

Discussion Questions

I Am Canada: Fire in the Sky

By David Ward

1. Some pilots had very little training before they went to war — as little as 12 hours of experience flying a plane. Paul practiced flying in a chair in his hut. What strategies might you use if you knew you would have only limited training before you had to not only fly the plane yourself, but fly it in battle?
2. The planes that Paul and his friends flew were constantly being updated with new inventions. What is something you might have invented for a World War I plane?
3. During WWI, pilots often thought the soldiers in the trenches were like rats, trapped by pounding guns. The infantrymen often thought the pilots were dangerously exposed in the air and faced a fiery death if they were hit. What might you have chosen to do? Why?
4. There were many times in a battle when pilots had to make split-second decisions. When Billy's plane was hit, Paul had to decide whether to look for Billy or make for the base because of his own head injury. What would you have done, and why?
5. How do you think pilots learned about planes that belonged to the enemy? Why was it important to know about enemy planes and their capabilities?
6. Would you have liked to be a squadron leader like Rogers, or would you prefer to follow someone into a dogfight? Why?
7. Research some of the Canadian flying aces the author mentions. Which one(s) most grab your attention? Why?
8. Why do you think the Red Baron is still so well known, nearly a century after he was flying?
9. Have you ever made a model airplane? Why did you pick the one you made?