

Name: _____

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The Marrow Thieves: Chapter 1
“Frenchie’s Coming-To Story” Questions (p.1-17)

Setting. What clues does the author give us that society and the environment have collapsed?

Plotting the Novel. Describe the *role* of an opening chapter. What is it meant to do? Do you believe this opening chapter achieves its goal? Yes, no, or something in the middle? Explain.

1. How did Frenchie and his brother, Mitch, end up in the treehouse?

2. Who are the “**recruiters**”? What do they want from Frenchie and Mitch? And how are they connected to the old Canadian system of residential schools?

3. What happens to Frenchie after Mitch is taken away by Recruiters?

4. Jot down your favorite simile from the chapter, then draw it below.



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The Marrow Thieves: Chapters 2 and 3
"The Fire" (p.18-22), and "Story: Part One" (p.23-31) Questions

Explain the meaning. "America reached up and started sipping on our lakes with a great metal straw." (24)

Did You Know?

- ☐ Only 0.5% of the earth's water is available fresh water.
- ☐ Canada has 20% of the world's fresh water, but 7% of the world's renewable H₂O.
- ☐ Renewable water resources are rechargeable due to the hydrological cycle unless they are overexploited.

1. According to Miigwans, what are dreams? Why are they important?

2. Summarize the Anishnaabe people's history told by Miig to the group.

3. Why doesn't Miig want RiRi hearing Story? What happened to Slopper when he heard Story at RiRi's age?

4. Upon seeing the girl at the end of the chapter, why does Frenchie think to himself "Please don't let her be my cousin. Please..." (31)

5. Explain the meaning of the following quote. (*Hint: Why is remembering so important?*)

"We needed to remember Story. It was his job to set the memory in perpetuity (...) But every week we spoke, because it was imperative that we know. He said it was the only way to make the kinds of changes that were necessary to really survive." (25)

Discussion Question. Do you think the future described in the book could happen to us for real? If so, why? If not, why not? Explain.

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The Marrow Thieves: Chapter 4
"Magic Words" (p.32-41) Questions

Explain the meaning. "I turned the word over in my throat like a stone; a prayer I couldn't add breath to." (24)

Basic Survival Skills Quiz

In the wilderness, would you be able to...

- ☐ Build a fire?
- ☐ Create potable water?
- ☐ Discern between edible and poisonous food?
- ☐ Make a weapon?
- ☐ Build a shelter?

/5

1. Describe Rose, in appearance and personality. Use two to three examples from the text to prove your answer.

2. Explain what Miig means when he says, *"Trust that there is always someone who has taken the great good as mission."* (33) Use the surrounding phrases on page 33 to help give you context.

3. What is "Apocalyptic Boy Scouts"? What skills are taught there, and why?

4. What is "Homesteaders"? What skills are taught there, and why?

5. The title of this chapter is "Magic Words." What makes the word "nishin" like magic to Frenchie? Take into consideration the history of the Anishnaabe people when explaining your answer.

Discussion Question. Do you think the skills taught to the group by their Elders should be skills you learn at school? Why/Why not?

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The Marrow Thieves: Chapters 5 and 6
“Haunted in the Bush” (p.42-51) and “A Plague of Madness” (p.52-55) Questions

Find an instance of imagery.

Did You Know?

The most commonly experienced dreams involve being attacked or chased, being late, loved ones dying, falling, flying, school, and having one’s teeth fall out.

1. Why does Frenchie decide not to shoot the moose? How does he feel about this decision, and what does this say about his character?

2. Why do you think watching Wab and Chi-Boy packing Wab's tent make Frenchie feel awkward?

3. What did Wab see in the woods in Chapter 5? Why did what she see frighten her?

The Marrow Thieves: Chapter 7
“The Four Winds” (p.56-79) Questions ((**TW**: alcohol abuse))

Explain the meaning. “Everyone’s creation story is their own” (79).

1. Why is Miig upset with Frenchie at the beginning of this chapter?

2. Summarize Rose’s coming-to story.

3. Describe Wab’s state of mind at the end of the chapter. How do you know?

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The Marrow Thieves: Chapters 8 and 9
“Wab’s Coming-To Story” (p.80-86) and “Story: Part 2” (p.87-90) Questions
TW: References made to sexual assault, drugs & alcohol abuse

Explain the meaning. “... a man without dreams is just a meaty machine with a broken gauge.” (88)

Key Words, Concepts, & Events.

Climate Crisis.
Cultural Appropriation.
Groupthink.
Colonialism.
The Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis.
The Puerto Rico Pill Trials.
Residential Schools.

1. Summarize Wab’s coming-to story.

2. What prompts Miig to believe RiRi is now ready for Story?

Choose one of the following questions to answer.

3. According to Miig’s Story, in what concrete ways is the physical world “broken”?
What is the effect of this broken, destitute, and polluted environment on society, and specifically Indigineous people? Explain.

OR

4. Draw Story in the following panels, choosing only the 3 most poignant moments.

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The Marrow Thieves: Chapters 10, 11, and 12

“Back Into the Woods” (p.91-99), “Miigwan’s Coming-To Story” (p.100-107), and Finding Direction” (p.108-110) Questions

TW: references made to sexual assault, drug & alcohol abuse

Key Words, Concepts & Events.

The Stanford University Experiment.

Asch Conformity Experiment.

The Salem Witch Trials.

1. What special item does RiRi find under the bed? Draw it in the blank square above.
2. What does Frenchie see when he climbs the tree? Why doesn’t Miig want to tell the others? Explain.

3. Describe Miig’s wedding “ring.” What happened to Isaac, his husband? Summarize his coming-to story.

The Marrow Thieves: Chapters 13 and 14

“The Potential of Change” (p.111-117) and “The Other Indians” (p.118-129) Questions

1. What suspicious item does the group find in the woods?
2. How does the author, Dimaline, create tension on pages 126 and 127? In particular, re-read Miig's question (*"And what other ways could we fit in?"*) and Travis' response, (*"Hiding is all."*) Explain.

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The Marrow Thieves: Chapters 15 and 16

"The Way It All Changed" (p.130-137) and "The Long Stumble" (p.138-145) Questions

Define.

Complacency. _____

Catatonic _____

Literary Devices. In the context of this novel, how is the world "harvesting," a euphemism? What is it a euphemism for? Explain.

1. What happens to RiRi? What imagery does Dimaline use to focus our attention on this event? Why might this be more powerful for the reader than simply stating what happened?

2. In a blind rage, how does Frenchie retaliate?

3. What did Miig do after Isaac was taken by the Recruiters? Why does he choose to tell Frenchie this story now?

The Marrow Thieves: Chapters 17 and 18

"Rogarou Comes Hunting" (146-153) and "On the Road" (p.154-160) Questions

1. What happens to Minerva in this chapter? As a result, what does Frenchie decide to do?

2. Describe Frenchie's reaction to the water. Why does he fall to his knees? What does he mean by, "*It was too much*" (158). What is too much? Explain.

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The Marrow Thieves: Chapters 19 and 20
“Found” (161-170) and “The Miracle of Minerva” (p.171-174) Questions

Define.

Hope _____

Discussion Question.

When you’re feeling down, what gives you hope?

1. With whom is Francis reunited? Describe this person.

2. According to the story reported back to the Council, how was Minerva able to resist “harvesting” while in Espanola? Explain.

The Marrow Thieves: Chapters 21 and 22
“Loss” (175-183) and “The Circle” (p.184-191) Questions

1. *“The chase was the crux; after that, who cared how the savages screamed or cried? (my emphasis, 172)”* Why would the narrator call Indigenous people “savages”?

2. In these chapters, Frenchie is full of rage. Towards which three people does he act out, and how? Why do you think he is feeling, and reacting this way? Explain.

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The Marrow Thieves: Chapters 23 and 24

“Word Arrives in Black” (192-201) and “Lost and Found and Lost” (p.202-211) Questions

TW: violence, death

The Power of Language.

What does “kiiwen” mean?

What might it signify to Minerva?

Rose? Frenchie?



1. Why do Frenchie and Rose fight? Explain.

2. Why does Jean choose this particular moment to tell Frenchie about how he and Frenchie’s mother first met? What is he trying to show his son?

3. The Elder is described as the “key.” The key to what?

4. Explain what happens to Minerva at the end of the chapter.

Discussion Question. Read the following two quotes, then explain, what is the effect of using literal imagery versus metaphorical language to describe a situation?

“I dropped to my knees beside Miigwan (...) I grabbed her hand, placing it under mine and over the hole in her chest. Blood, hot and sticky, gushed out between our fingers. Her thin shirt was already soaked through” (210).

VS.

“The blood blossomed under my knees like peonies over craggy asphalt” (210).

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The Marrow Thieves: Chapters 25 and 26
“Kiiwen” (212-220) and “Locks Mean Nothing to Ghosts” (p.221-231) Questions

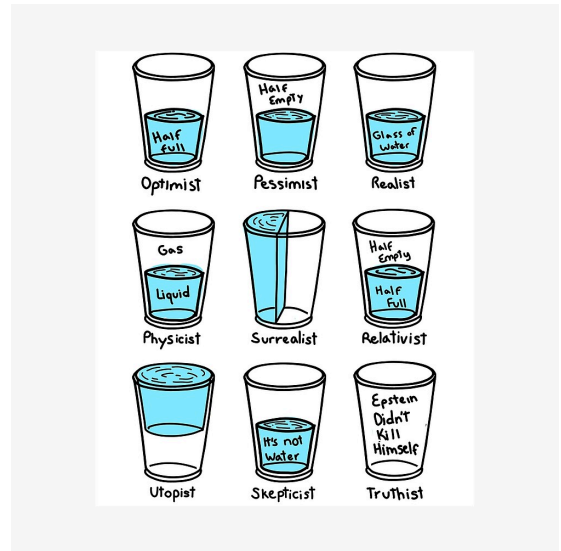
Define.

Optimist:

Pessimist:

Realist:

Which do you consider yourself to be?



1. Explain the meaning of Jean’s advice to Frenchie: *“running only works if you’re moving towards something, not away. Otherwise, you’ll never get anywhere”* (217).

2. After hearing his father’s advice, what does Frenchie choose to do?

3. Why does the “key” not have to be old? Explain.

4. With whom is Miig reunited at the end?

5. **Opinion.** Overall, would you say *The Marrow Thieves* is an optimistic book, a pessimistic one, or somewhere in between? Explain your answer.
