When was her first poem published?
3. What is the name of her first novel?
4. What order did Muriel Spark receive?
5. What is the essence/focus of Muriel Spark's stories?

### III. Discussion Points

1. What is your impression of the story?
2. How the main character got her nickname?
3. What character trait, in the opinion of friends, did George lack?
4. Do you think time is important for friendship?
5. In the beginning of the story how did you think the murder happen?
6. Do you condemn George?

### IV. Word Hunt

1. (n.) a person whose parents are of different races;
2. (v.) to be disgusted with something;
3. (v.) be about to happen;
4. (n.) an authoritative order;
5. (v.) (of animals or birds) come together for breeding; copulate;
6. (adj.) very strong and solid;
7. (adj.) cleverly concise; neat;
8. (n.) a building devoted to the worship of a god or gods;
9. (n.) the opinion generally held of someone or something; the state of being regarded in a particular way;
10. (adj.) affectedly grand, solemn, or self-important.

### V. Quiz

#### 1. What is the nickname of the main character?

- a) Plum
- b) Needle
- c) Pin

**2. How long the main character hadn't seen Kathleen?**

- a) for nearly 5 years
- b) for nearly 15 years
- c) for nearly 10 years

**3. Which thing appealed Kathleen in the Portobello Road?**

- a) a jade ring
- b) a jade brooch
- c) a jade pendant

**4. Where Needle taught for a while?**

- a) in private school in Chelsea
- b) in private school in Hammersmith
- c) in private school in Kensington

**5. Why Skinny went to Africa?**

- a) to grow tobacco on the farm
- b) to investigate King Solomon's mines
- c) to collect coffee beans on the plantation

**6. When Skinny and Needle visited George in Africa which experiment George wanted to do?**

- a) he wanted to mate zebra mare and horse
- b) he wanted to grow cannabis
- c) he wanted to mate zebra and pony

**7. What secret George told Needle in a hotel in Bulawayo?**

- a) that he was going to leave the country
- b) that he was going to sell the tobacco farm
- c) that he was married to Matilda

**8. Where Kathleen was working?**

- a) she kept an antique shop
- b) she kept a hat shop

c) she was a housemaid

**9. Who killed the main character?**

a) Kathleen

b) George

c) Skinny

**10. Why Needle was murdered?**

a) she stole a bottle of milk

b) it was an accident

c) because George was afraid that Needle would tell Kathleen that he had already been married

**VI. Write a page long summary**