

Guided Reading Questions: “The Honey Jar” by Rigoberta Menchú

Before Reading:

1. Who is the author, and where is she from?
2. Why is Rigoberta Menchú Tum an important figure? What is she an advocate for?

Chapter 1: Grandmother Moon and Grandfather Sun Were Bored:

1. What was the most special holiday in Chimele? (p. 9) What is the most meaningful holiday to you?
2. What did Grandfather Sun create to make Grandmother Moon happy? (p. 11)
3. Describe the village festival and what it celebrates. (p. 12)

Chapter 2: The Creation of Plants, Animals and Fish:

1. Name five creations Mother Earth and Father Sky made. (p. 14)
2. What was still missing after the creation of animals? (p. 16)

Chapter 3: The Keepers of the Earth:

1. What/who is the Ajaw and who is a part of it? (p. 20)
2. What is the meaning of *nahual*? (p. 20) What are some synonyms?
3. Summarize what happened in this chapter. (p. 17-20)

Chapter 4: Why the Elders Are the Four Corners of the Universe:

1. Who are Chuchu'ib and Tata'ib? (p. 21)
2. What is the significance of the elders? (p. 22)
3. Describe what is happening in the picture on p. 23.
4. How did Ajaw celebrate the pact with the elders? (p. 24) Do you have any belief as to what thunder and lightning represent?

Chapter 5: Where It's Revealed That Each Thing Has a Spirit:

1. Who is Rajaw Juyub'? (p. 25)
2. What two things could happen if you see Rajaw Juyub'? (p. 26)

Chapter 6: Why You Can See a Rainbow When Deer Are Born:

1. In what form did Rajaw Juyub' appear to the wicked man? (p. 28)
2. What did the injured boy and girl represent? (p. 29)
3. What does a rainbow represent? (p. 31) Does a rainbow mean anything special to you? If so, what?

Chapter 7: Where It's Told That Monkeys Are Descended from Humans:

1. Summarize the story of the four brothers. (p. 32-34)

2. What is the role of the howler monkeys? (p. 34)
3. What did Ch'owen and Jun B'atz' want in order to accept their fate as monkeys? (p. 34)
4. What do the people dressed as monkeys at the village festival represent? (p. 37)

Chapter 8: The Story of the Weasel Who Helped People Find Corn

1. Why were the villagers so sad? (p. 38-39)
2. Describe what is happening in the image on p. 41.
3. What is the moral the weasel taught the villagers? (p. 43)

Chapter 9: The Man Who Became a Buzzard:

1. Why did the man want to be a buzzard? (p. 44)
2. What did the man dislike about being a buzzard? What did the buzzard dislike about being a man? (p. 46-48)
3. What is the moral of the buzzard story? (p. 49) Can you think of a similar lesson you've learned?

Chapter 10: Twins Make Holes in Your Clothes and Send Ants:

1. What can happen if you insult a twin? (p. 50)
2. Why did the grandmother return after three days? (p. 52-53)
3. Why are twins special? (p. 53) Think of your own experiences. What traits do you notice about twins?

Chapter 11: The Amazing Twins:

1. How did the message from the Underworld get to the twins? (p. 55-57)
2. What is the story of why toads hop? (p. 57)
3. What food chain was established through the twins' story? (p. 57)

Chapter 12: The Story of the Hormigo Tree:

1. Why was the hormigo tree sad? (p. 59)
2. Define "nostalgia." (p. 59) Describe a time when you felt nostalgic.
3. Why did the world become silent? (p. 60)
4. How will the Men of Corn help the hormigo release music? What is the instrument called? (p. 63)

After Reading - Reflection Questions:

1. What are some stories your family has told you, just as Rigoberta's grandmother and grandfather told her?
2. Why do you think the title of the book is "The Honey Jar?" Explain.
3. What did you learn about the ancient Maya? How do these stories differ from how you understand the creation of the world?

