Prologue and Chapter One

1. In the prologue, the voyageurs left the baby alone on the island. Why didn’t they rescue her?

2. What would you have done in this situation? Think carefully about the pros and cons of rescuing the baby. Explain your actions.

3. Why did Nokomis leave an offering before she stripped the tree’s bark?

4. In what ways did Omakayas have mixed feelings for her sister, Angeline?
5. What have you learned about Omakayas?

6. What is the connection between the baby in the prologue and the characters in chapter one?

Write a higher level question to bring to your group’s discussion.

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BU=beginning understanding  PP= proficient

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Chapter Two

1. Why do you think Old Tallow treated Omakayas differently than the other children?

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2. How did Old Tallow know that Omakayas was coming for the scissors?

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3. What was Omakayas' scheme for getting Angeline's respect?

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4. Why do you think the mother bear did not harm Omakayas?

5. Why do you think that Omakayas showed little fear when the mother bear was pinning her to the ground and checking her out?

Write a higher level question to bring to your group's discussion.

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Chapter Three

1. Why did Omakayas send Angeline to swim while she cleaned the moose hide without complaining?

2. Why did Omakayas and her people believe that bears were like people?

3. Why did the Anishinabeg delay naming their babies?
4. Why do you think the name-givers were unable to dream a name for baby Neewo?

5. How would life change in Omakayas' family when her father was home?

Write a higher level question to bring to your group's discussion.

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Chapter Four

1. Why was it important to Omakayas to keep the birds from eating the corn?

2. What plan does Angeline create to trick the birds?

3. Why does Omakayas ask the birds for forgiveness?
4. Why did Omakayas decide to keep the injured crow?

5. Why did Omakayas take her father’s gift without showing her disappointment?

Write a higher level question to bring to your group’s discussion.
Chapter Five

1. Why did Omakayas love Dagwaging (fall)?

2. Who are “the useless ones?”

3. What were “the useless ones” saying?
4. What did Deydey mean when he said, “We hear chimookoman ax ring in the woods, chopping a tree. We should be gone before the tree falls”? (page 79)

5. Why did the men say that the chimookoman were “infinitely hungry”? 

Write a higher level question to bring to your group’s discussion.
Chapter Six

1. What two surprising interactions did Mama witness between Omakayas and the bears?

2. What service did Andeg perform for Omakayas and her family, even though he no longer trusted Mama?

3. How did it happen that Andeg spoke to Pinch?
4. How did Pinch react?

5. Why didn't Two Strike Girl like to do the typical work of girls and women?

6. How did this impact Omakayas?

Write a higher level question to bring to your group’s discussion.

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Chapter Seven

1. List some of the things that Omakayas and her family ate during the winter.

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2. How did Omakayas feel when Nokomis prayed?

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3. What did Nokomis mean when she told Omakayas “listen to them”? (page 104)

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4. **Foreshadowing** is when the author gives the reader a clue or clues as to what is going to happen in the future. This clue or hint can be literal (what might actually happen) or figurative (something that represents or symbolizes something else).

On page 105-106, the author wrote, “**there was something odd in the ferocity of the cold that continued to deepen as the night went on.**”

What might this foreshadow?

Write a higher level question to bring to your group’s discussion.

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Chapter Eight

1. What did the presence of a Catholic school in the village reveal about the chimookoman?

2. What did the presence of a Catholic school in the village reveal about the Anishinabe?

3. What did Nokomis mean when she said, "Take their ways if you need them, but don't forget your own"? (page 110)
4. Why was Fishtail at the school?

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5. What did Omakayas learn about Old Tallow in this chapter that she didn’t realize before?

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Write a higher level question to bring to your group’s discussion.

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Chapter Nine

1. When and in what way does Omakayas see how her hard work during the warmer months paid off?

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2. In what way was having Deydey home more difficult?

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3. What do the adult conversations tell you about the lives of the Anishinabe?

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4. Why was Ten Snow’s gift so important to Omakayas?

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5. What lesson or lessons were contained in Nokomis’ story?

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Write a higher level question to bring to your group’s discussion.

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Chapter Ten

1. What steps were taken after the visitor died to stop smallpox from spreading?


2. Why did Deydey continue to chop wood even after he had plenty cut and stacked?


3. Why did Omakayas follow Neewo inside the cabin where everyone was sick?
4. What worried Omakayas about Neewo’s death?

5. What was the answer to Omakayas’ worry?

6. After Neewo’s death, Omakayas was overcome with grief. How was she finally able to get up and go outside?

Write a higher level question to bring to your group’s discussion.

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Chapter Eleven

1. How did Deydey’s chess game help the family?

2. Was Old Tallow right to blame the chimookoman for bringing smallpox to the Anishinabe? Explain your answer.

3. What lesson or lessons are contained in Nokomis’ story?

4. What was the result?
5. How do you explain Nokomis’ dream about One Horn?

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5. How were Pinch’s antics as important to the family as food?

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Write a higher level question to bring to your group’s discussion.

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Chapter Twelve

1. Why was the sugaring time so important to the Anishinabe?

2. Omakayas was overwhelmed with sadness for the loss of Neewo, but she also felt lonely? Why?

3. Why did Omakayas ask for help in the woods?

Who did she ask?
4. Who was talking to Omakayas in the woods? Why?

5. How did Omakayas begin to develop a relationship with Pinch and earn the respect of her family?

Write a higher level question to bring to your group’s discussion.

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Chapters Thirteen & Fourteen

1. What did Omakayas learn from Andeg?

2. Why didn’t Omakayas get smallpox when most of her family members were so sick and Neewo died?

3. Why did Old Tallow feel that Omakayas was “sent” to her family (Mama, Deydey, Nokomis, Angeline)?
4. How does the discovery of the truth about her background affect Omakayas?

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5. What finally healed Omakayas’ broken heart?

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Write a higher level question to bring to your group’s discussion.

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