

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Consider the main character, Jack. At the start of the story, what does he care about? How do his interests change by the end of the book? What causes him to change?
2. Who are the secondary characters in the story? Are they stereotypical characters, or are they unique and dynamic? Explain your answers.
3. Contrast Jack with his two best friends. How do their lives and character development differ? What important changes happen to each of them? Do the changes bring them closer together, or take them farther apart?
4. As Jack's interest in Tess grows, how do her interests influence his?
5. Explore the setting of the story. Look at Google Maps satellite images of the location and surrounding areas. How did the location of Lytton inform the story? Is the setting a character, too?
6. How does the setting influence the interests of the characters? Could the events of the story happen anywhere, or are they specific to the location?
7. Notice the colours of t-shirts in the story. How do they reflect the moods of the story?
8. Consider the point of view the author used to tell the story. Did she use first person, second person or third person? Does the POV shift in different parts of the story?

9. What is present tense, past tense and future tense? Does the tense shift in different parts? If so, give examples and explain why the author may have chosen to use different tenses.
10. What does Jack believe about trees in the story? What does he think about his father's work in forestry, and his friend Tess's biodiversity club?
11. Did you find contradictions in the story? If so, how? Does Jack contradict himself? Analyze any contradictions you find and decide if two things can both be true at the same time.
12. What is climate and what is weather? Define these two terms and note any differences.
13. Can people predict the weather? Can people predict the climate? If so, what methods are used?
14. Consider the age of the Earth. How long have people kept records of the weather and the overall climate of the Earth? What are some good sources to read about weather and climate?
15. How is the imagery of mountain lions used in the story?
16. Do all the characters in the story relate the same way to the wildfire and to its aftermath? If not, what may prompt different responses?
17. Find information regarding the First Nations peoples of the interior of British Columbia. What are their band names? How long have they inhabited the land? How did they survive on the land before settlers moved to the land?

18. Choose one Indigenous tribe and describe their ceremonies, their spiritual beliefs and their artistic practices. What are some artifacts that could be found in Kumsheen, or Lytton?
19. Research the earliest records available about Chinese Canadian railway workers. Can you find the photo of the *Last Spike* Jack wrote about? What were their living conditions like?
20. Compare living in the Thompson-Nicola Valley today with when rail companies built train tracks. How has the population changed? How have the lifestyles of the people changed? What kinds of developments made life easier? What kinds of developments have made life worse for people?
21. If you had to design a weather-proof house that uses clean energy, what would it look like, and what materials would you use?
22. Have you experienced a natural disaster? If so, what did you learn about yourself during the experience? What did you learn about the Earth, and about its processes?
23. Read about Lytton and their recovery process at Lytton.ca.

If you or someone you know has experienced trauma through wildfire or another natural disaster, speak with your parent, a teacher or school counsellor. There is help available.