English 11

Novel Study

***Three Day Road***

***By Joseph Boyden***

**Chapter Questions 16-21**

Three Day Road does not have numbered chapters. Instead each chapter has a name but no number. Some chapters feature Niska’s voice in the first person while some feature Xavier’s voice in the first person.

**Mamishihiwewin (‘Betrayal’)**

1. How is Chapter 16 (Betrayal) NOT a story about sex? Explain and provide a quotation in support of your response.

**Mistatimwak (‘Horses’)**

2. Explain the following quote:

*‘I can feel Auntie’s eyes on my actions, and I feel like a pathetic criminal under her gaze even though I know she does not judge me’* (p. 177)

3. While Elijah was learning to be a hunter in the bush, Xavier, as Elijah’s mentor, was much more competent in traditional bush skills. In this context, Elijah followed Xavier and Xavier was more prominent. Once in Europe to fight in the war, however, Elijah’s sense of confidence grows. How does this power shift between them affect Xavier? How does

4. Why does Xavier tell the story of the horses on the ship? Why does he kill the two horses?

**Omawahtonikew (‘Collector’)**

*‘We’ve been issued tall rubber boots that reach up to the thighs, but in many places these are not even tall enough and fill with water. A new expression to describe the condition of feet rotting in watery boots has appeared. When the soldiers see that their feet are black and swelling they call it trenchfoot’* (p. 199)

5. Explain how this quote demonstrates the ‘reality’ of war, rather than the ‘adventure’ that war is often described as, particularly by recruiters, government propaganda and officers on the homefront.

**Pahkonikewin (‘Skinning’)**

6. ‘Scalping’ has been identified as an Indian tradition, but its history is actually quite complex. For example, American settlers during the American Revolution scalped Indians, and even stripped Indian corpses of their skin. In this way, it must not be seen solely as an Indian practice. How does Boyden introduce ‘scalping’ in this chapter and would you say he refutes or perpetuates the stereotype of scalping and Indigenous peoples? Explain your answer (see ‘Fighter’ chapter, as well).

**Kimotowin (‘Stealing’)**

7. Why did Niska help Xavier escape the residential school?

*‘I was left alone, and being alone, I found it easy to pity myself. The seasons came and went, sometimes so quickly that I lost track of my own age, sometimes so slowly that I felt I would go mad’* (p. 214)

8. Niska is unlike other people, but she is also quite a lot like every human that exists. Explain with reference to the quotation above.

**Onatopaniw (‘Fighter)**

*‘His hands looked black in the dark, and I realize that they are covered with blood. ‘Did you cut the hair from them?’ I ask. ‘How did you know?’ he answers, excited like a young boy who’s taken his first grouse’ (p. 230).*

9. How has Elijah changed as a result of the war?