

DEAR CANADA

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Blood Upon Our Land

The North West Resistance Diary of Josephine Bouvier

By Maxine Trottier

1. What personal meaning does keeping a diary have for Josephine? What other significance does her writing hold?
2. When Edmond brings a deer home, Josephine describes her friend Emma's reaction to and Moushoom's beliefs about hunting. What other different ways of seeing things come up in the story, both within Josephine's changing family and her changing world?
3. What do you think is the meaning of Josephine's dream of falling? How does it relate to Papa's account of Louis Riel's plans and Moushoom's story about buffalo hunting? What is being foreshadowed? Who might the buffalo represent, and who are the hunters?
4. From time to time, Josephine includes a newspaper clipping in her diary. How do these compare or add to what Josephine reports? What do Josephine and her family members think about what the newspapers have to say?
5. Moushoom's story about a past buffalo hunt includes the hunt's strict laws, the effort it took, its value and what has been lost since the buffalo disappeared. What lesson(s) do you think Josephine was supposed to take from this story? What lessons might *we* take from it, both for the story and in our own world?
6. Why is Josephine resistant to Louise's presence in her family at first? How are Josephine and Louise similar, and how are they different? How do the events of the story help in bringing them together? When the new baby arrives at the end of the story, how does Josephine feel about him?
7. As conflicts grow, Josephine wonders about law, government and the nature of loyalty. Where do her own loyalties lie, and why? Who in her world chooses differently, and how does she feel about this? Why does Josephine have to "harden" her heart at one point?
8. In his account of the battle, Moushoom has strong feelings about the actions of Père Moulin and the nuns. What does he feel, and why? Why do you think the priests and nuns chose to side with the government forces?