



# The Chamber

## Book key

- 1 Open answers
- 2 **a** Grisham gave up his career as a criminal lawyer to write.  
**b** On September 2, 1983 in Mississippi, a man by the name of Jimmy Lee Gray was sent to the gas chamber for his crimes. Gray did not die right away, but suffered a long, painful death. In *The Chamber* Grisham uses this true account to illustrate the cruelty of the use of the gas chamber for people on death row.  
**c** Grisham questions the use of the gas chamber for death row criminals. He also questions the morality of blaming and putting to death a man who has grown up in a racist society.
- 3 Open answers
- 4 **a** 3 **b** 5 **c** 1 **d** 7 **e** 2 **f** 8 **g** 4 **h** 6  
**i** 10 **j** 9
- 5 **a** Sam Cayhall's family had had connections with the Klan for many years. Adam Hall, whose real name was Alan Cayhall, is Sam's grandson. Adam's father, Eddie, killed himself after Eddie was found guilty in 1981. Sam has a daughter, Carmen, and a sister, Lee. Carmen is studying psychology at Berkeley. The Cayhall family is strange and secretive and keep themselves apart. Sam's wife died of cancer. Sam's daughter married a rich man called Phelps Booth, but they do not have a happy marriage.  
**b** Sam Cayhall thought that he and Rollie were going to bomb an empty office building. Sam did not know that Rollie had put a timer on the fuse. Sam had no intention of killing Kramer's sons, but it must have pleased Rollie very much. Sam could not talk about Rollie's involvement for fear of what Rollie would do to him and his family, so Sam took the blame for the bombing.  
**c** Sam's first trial was held in a town that was sympathetic to the Klan. The all-white jury could not decide if Cayhall and Dogan were guilty, so the trial was abandoned. The second trial, six months later, was also held in a town where people were sympathetic to the Klan. The jury was all-white and non-Jewish. The only juror who voted the men guilty was Sharon Culpepper, the mother of twin boys, who felt great sympathy for Marvin Kramer. Rollie Wedge watched this trial very carefully. Again the jury was undecided and the trial was abandoned. The third trial began in February 1981 with the ambitious District Attorney, David McAllister, and a jury with eight whites and four blacks. Sam was found guilty of murder and went to Parchman Prison to wait on death row for his execution.
- 6 **a** Marvin lost both legs in the bombing and had to use a wheelchair. He went to the second trial. He and his wife separated in 1970. He went into a mental hospital and killed himself in 1971. Ruth returned to Memphis to live with her parents.  
**b** Goodman is relieved that Sam Cayhall has fired him because Sam is a racist who hates just about everybody, including lawyers. Goodman thinks that Sam has no chance of getting a successful appeal.  
**c** The Adventures of a Klan Bomber is a video made by Adam, which starts with a television news report from 1967 about the bombing of a Jewish church. The Kramer bombing follows, and it continues with pictures of Sam outside various jails and courthouses. It ends with Marvin Kramer pitifully chasing after Klansmen in his wheelchair and falling over.  
**d** Lee is ashamed of Marvin Kramer because she believes he killed the Kramer twins, their father, Eddie, and maybe others. She thinks he is a terrible person who has ruined his own family.
- 7–8 Open answers
- 9 **a** T **b** F **c** T **d** T **e** F **f** T
- 10 **a** Phelps Booth  
**b** Sam Cayhall  
**c** Lee  
**d** Teddy Doyle Meeks **e** Roland Forchin (Rollie Wedge)
- 11 **a** Sam says this to Adam, talking about the change in the Mississippi law that now forbids death by gas. He wants Adam to know that his conviction was too long ago so he will be cruelly gassed.  
**b** Adam says this to Sam. He wants Sam to understand that although his father, Eddie, killed himself, he would not want Sam sent to the gas chamber. He would want Adam to save him.  
**c** Naifeh says this to Nugent because he wants him to read what they have learned from twenty-four previous executions. Naifeh is tired of executions but he knows that Nugent is looking forward to killing Sam Cayhall. He knows he will read the manual and do a good job.



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- d** Sam is talking to Adam about the state governor, David McAllister; Sam thinks that the governor is a dishonest man. He put Sam in Parchman Prison to get votes and Sam hates him for that.
- e** Sam tells Adam that when the bomb did not explode as planned, he wanted to save the lives of the people in the building. He did not do it because he did not have change for the telephone and he did not want to go into a store and ask for change. The people in the store would remember his face.
- 12 a** Lee is a volunteer, working with young mothers because she hated being a rich woman with no job. She is an alcoholic and needs Adam's help.
- b** Adam plans to attack the gas chamber as a method of execution and to find a judge who will rule against the gas chamber. If they can get a temporary delay, then they can take the case through the higher courts and make it last for years.
- c** Rollie Wedge uses the name Roland Forchin. He lives in a secret underground hiding place where he has a printing press and weapons. He has watched the case of Sam Cayhall for years and wants him dead. With Cayhall dead, he will no longer have to fear that his secret will be revealed.
- 13** Open answers
- 14 a** 7   **b** 1   **c** 3   **d** 6   **e** 2   **f** 5   **g** 8   **h** 4
- 15 a** evidence
- b** lynching
- c** rats
- d** lethal injection
- e** twelve
- 16 b** Eddie killed himself with a gun when Sam's trial ended. He left Adam a note asking him to clean up the mess. Adam was left without a father because of Sam's crime.
- c** If Sam tells the truth about the bombing and names Rollie Wedge, the governor will give Sam clemency. But Sam will not do this. He would rather be executed or a crime he is not guilty of because his family will be safe if he dies with the secret.
- d** Sam killed Joe Lincoln because of an argument between Eddie and Quince over a toy soldier. Afterward, Eddie found the toy under his bed, which meant that he had wrongly accused Quince of stealing it, and he felt very guilty about it. Lee witnessed the murder and felt guilty that she had not tried to stop her father.
- 17–19** Open answers
- 20 a** 2   **b** 1   **c** 2   **d** 2   **e** 1
- 21 a** Dr. Swinn
- b** Garner Goodman
- c** Colonel Nugent
- d** Adam
- e** Sam
- 22 a** Sam wants McNeeley to fight for him in the appeal against using gas for his execution.
- b** Sam wants Ralph Griffin to be his spiritual adviser and to visit him.
- c** Sam wants Nugent to allow him to see one last sunrise before he dies.
- d** Sam wants Dr. Swinn to declare him mentally unbalanced.
- e** Sam wants Quince Lincoln to forgive him for killing his father.
- f** Sam wants Ruth and Elliot Kramer to forgive him for killing Ruth's husband, who is Elliot's son.
- g** Sam wants Donnie to buy him some nice clothes for his final day and execution.
- 23 a** Sam was born into a household where hatred of blacks and others was simply a way of life. Like his father and his brothers, he took part in lynching blacks.
- b** Sam's father was killed by two white men. Sam and his brothers killed their father's killers.
- c** Lee has disappeared and Adam cannot find her. No one has seen her for some days.
- d** Sam writes to the Klan and tells them that he is no longer a member of the Ku Klux Klan.
- 24** Nugent does not feel bad about executing Sam. He sees it as a great job for himself
- 25–26** Open answers
- 27 a** ineffective representation
- b** clemency
- c** proud
- d** relieved
- e** true
- f** a sunrise
- g** a federal judge
- h** an execution
- i** the Supreme Court
- j** home



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- 28 a The new clothes bring back painful memories for Sam of the free world.  
b Sam knew he would not be hungry and asked only for ice-cream and coffee.  
c Sam tells Donnie that he was the only one who cared about him. He feels very sad saying goodbye.  
d Sam's hope disappears when he hears that the Supreme Court has denied his appeal and the Governor has denied clemency.  
e Sam tells the chaplain and Adam that he did not kill those boys but that someone else wired the bomb. He knows he was wrong to be involved in the bombing, but he does not name his partner.

29–41 Open answers

### Discussion activities key

- 1 Students should point out that the man is in prison. They may also point out that the phrase "Mississippi State Penitentiary" can be seen extending across the cover of the book. They should guess that the man is in this place because he has committed a crime. They should point out that the man is leaning against the bars of his prison cell and putting his hands through the gaps. They should guess that he is feeling sad, lonely, trapped, desperate, hopeless, etc.

2–7 Open answers

- 8 a escape  
b guardhouse  
c prison  
d watchtower  
e gate  
f lawyer  
g execution  
h secrets  
i family  
j criminal  
k grandson  
l guards  
m chamber  
n witness  
o violent  
p attack  
q bombing  
r dynamite  
s crime  
t killed

9–14 Open answers

- 15 a church  
b teenage  
c rich  
d racist  
e horror  
f cage  
g chains  
h cell  
i inmate  
j law  
k acid  
l gas  
m death  
n lethal  
o agent  
p bomb  
q body  
r hate  
s truth  
t blame

16–26 Open answers

- 27 a 8 b 12 c 2 d 4 e 7 f 1 g 9 h 11  
i 10 j 3 k 5 l 6

28–35 Open answers

### Activity worksheets key

- 1 a fifteen  
b twenty  
c six  
d twenty-eight  
e twenty-two  
f three  
g eighty-two  
h seventeen(th)
- 2 a David McAllister was ~~twenty-eight~~ > **twenty-seven** years old when he was elected as District Attorney in Greenville.  
b Kravitz and Bane has two hundred and eight-six lawyers and is the ~~second~~ > **third** largest law firm in Chicago.  
c Adam is ~~twenty-eight~~ > **twenty-six** years old.  
d Sam will be dead in ~~six~~ > **three** months without Adam's help.  
e Adam found out that he was Sam's grandson when he was almost ~~seven~~ > **seventeen** years old.  
f Kravitz and Bane has handled Sam's appeal for almost ~~seventeen~~ > **seven** years.



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- 3 a Maximum Security Unit.  
b August 8th.  
c His voice.  
d His case and his family.  
e Because they don't do criminal work and because they don't want any publicity that might connect them to the case.  
f For twenty-one years.  
g He hates them.  
h Two.
- 4 a Adam to Lee  
b Lee to Adam  
c Sam to Sergeant Packer  
d Adam to Sam  
e Sam to Adam  
f Adam to Wyn Lettner  
g Wyn Lettner to Adam  
h Lee to Adam
- 5–6 Open answers
- 7 a 3 b 4 c 6 d 5 e 1 f 2 g 8 h 7
- 8 a 7 b 8 c 5 d 3 e 1 f 4 g 2 h 6
- 9 Open answers
- 10 a freedom  
b month  
c proud  
d hatred  
e moment  
f funeral  
g member  
h tree

11 a T b T c F d F e T f F

12–13 Open answers

- 14 a She has been in treatment (for her drinking problem).  
b Because she wants to get rid of all the evil ghosts and spirits.  
c He is going to work as a lawyer for people on death row.

### Progress test key

- 1 a 4 b 5 c 3 d 2 e 1
- 2 a F b F c T d T e T
- 3 a 3 b 1 c 5 d 4 e 2
- 4 a Judge Slattery to Adam  
b Sam to Adam  
c Adam to Sam  
d Lee to Adam  
e Adam to Judge Robichaux
- 5 a 6 b 3 c 1 d 4 e 5 f 2
- 6 a denied  
b madness  
c stop  
d trusted  
e dishonestly
- 7 a Sam  
b Donnie Cayhall  
c Bill Monday (the state executioner)  
d David McAllister  
e Adam