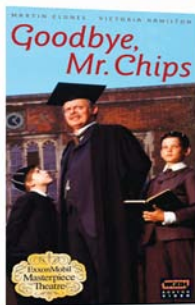


Discussion Questions

- 1** James Hilton wrote *Goodbye, Mr. Chips* partly in tribute to his own schoolteacher father. What would you say Hilton values in a teacher? What qualities do you think make a good teacher? Is Mr. Chipping, or “Chips” as his students come to call him, a good teacher or not? Why?
- 2** Chips seems to be an ineffectual teacher at first. By the end, however, he is revered by the students and faculty that lived and worked with him. How has he changed by the end? What, if anything, remains consistent about him during his tenure at Brookfield?
- 3** Are rituals like the hazing, bullying, and “fagging” at Brookfield (or any institution) an unavoidable part of establishing a hierarchy and bonding a group together? Can they ever be healthy or do they inevitably lead to a culture of violence?
- 4** Meeting his wife Kathie may have been the single event that changed Chips the most. Do you agree with this statement? How do the two of them compare when they first meet? What does she teach him? How does she influence the students and the school as a whole?
- 5** By staying at Brookfield for over 60 years, Chips becomes deeply associated with the institution. To what degree does Brookfield shape the life of Chips? To what extent is Chips able to influence or change Brookfield? How do you think James Hilton felt about the place and importance of institutional knowledge?
- 6** Brookfield is a very exclusive school, mainly for boys of wealthy and upper-class families. How much does that seem to matter in the day-to-day lives of the students and faculty? Do you think class matter in today’s society? What do you think is most important today in terms of achieving power and success—class background, education, talent, or money?
- 7** The school setting is frequently used in books, films, and television shows. List all the stories you can think of that are set in a school. Why do you think this setting is so perennially popular? What about the setting of schools might make them particularly rich for drama, comedy, or satire?

Goodbye, Mr. Chips, by James Hilton, was first published in 1934. For more about the MASTERPIECE film *Goodbye, Mr. Chips* and related features, visit <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/masterpiece/mrchips/index.html>. For the *Goodbye, Mr. Chips Teacher's Guide*, go to <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/masterpiece/mrchips/tguide.html>.



You can purchase the *Goodbye, Mr. Chips* DVD from shoppbs.org. Enter code BOOKANDFILM during checkout to receive a 15% discount.

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