



Teacher Companion Guide

The Marrow Thieves

By Cherie Dimaline

Note about this guide

This book club teacher guide is centered around Cherie Dimaline's book, *The Marrow Thieves*. This guide offers a short summary of each chapter and suggested discussion questions to accompany the student journal prompts. In addition, we have provided extension activities for potential deeper learning.

Note about the book

Set in a world where people no longer dream except for Indigenous people, this story follows Frenchie, an Indigenous teen who, alongside a group of other North American indigenous people, are constantly on the run from a government who is hunting unwilling Native donors to harvest marrow wherein dreams are kept. The book includes discussion of sensitive topics that may be triggering for some students, including violence (kidnapping, gun violence, mention of rape), death of children and adults, grief, and colonialist oppression. We suggest teachers provide time and space for students to reflect on these topics.

Materials:

- Teacher Guide (this document)
 - [Before Reading](#): Author Bio
 - Chapter summaries, discussion questions, & extension activities
 - Pages 1 - 31
 - Pages 32 - 79
 - Pages 80 - 107
 - Pages 108 - 137
 - Pages 138 - 170
 - Pages 171 - 201
 - Pages 202 - 231
- [Student Journal](#)
 - Student journal prompts for each section
 - Each entry contains an analysis prompt, creative/reflective prompt, vocabulary tracker, and additional prompts.

Before Reading

Questions to begin the book club

- What do you think of the cover of the book? What do you think this story will be about?

Brief Bio of Cherie Dimaline

Cherie Dimaline is a writer from the Georgian Bay Métis Nation, a part of Métis Nation of Ontario. She has written a variety of award-winning novels and other acclaimed stories and articles.

Larger bio on author's website: <https://cheriedimaline.com/who-i-am>

Summary	In these opening chapters we are introduced to Frenchie, a teenage boy on the run. We learn his “coming-to” story, which explains how he’s ended up in his current situation. A while back Frenchie and his family made plans to leave their town to travel North where they could be safer, away from a government group trying to round up Natives. The book takes place in a future Canada where global warming has practically destroyed the world (glaciers have melted causing flooding and cities to disappear, the weather is unruly and constantly rains, and the great lakes have been turned toxic). Everyone but the Natives have lost their ability to dream. The government is capturing Natives to bring them to “schools” and experiment on them, trying to obtain their dreams. Right after Frenchie and his family made plans to leave, his father attended a Council meeting with the government and never returned. His mother then left with Frenchie and his brother, but shortly after, his mother was caught. With just his brother, Mitch, Frenchie continued to move North, but when a Recruiter (an agent for the government’s Department of Oneirology) spotted them, Mitch sacrificed himself for Frenchie to get away. On the run by himself for several days, Frenchie got picked up by a hodge-podge group of Natives all headed North as well. Frenchie comes to call this group his new family, as they’ve banded together to survive. The leader of the family is Miig, an older male who escaped from a government school and tells the younger members about their history and how the world ended up in this terrible state of play (colonization of the Americas, Indian residential schools, water diversion and oil digging, and now Natives being hunted for their ability to dream). There’s also Ri-Ri, a seven year old girl who’s latched onto Frenchie, and Chi-boy, a tall and quiet boy. After story time one night, another girl stumbles into the camp.
Discussion Questions	• Why do you think the first chapter is called “Frenchie’s coming-to story?” • Frenchie’s brother Mitch sacrificed getting caught by the Recruiters to allow Frenchie to escape. Have you ever sacrificed something for someone else? • On page 6, Frenchie said he felt kind of special, before he knew how dangerous special could be. What is dangerous about being special? • Frenchie lost his entire family and was forced to survive in the wilderness alone. What do you think gave Frenchie the strength to keep going? • On page 25, Miig says, “A general has to see the whole field to make good strategy...When you’re down there fighting, you can’t see much past the threat directly in front of you.” What does Miig mean? How might you say this differently? • Anyone under a certain age wasn’t allowed to listen to Miig’s “Story.” Why? Do you think knowing the truth can do more harm than good? Does being older prepare you better for the truth? Explain. ◦ RiRi says she deserves to know her own history. Do you agree? • On page 99, what do you think Frenchie means when he says, “This was our medicine, these bones, and I opened up and took it all in.” • How does Frenchie’s experience inform your own sense of family?
Possible Extension Activity	Learn About Indian Residential Schools in Canada • Print or pull up the article on Residential Schools on projector OR watch a video ◦ Canadian Residential School History ◦ Stolen Children: Residential School Survivors Speak Out • Discussion Questions

	○ What were the residential schools? ○ How were Native Americans treated at the schools? ○ How did the schools harm the Native American community? ○ What are Native Americans doing now to help survivors of the schools? ○ How might this history affect your understanding of the book? ○ What do you think the characters in the book would say about these schools?
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Summary	The girl who stumbled into the camp goes by Rose, and Frenchie has a crush on her. With their new family member, the group continues to stay on the move. They stop to build camp and while most of the girls stay with the woman elder, Minerva (who's elderly and cooky), to prepare camp, the boys go with Miig to practice their hunting skills. The hunting group breaks apart to search for food. Frenchie sees a giant moose, but can't find the nerve to shoot and kill it because it is so old and peaceful. Wag, the oldest girl in the group, returns from hunting and tells everyone she saw Indians she recognized in the woods—people she does not trust. When Wab tells the group this, they discuss the philosophical question of whether circumstances make people bad or people make circumstances bad. During this conversation, Miig explains that both Indians and non-Indians are trying to survive. The Indians are on the run to survive and the non-Indians are on the hunt to survive because they think the Indians have the key to their survival. The group arrives at their next destination, a boarded-up luxury lodge where they break in and spend a couple nights collecting supplies. On their first night, Minerva gathers the girls and tells them an “old-timey” story about Rougarou and Frenchie eavesdrops, interested in old tales. Later that night, Rose sneaks into Frenchie's room and tells him her “coming-to” story. They share a kiss before everyone else piles into the room, and they all end up sleeping next to each other despite there being enough rooms for each of them. In these pages we also get a glimpse of Wag and the fact that she has a troubled past that involves her mother. We see Frenchie having frightening dreams about his taken family members, where he sees them deformed, abused, and within the government schools. As a result, Frenchie has difficulty sleeping. Last, we learn more about the state of the world and how wars had broken out, forcing the wealthy hospitality corporations to shut down their resorts, leaving them abandoned.
Discussion Questions	• There seems to be a real value put on the “old-timey” stories told by the elders. Why do you think that is? • On page 37, Frenchie said that Wab “got to say who did what and how,” because as the woman of the group, she was in charge of the important things. Why do you think the “woman of the group” is given that authority? Why not Miig? • Frenchie felt he would be “stuck” if he had to hang out with Minerva until he found out she taught Rose some of their native language. What valuable lesson do you think Frenchie learned from this? Can you give an example of this happening in your life? • Why do you think Frenchie and other Natives are able to dream when “others” aren't able to? • On page 44, Miig seems disappointed that they have to rely on watches while they hunt, rather than having the skill of “telling time by the sky.” Do you think that people today are over reliant on technology? Are you? Give a few examples. • On page 55, after Wab told Miig about the men she saw in the woods' Miig warned her that, “every Indian is not an Indian.” What does Miig mean by this? Why did Miig say that? • On page 50, Frenchie had the opportunity to shoot a moose that would've fed their family for a week, but he couldn't. He reasoned, “I was okay with my decision, but not okay with the consequences.” Why didn't Frenchie shoot the moose? Could you have done it? Why?

	• Even though Miig and his family are running from the Recruits and the Recruits are chasing them, Miig believes, “We are actually motivated by the same thing: survival.” What are the Natives doing to survive? What are the others, like the Recruiters, doing to survive? By saying his family and the Recruits are the same in a way, what lesson do you think Miig is trying to teach his family? • On page 58, Frenchie took the risk of touching the electric fence before Miig had an opportunity to. Miig told Frenchie that, “No one is more important than anyone else [and] no one should be sacrificed for anyone else.” Why did Frenchie touch the fence first? Why did Miig tell Frenchie this when he was prepared to do the same thing, too? • Why does Frenchie feel like he deserves to learn the language more than Rose? Do you think it has to do with gender, age, or something else? • On page 53 Wab asks, “do you think circumstances make people turn bad or do people make circumstances bad to begin with?” How would you respond? • Why do you think everybody chooses to sleep in Frenchie’s room rather than on their own comfortable mattress?
Possible Extension Activity	Learn about the Rougarou In the book, Minerva shares a story about the Rougarou, a mythical creature in Native, Canadian, and even Cajun culture. Explore the stories behind this figure! • The Rougarou is the werewolf of Métis mythology. The Métis Rougarou is a syncretistic variation of the French-Canadian loup garou and the Cree shapeshifter figures. The Rougarou, is usually a person who in some way has offended the Creator or has been possessed by evil spirits. Some also view the Rougarou as a variation of the Indian Bearwalk mythology. The Métis of Turtle Mountain had the belief that a person who is a Rougarou changes into either a dog or a black mare rather than into a wolf. Another variation is that the Rougarou is half man and half horse. Some say that if one ever meets a Rougarou they must throw a skeleton key and hit him between the eyes. The Rougarou will then be turned back into a man. You had to keep his identity secret or you would become a Rougarou. The Métis also believe that if a person does not pray regularly or otherwise neglects their spiritual well-being the Devil (li diable) or other demons would come to live in their home. The Devil usually appears incarnated as a black dog or a handsome stranger. ◦ Source • Listen to a Metis elder share a story of a Rougarou to children in this video. To help students envision Minerva telling the girls a similar story. ◦ https://vimeo.com/109408088 • Discussion Questions ◦ What does the Rougarou represent? ◦ Why might elders tell stories of the Rougarou to children? Why do you think Minerva shared the story she did, when she did? ◦ Does the myth of the Rougarou remind you of any other fairy tales or mythical creatures?

Summary	Wag shares her coming-to story. She lived in the cities before they crumbled. As people were kicked out of their homes, the homeless gathered in alleyways and abandoned buildings, living on top of each other until the buildings burned down. Wag and her mother lived in a dumpster for a time, but when her mother turned to crack, Wag started running messages across town for payment in food. When a group of gangsters wanted her communication business, they trapped her, abused her and raped her, so as to scare her to stop running messages. She later escaped to the woods where she found Miig and the group. The person Wag saw during the group's hunting trip—the person she said she didn't trust—was a member of the gangsters who hurt her. Miig gathers the children for more story time. He shares that after the earth was sucked dry by the humans, the White people lost the ability to dream. After learning the Indians could still dream, the government tried to incentivize the Indians to participate in scientific studies, but the Indians didn't volunteer because they didn't trust the government. Soon after, the government started rounding up Indians and sending them to the schools, where nobody returns from. Miig shares the beginning of his coming-to story. His husband and he had found a cabin where they were living secluded and peacefully out of sight, but one night a group of travelers arrived at their cabin and asked to stay with them. Miig's husband was a kind soul and didn't question their motives. The group, however, was working with the government recruiters and had a tracking device, which then allowed the recruiters to find their location. The recruiters surrounded the cabin and took Miig and his husband. The group leaves the resort and goes back into the woods, but when they smell smoke, Frenchie climbs a tree to look for its source. He sees trees swaying in strange ways and behaving erratically around the smoke. Frenchie goes back down to the ground to tell Miig.
Discussion Questions	• Why do you think the government and the people in power are so concerned about losing the ability to dream? What does it mean to dream (hint: Dream has two meanings... thinking when sleeping; aspiring toward something)? What might be the deeper meaning behind people being unable to dream anymore? • On page 81, Wab said that the military was shuttling the cleaner citizens to new settlements and gated communities. Why did Wab describe those people as the "cleaner" citizens? What do you think makes them clean? • On page 88, how does Miig describe a man without dreams? • On page 88, Wab said that the government was more concerned with protecting its wealthy citizens more than anyone else. Does having wealth make your life more important or valuable than someone who doesn't? Can the value of human life be assessed? How? • Frenchie believes Miig wanted to leave the resort because the comfortability would weaken everyone's resolve to keep pushing forward. Do you believe comfortability creates complacency? Explain why. • On page 99, Miig reveals that he had a husband that he lost during his escape from Recruiters. Did your perspective change about Miig after hearing his coming-to story? How? • How might the continuation of Miig's story challenge your view of America today?

	• On page 89, is Miig speaking literally or are his words an allusion to something else when he says, “it began as a rumor, that they had found a way to siphon dreams out of our bones...?” • Why do you think Rose is being distant from Frenchie?
Possible Extension Activity	Get to know the Author Read an interview with author Cherie Dimaline and learn about her hopes for Marrow Thieves and the message she wants to deliver with it! • Read this interview • Discussion Questions ○ What surprised you about the author? ○ Why did the author write Marrow Thieves? ○ Dimaline wants readers to connect with her characters. Do you feel like you’ve connected with Frenchie and his family? Why or why not?

Summary	Miig tells Frenchie that what he saw with the trees and the smoke was likely the government constructing new schools—because the government knew the Indians were moving north, they are building more schools farther north so as to not need to transport their captured to the south. The family decides to travel northeast to avoid the new school construction. When the family sees smoke again, Frenchie climbs a tree and reports that there are two Indian men in the distance, one in camouflage and one wearing a red hat. Wag confirms those are the men she saw in the woods a while back. After three days, the family catches up with the men and cautiously enters their camp. Miig is suspicious of the two men, but they offer the family food and information about what they’ve seen recently, so Miig agrees to stay with them for the night. The men tell the family that there is a group of resistors living near Espanola. One of the men, Travis, recognizes Wag and essentially apologizes to her for what he and his gang did to her in the past. His partner, Lincoln, is under the influence of pills and is not as friendly, keeping to himself. In the middle of the night, Frenchie wakes up to screams. Travis has a gun pointed at two of the members of the family and Miig is trying to calm him down, where Lincoln has RiRi trapped in his arms. Chi-boy lays on the ground, having been stabbed, but in a moment of opportunity, Chi-boy jumps up and attacks Travis. His gun falls and Miig picks it up. Now worried, Lincoln runs through the forest with Ri-Ri. Several family members run after RiRi and the man, but he jumps off a cliff with her, sending both of them to their deaths. Shaken by the events and watching RiRi disappear, Frenchie bolts back to the campsite with his rifle. He shoots and kills Travis.
Discussion Questions	• Frenchie was able to kill Travis but not the moose. Do you think that is significant? What might this mean? • What do you think made Tavis and his partner become traitors to their Indian heritage? How might this relate to Wag’s question earlier in the book about whether <i>circumstances make people bad</i> or <i>people make circumstances bad</i>? • At the beginning of page 108, Miig tells Frenchie, “Sometimes French, you gotta trust that people are making decisions for the better of the community based on things they know that you don’t know.” Do you agree? Explain. • Frenchie says that “loss” is worse than running and worse than the schools. What do you think he means by this? Do you agree? • On page 116, Frenchie says to Rose, “It’s weird when you come to a spot in the story where the plot could go either way, you know?” Have you ever had a moment where you felt that? How did you handle it? Did you make the right choice(s)? Explain. • Travis and Lincoln told Miig and the others about their travels and other Indians that are forming a resistance. They suggested that these other Indians were crazy and that the Indian way of life was dead. They believed people needed to run or assimilate. Why didn’t Miig and his family consider this an option? Would assimilation be an option for you, under their circumstances? Why or why not? • If Lincoln was going to jump off the cliff why do you think he took RiRi with him?
Possible Extension Activity	Learn about the Native Tribes of North American Throughout the book, many Tribes are mentioned. Help students to understand the history of Native Tribes in North America!

	● Pull up this site with information and maps about the different Tribes. Watch the short movie on the removal of Native lands in the U.S. ● Discussion Questions ○ What surprised you about this information? ○ In the book, the Frenchie and his family are moving north. Do the maps on this site correlate at all? ○ How many reservations are in the U.S.? Does it seem like enough?
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Summary	After losing RiRi, the family moves at a fast pace for eight days. During that time, Franchise is practically in a daze from everything that happened. At one point, Miig calls Frenchie over and tells him what happened after his husband and him were taken by the recruiters: they were taken to a school and separated. While working in the laundry, Miig found a way to escape. He ran for days with the plan of gathering weapons to return for his husband. That's when he met Frenchie's father, who Miig helped guide to the government capital for their conference. In payment for his help, Frenchie's father gave Miig a gun and Miig then ran all the way back to the school. For two days he looked at the fortress of the school and realized there was no way to break in. Finally he saw a truck enter and when it left, Miig carjacked the driver. From the driver he learned that everyone who had been at the school was killed. In the back of the truck were vials of bone marrow taken from the people. Miig killed the truck driver and brought the vials to a lake, where he released the marrow back into the earth, vial by vial. On the eighth day after losing RiRi, the family finds a barn to sleep the night in. Everyone except Minerva sleeps in the barn loft, where there is soft hay for beds. In the middle of the night, recruiters show up and kidnap Minerva, but she had removed the ladder to the loft, so the recruiters didn't know to look for the others. Minerva had sacrificed herself. When they are about to continue north the following day, Frenchie refuses and says he's going after Minerva. The rest of the family decides to go, too. After a few days, their camp is broken into at night by another group of Native Americans. At first, the family is apprehensive, but then the new people take them to a secret, hidden cave and forest where there is a much larger Indigenous population living. As they walk through the encampment, Frenchie sees his father and they reunite. His father catches up with Frenchie and Frenchie's new family and when Frenchie explains they were on their way to find the school Minerva was taken to, they are told that Minerva isn't at a school, but instead in Espanola.
Discussion Questions	• On page 139, Frenchie falls into a dreamless sleep after killing Travis. Why might the author have written that line? Do you think it means anything? Has Frenchie become more like the White people through his act of killing Travis? • Miig told Frenchie the rest of his story about how he met Frenchie's father while escaping from the school and how he killed the truck driver that was transporting vials of marrow. What was the purpose of Miig telling Frenchie this story now? Why do you think he mentioned the truck driver? How could that help Frenchie? • Do you think it's significant that Miig chose to release the vials of marrow into the lake? Why do you think he did that? • Minerva sacrificed herself in the barn when the Recruiters found where she and everyone else was hiding. Why do you think Minerva sacrificed herself? Do you think it was necessary? • On page 153, Frenchie told the group that he wasn't going north, but to find Minerva, and they followed. Do you think this is significant? Has Frenchie changed? Has the rest of the group changed? • Why might Miig understand the spoken language but not the written language, syllabics? Did this surprise you? • At the end of page 145, what do you think of Miig telling Frenchie that pure intentions are the only thing that matter on a trying journey? • Do you think the presence of Rose's love affects Frenchie's decision making?

	Why didn't Jean, Frenchie's dad, make Mitch and Frenchie privy to the resistance when they were younger?
Possible Extension Activity	Write a book review! BreakFree Education is collecting book reviews from students to share with our partners at Freedom Reads, authors, and on our website! Ask students to write a review and submit it to us. Student book review template (students may choose to use this template or not) - Submit book reviews to initiatives@breakfree-ed.org

Summary	Frenchie learns that when Minerva was taken she was brought to a school. The entire ride there, the recruiters felt she was strange because she wouldn't stop singing. At the school, when the Recruiters and headmistress of the school hooked up Minerva to the machine to take her dreams, Minerva shocked the system and sent it up in flames. Minerva sang her memories and her dreams in her native tongue which made the machines spark and eventually burned down the school. Frenchie is very quiet and unsettled at the new camp. He can't figure out what is bothering him, despite everyone noticing that something isn't the same about him. He has a conversation with his father where he realizes he is angry at his father for having left him, and he's angry about the loss of his childhood. Frenchie also talks to Miig, who is sad. Miig tells Frenchie that he is tired, tired of missing his husband. When talking to Rose, Rose tells Frenchie that Miig may be sad about the potential that Frenchie may choose to stay behind at the camp when the family leaves next. Frenchie wonders what he will do, but then gets caught up in his love for Rose. They kiss again. When the camp throws a social night, Frenchie gets jealous when Rose dances with another boy. The next day, Frenchie goes hunting with the men and they bring back a large buck. When Rose comes to congratulate Frenchie, he lets out his anger and jealousy and they argue. Upset with how he behaved, Frenchie goes to his father who tells him the story about how he met Frenchie's mother. The story is interrupted when a priest enters the camp. At first, Frenchie, Miig and Chi-boy all go on the defensive against the priest, but Frenchie's dad stops them. The priest is working with the camp, and is operating on the inside of the schools to share information with them. He's come with news about Minerva: the government is afraid of her power and is transporting her to the capital. They'll have to pass the camp on their way to the capital and that is when the group will attempt to rescue Minerva.
Discussion Questions	• On page 177, Tree thought Frenchie didn't need them anymore because he had found his "real family." For someone to be a "real" family member, do you have to be related by blood? Why or why not? • What allowed Minerva to break the system in the school when she was connected to it, when others couldn't? Do you think her lack of fear for the Recruiters factored into anything? How? • On page 178, Miig seemed depressed. What emotions is Miig dealing with? Why do you think he is showing this vulnerability now? (Is Miig realizing he can't lead them where they need to go? Is he upset that Frenchie may no longer need him? Is being around so many natives making him think of what he's lost?) • In these pages, people start addressing Frenchie as "French." What does that signify to you? Did you have a nickname that you outgrew? • What is your opinion of Derrick? Do you think that he is antagonizing Frenchie? Besides Rose, what else do you think is at the root of Derrick and Frenchie's competition? • On page 193, Clarence told Frenchie, "When we heal our land, we are healed also." If they can dream already, why do they need healing? Explain. • After catching a deer on their hunting expedition, Miig prepares the ceremony which would allow the deer to take his dreams with him to find the next world. Why do you think it is important for animals to be sent off this way? Do you believe the ceremony is for the deer or for the Natives? Explain. • Recounting his story of meeting French's mother, Jean tells French that his

	mother gave him what he couldn't find in the supposed "medicine house." What did she give him? Why did he refer to it as "medicine?" Why couldn't it have been found at the "medicine house?" • Why might Frenchie feel like he has to choose between his dad or his new family? • Why might Derrick feel the need to express his manliness against other natives who aren't his enemies? • Do you think Frenchie lashes out at Rose because she was dancing with Derrick or is there another reason? • Frenchie and his family lost RiRi and Minerva during their journey, the youngest and the oldest female in their family. Do you think that is a coincidence? Did who they were make them more vulnerable? How? • On page 180, Frenchie explains how simply "being himself" used to be his job, but now his job was to hunt, scout and protect others. In what ways does this affect Frenchie? How do you think Frenchie is handling these changes? How would you?
Possible Extension Activity	

Summary	On the day of Minerva's transport, Frenchie, Miig, Chi-boy, Wag and Rose, along with others, wait by the road to ambush the transport cars. After a short exchange of fire, Frenchie and his group get to Minerva's van and open the doors, but she's been shot. She dies in Rose's arms, her last words, "go home." Upset by their loss, Frenchie's family along with the rest of the larger camp travels north and sets up a new camp. Rose is sad and quiet, and after several months she leaves the camp. Knowing she is leaving, Frenchie hides to avoid having to say goodbye, but soon after she's gone, he goes to his father and cries. His father relates back to what Frenchie's mother once told him, "running only works if you're moving toward something, not away." From this conversation, Frenchie realizes that Rose is his "home" and that when he is running with her, he's running toward home...just like Minerva said to do. Frenchie gathers his things and races to catch up with Rose, without having the time to say goodbyes. Frenchie finds Rose not far from the camp—she'd waited for him, knowing and hoping he would follow. As they're preparing to continue on, they hear footsteps and find a group of people from their camp who are running to intercept several unknown people further north in the woods. Frenchie and Rose decide to delay their departure and go to see who the unknowns are. They find two women, former nurses who worked at the schools in the very beginning and helped people escape, along with two pale-skin men, one of whom speaks perfect Cree. Rose and Frenchie realize that the man who can speak Cree, speaks just as well as Minerva does—as such, he may have the same power she did against the government's marrow-sucking machines. When the Cree man confirms he dreams in Cree (rather than English), Frenchie knows he is a key they've been missing. As Frenchie is walking the new guests back to the camp, he talks with the Cree man and realizes it is Isaac, Miig's missing husband. Frenchie races back to the camp in front of the others and calls Miig to the camp entrance. Miig falls to his knees and embraces his husband. The book ends with Frenchie coming to the realization that "as long as there are dreamers left, there will never be want for a dream." Frenchie realizes that he, and every other surviving Indian will band together, will preserve their heritage and their dreams, and continue to live with hope and aspiration of a better world.
Discussion Questions	• Just before Minerva dies, Frenchie comments on how the season has changed to spring and new plants are ready to blossom. Why do you think the author chose to have Minerva die during spring? • What do you think of Frenchie's realization that "as long as there are dreamers left, there will never be want for a dream?" What does that mean? • Given Minerva's last words ("go home") and Frenchie's father telling him about his mother's advice ("running only works if you're moving toward something, not away"), why do you think Frenchie needed to leave with Rose? • Why do you think the group chose to leave the captured government people alive and by the side of the road with food to survive until they were picked up? What does this say about their morals? How is this different from Frenchie's actions toward Travis a while back? • In the camp where they were somewhat safer, everyone's attention focused more on issues within their personal relationships than the ever present threat of Recruiters. Why? Individually, identify the different emotions French, Miig, Rose, the Twins, and Jean experience?

	• Why does having a longer braid than Derrick mean so much to Frenchie? Why only Derrick? How is this related to Frenchie's pride? • Miig entrusted Frenchie with the pouch of his husband's vial of marrow that he kept around his neck. Earlier Miig said the pouch was where he "kept his heart." Why did Miig give "his heart" to Frenchie? Do you think there is a deeper reason? What is it? • On page 207, after Derrick shot the driver of the van that was trying to get away, French said, "He looked over at me, and I recognized that face that I'd worn just a few weeks ago. He wouldn't be shooting anymore today. His one lucky shot had put him into retirement." What did Frenchie recognize in Derrick's face? Do you think Frenchie felt sympathy for Derrick? Why? Why now? • On page 217, how might the lesson Frenchie's mother told his father help people today, who have gone through a hard experience? • Why is the vial Miig has in his pouch only half full? • Why, in his final act, might the van driver have shot Minerva? • What do you think of Minerva's last words, "go home?" • Is Minerva's death the end of hope for the resistance or indigenous culture all around? Why or why not? • On the last page Frenchie refers to Isaac as "the man who dreamed in Cree." How is this significant?
Possible Extension Activity	Write a book review! BreakFree Education is collecting book reviews from students to share with our partners at Freedom Reads, authors, and on our website! Ask students to write a review and submit it to us. • Student book review template (students may choose to use this template or not) • Submit book reviews to initiatives@breakfree-ed.org