

## Literature Circles

Use these questions and the activities that follow to get more out of the experience of reading *Indian Captive* by Lois Lenski.

1. What do the Senecas give to Molly and Davy Wheelock to show they've been chosen to travel with them?
2. As Molly is taken away, what are Mrs. Jemison's last words of advice to her daughter?
3. Before her capture, Molly spent her time learning to knit, spin, weave, and read from her mother. After her capture, what new skills does Molly acquire through living with the Senecas?
4. Why do Shining Star and Squirrel Woman perform a ceremony once they've taken Molly home? What do we learn about the reasons Molly was kidnapped from this?
5. Earth Woman, who lives alone in her tent, becomes an important person in Molly's life. What is Earth Woman like, and how does she help Molly?
6. For Molly, the journey to Genesee town after the brief encounter with the white women at Fort Duquesne is a "second captivity." Explain why this second captivity is worse than the first for Molly.
7. Molly feels like she is "living in two places at once, her body with the Indians, but her spirit where she wanted to be—at home with the white people." Can you explain this in your own words? Have you ever felt like Molly—that you are living in two separate places at once? What was this like for you?
8. Imagine yourself in Molly's shoes, kidnapped by strangers with unfamiliar customs and language. How would you deal with your situation? Would you behave as Molly did? What would you have done differently?
9. Compare Molly's adopted sisters Shining Star and Squirrel Woman. Describe each woman. How are they different, and how does each woman treat Molly?
10. Molly tells Josiah that she believes the Senecas are kind: "I never knew what kindness meant until I came here—perhaps because I never needed it so much till then." How do the Senecas show kindness to Molly?
11. Why do you think the Senecas forbid Molly to speak English, "the words of the pale face"?

12. Molly's two oldest brothers escaped capture by the Senecas, and when the book ends, Molly has not had contact with them yet. What if Molly were to meet her brothers again years later? What would their reunion be like? What do you think they would say to each other?
13. In your own words, explain why Molly decides to stay with the Senecas in the end rather than go with Captain Morgan. Were you surprised by her decision? Do you think she made the right choice?
14. Compare Molly's upbringing before her capture to the way she was raised by the Senecas. What are some of the differences between the two ways of bringing up children? How would you prefer to be raised?
15. Besides Molly, who was your favorite character in *Indian Captive*? Why did you like him or her, and what did that character contribute to the story?

*Note: These questions are keyed to Bloom's Taxonomy as follows: Knowledge: 1-2; Comprehension: 3-6; Application: 7-8; Analysis: 9-10; Synthesis: 11-12; Evaluation: 13-15.*

### **Activities**

1. Illustrate Molly's first year living with the Senecas as a line graph. What are the highest and lowest points of her year? After you've drawn and labeled your line graph, use drawings to depict each of the events in that year. Afterwards, compare your line graph with a classmate's, and talk about why you graphed Molly's year like you did.
2. Through living with the Senecas, Molly is introduced to many types of utensils and other gear that she had never encountered before – things like baby frames, burden straps, and clay cooking pots. Create an illustrated dictionary to list and describe at least ten items. Use drawings and descriptions to explain the use of these different items.
3. Names have important meanings in the Seneca tribe. In this story, for example, Little Turtle becomes Turkey Feather after he successfully hunts his first turkey, and Corn Tassel becomes Little Woman of Great Courage after she decides to stay with the Senecas. Give yourself a new name with a meaning that shows an important achievement or experience in your life, and write an explanation of your new name.

### **Other Books by This Author:**

*Bayou Suzette*. Published by Stokes.

*Phebe Fairchild: Her Book*. Published by Stokes.

*Strawberry Girl*. Published by Lippincott.