

Literature Circle Questions

Use these questions and activities that follow to get more out of the experience of reading *So B. It* by Sarah Weeks.

1. Heidi says she is “just plain lucky” when she guesses all of the pairs in the game Memory (p. 14-16). List two other instances where Heidi shows she is lucky.
2. Describe how Bernadette became a part of Heidi and Mama’s life.
3. What does Thurman Hill think Heidi wants from him when he first meets her? Why is he angry?
4. Describe why Bernadette can’t go outside. What happens when she tries?
5. Bernadette compares Mama’s brain to a broken machine: “All the basic parts are there...but inside there are lots of mysterious little pieces busted or bent or missing altogether,” she says (p. 5). Explain what Bernadette means.
6. When Heidi first meets Zander, she doesn’t like him. Explain how they become friends and what Heidi comes to appreciate about him.
7. Heidi’s mama uses only 23 words, but she is often able to show what she wants or how she feels beyond those 23 words. Explain how Mama is able to communicate with Heidi and Bernadette.
8. When Heidi makes a list of what she knows about her mama, why does she only put one thing on it—the name So B. It (p. 140)? What else could she add to that list?
9. Heidi hears her mother’s word *soof* many times as she travels across country. She hears it when she opens the phone booth door in Cheyenne (p.123) and in the wind when she gets to Liberty (p.158). Why do you think she hears *soof* so often?
10. Heidi first experiences lying when she realizes that Zander is “bending the truth to within an inch of its life” (p. 29). On the bus to Liberty, she tries lying herself. Why do you think Heidi lies about her family to Alice Wilinsky? How does she feel about her lies both before and after she gets caught?
11. How do you think things would have turned out differently for Heidi if Bernadette had convinced her not to go to Liberty? Do you think Heidi could have ever been satisfied if she didn't try to find out about her past? Explain your answer.
12. Why do you think Heidi decides not to stay with Ruby and Roy, but instead to return and live with Bernadette after Mama dies?

13. Imagine you are in Heidi's place. What would it be like to grow up with Mama and Bernadette? Would you have more or less independence than you have now? What do you think would be challenging and what would be enjoyable?

14. Heidi makes a list of what she knows about her mama and she makes a list about what she knows about Georgia, whom she meets on the bus (pp. 138 and 140). Compare the two lists and explain why they are so different. Does Heidi really know more about Georgia than she does about her mama?

15. In *Liberty*, Heidi says she finally understands "there are some things in a person's life you just can't know" (p. 221). Explain how she has come to feel this way, as compared to earlier when she says to Bernadette, "A person has a right to know from the beginning" about her life (p. 39).

Note: These Literature Circle questions are keyed to Bloom's Taxonomy as follows: Knowledge: 1-3; Comprehension: 4-6; Application: 7-8; Analysis: 9-10; Synthesis: 11-13; Evaluation: 14-15.

Activities

1. Both Heidi's mama and Bernadette use made-up words. *Soof* is Mama's word for love. Bernadette uses the word *rimple* to describe when Heidi's mama gets frustrated. Brainstorm a list of five original words. Then decide what each word will mean. Will it be a feeling, an idea, or a thing? Write down your definition next to each word. Now trade new-word lists and explain to your partner how you decided on each word.

2. Heidi keeps a book of lists. She makes a list of what she knows about her mama and one about Georgia from the bus. Pick another major character from the book (such as Heidi, Bernadette, Zander, Ruby, or Thurman Hill) and make a list of everything you know about him or her.

3. Heidi's mama only uses 23 words, but she is able to communicate what she needs and how she feels. For instance, when she offers tea to Heidi, she is also offering comfort. Imagine you could only use 23 words. Make a list of what words you would use and explain your choices. Would you be able to use the same word for more than one purpose?