



Donna Costa

Breathing With Trees

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. With residential schools, Indigenous children were taken from their homes, forced to live far away and to learn religion, while not allowed to speak their own language or practice their traditions. Judy denied Lucy any knowledge of her Indigenous roots, culture, language or traditions. What were Judy's reasons for doing this? Do you agree or disagree with her actions?
2. How do you feel about a non-Native author writing about an Indigenous character and Indigenous issues? Are Indigenous readers more or less likely to read the story because of that? Are non-Indigenous readers more or less likely to read the story because of that?
3. For Teen Girls — How did you learn about menstruation? Was it at school, from a parent, sibling or friend? Maybe you only found out about periods the first time you got one? What feelings did you experience with your first period? How comfortable are you in talking about your Time of the Month (TOTM)? Would you have liked your first period to be celebrated like in the story?
4. Parker's mother was an alcoholic. Did your feelings about her alcoholism change when you discovered the reason she began drinking? Does your understanding change your attitude towards her abusive behaviours?
5. Lucy's father was an alcoholic. Were your feelings to his alcoholism different than your feelings to Parker's mother's alcoholism?
6. Did your perception of Lucy change when you discovered she was Indigenous? If so, in what way?
7. What examples illustrate the complicated relationship between Lucy and April? In your experience, is this changeability ("up, down, on, off") common in teen relationships?
8. In Ontario, a minor or child is defined as a person under the age of 16. Is a child capable of giving Informed Consent?
9. Which is harder — giving consent or withdrawing consent — when it goes against what the group is doing? Does age or peer pressure affect that ability?



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10. There is no minimum age for giving Informed Consent for HPV vaccine in Ontario Do you feel there should be? If so, what would it be?
11. Was Lucy fully informed about the benefits and risks of the HPV vaccine?
12. Was Miss Lang being coercive when she told Lucy that she could get the vaccine even if her mother said no? What about later when she had a private talk with Lucy? Did Miss Lang overstep her role as a teacher or was she fulfilling her role as teacher?
13. Do you feel that Mr. Munro was a bully? Was his lecture or behaviour harrassing? Did he overstep his role as a teacher or was he fulfilling his role as teacher? Should Mr. Munro be fired or disciplined for his actions?
14. Lucy didn't feel that Mr. Munro's lecture or his behaviour on vaccination day was abusive. However, if Mr. Munro is a bully at other times, do you think a student would be influenced by that, regardless of what he was saying in the moment?
15. Can you answer Mr. Munro's class lecture questions: Have any countries stopped the HPV vaccine? If they have, why did they do that? What are possible adverse effects? How serious are they?
16. Jean did a demonstration of the Reconnective Healing frequencies on Lucy's hand. Should Jean have gotten permission from Lucy's mother first?
17. Legally, Lucy is still a child (under 16). Did Jean fully explain Reconnective Healing to Lucy before taking payment? How do you feel about Jean accepting Lucy's money? Would you feel differently if the cost was \$40 or \$120? Do you feel differently about Lucy spending her money at the mall for an expensive item of clothing?
18. Lucy's mom, Judy, is dating Mr. Munro who is Lucy's teacher. What problems might result from the relationship?
19. At what age do you think someone is capable of making decisions about his/her own health choices? At what age is someone capable of making decisions about his/her own spiritual or religious choices? Is age the same for both? If not, do you see that as being contradictory?



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20. Is medicine a science, an art, or both?
21. Lucy's mom is a Homeopath, a regulated profession in Ontario, but not covered under OHIP (government health care.) Do you think it should be? Have you ever used homeopathic services? Does 'free' health care affect how people value their health?
22. For Homeopaths – Is homeopathy and the remedies portrayed accurately in the story? Why or why not?



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GROUP ACTIVITIES

1. Complete an experiment to prove whether Mr. Munro is a bully or an effective teacher.

OBSERVATIONS: Mr. Munro calls students names. Mr. Munro compliments students.

QUESTION: Is Mr. Munro is a bully or an effective teacher?

HYPOTHESIS:

Assumptions:

- Teachers must use the power of their voice and words to control the classroom.
- You can't please all the people, all the time; therefore, someone is bound to feel offended.
- A bully uses power to control or harm individuals, and the behaviour often repeats.

Therefore:

- If I measure all Mr. Munro's comments by student and frequency, we will observe the ratio of positive to negative remarks and the distribution among students, whether all are affected equally or only certain ones.

PREDICTION: Will you predict that Mr. Munro will be shown to be a bully or an effective teacher? (Or is the data insufficient?)

VERIFICATION:

CONCLUSION:

2. Make a batch of fruit or beet kvass: www.westonaprice.org/making-fruit-beet-kvass/



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3. Get a mother SCOBY (Here's one source: www.boochorganickombucha.com but check online what's available in your area.) and make kombucha: www.westonaprice.org/health-topics/food-features/kombucha-journey-love-kombucha-now/
4. Using kefir water grains, (Here's one source: www.water-kefir.ca but do check online what's available locally in your area.) Make cream soda kefir or other fermented beverages. www.westonaprice.org/health-topics/childrens-health/who-needs-soda-pop-with-these-bodacious-beverages/
5. Line dance to "Pontoon" by Little Big Town. (Lots of variations on YouTube.)
6. Learn an easy kids' dance to Meaghan Trainor's, Better When I'm Dancing by watching Saskia's Dansschool Kids on YouTube.
7. Make a list of all the songs and artists mentioned in the story.