Monkey Beach Novel questions

After we finish reading the novel you will have to choose questions to answer from the following lists of questions. You must answer each of your chosen questions using specific information from the novel to provide a minimum of at least one specific reason, example and explanation to support your answers (C-/C level), however it would be better to have two (C+ to A level). Make sure you answer the questions completely, and in full sentences.

Make sure you use specific examples and details from the novel to support your answers, in addition to specifically explaining how those examples support your answer, otherwise you will not meet the minimum expectations for the learning outcomes.

The level of question difficulty will affect the mark you will receive. Answering easier questions well can still receive high marks, however you will need to show critical thinking and insight in your answers to receive the highest mark, which can be difficult if you choose easily answered questions.

You will need to choose the amount of questions shown below:

Instructions: You must do the number of questions listed for the grade you wish to receive, however, in order to achieve that grade your questions must also meet the level of achievement listed. In other words if you do A range questions you do not automatically get an A. They would also need to be completed at an A level.

*C range grade* - 8 questions from general questions (#1-28) and 8 questions from specific novel questions (#29-49).

*B range grade*- 10 questions from general questions (#1-28) and 10 questions from specific novel questions (#29-49).

*A range grade*-12 questions from general questions (#1-28) and 12 questions from specific novel questions (#29-49)

**General Questions for novel**

Easy

1. Who was your favourite or least favourite character and why?

2. What was your favourite or least favourite part of the book and why?

3. What is something that surprised you about one of the characters and why?

4. How would you rate this book on a scale of 1-10 and why?

5. Would you recommend this book to someone else? Why or why not?

6. Did any of the characters remind you of yourself or someone you know? How? Why?

7. What did you learn from, take away from, or get out of this book? Why?

8. Did your opinion of the book change as you read it? How? Why?

Medium

9. What motivates the central character’s actions? How? Why?

10. What is the one thing the writer makes you curious about? How? Why?

11. What are the main character’s most important traits? Why are these traits important?

12. What is the significance of the title? Would you have given the book a different title? If yes, what would it be and why? If no, why not?

13. What scene resonated most with you personally in either a positive or negative way? Why?

14. What surprised you the most about the book?

15. Pick an important or meaningful quote from the novel? Why is it important or meaningful?

16. Were there any moments where you disagreed with the choices of any of the characters? Explain what you would have done differently? Why?

17. Did you think the ending was appropriate? How would you have liked to have seen the ending go?

18. Have any of your views or thoughts changed after reading this book? How? Why?

Hard

19. By the end of the novel, has the character changed, in your opinion? In what ways? Do you see this change as being positive, negative, or a combination of both? Why? Explain.

20. Does the setting play an important role in the novel? Could the novel have been set in any other environment and been as effective? Why or why not?

21. What is a possible theme of this novel? Why? Give examples that support your opinion.

22. What literary elements does the writer use to help the reader understand the views of the character?

23. What have you learned about Indigenous peoples (Haisla people in particular) and the importance of culture and tradition? Why are they important?

24. How did the main character change in the novel? What did they learn about life and the role they play in it? How? Why?

25. What did you think of the structure and style of the writing? Was it well done or need improvement? Why? Give specific examples to support your answer.

26. What scene was the most pivotal for the book? How do you think the story would have changed had that scene not taken place? Why?

27. Were there any notable racial, cultural, traditions, gender, sexuality or socioeconomic factors at play in the book? If so, what? How did it effect the characters? Do you think they were realistically portrayed?

28. What was the most powerful part of the novel? How and why is it the most powerful part? Explain.

**Specific Novel questions**

1. Read the following passage from page 255, and discuss whether or not you agree with Aunt Trudy’s belief that the men would have “got off scot-free” for raping or killing Lisamarie, if it had happened. Be sure to support your position with connections to real life and the novel.

“Lisa,” Aunt Trudy said, “you got to be more careful.”

“About what?”

“Those guys could’ve killed you.”

“It was broad daylight,” I said. “And there were tons of witnesses. They wouldn’t have done anything.”

“Honey,” she said, “if you were some little white girl, that would be true. But you’re a mouthy Indian, and everyone thinks we’re born sluts. Those guys would have said you were asking for it and got off scot-free.”

1. Read the following passage from pages 288-289 and discuss why Lisamarie is encouraging Jimmy to talk to Karaoke. How does she deal with her own “love” issues?

“She’s so pretty,” he said.

“You aren’t dog food yourself,” I said. “Look, this is silly. Go over to her. Say hi. As her if she wants a pop or something. Life is short, Jim.”

“You think she’d go out with me?

“You’ll never know until you try.”

He stayed beside me, taking deep breaths. He stood, gave me a nervous smile, made it to the bottom of the bleachers, paused and turned around, annoying the anxious fans who hissed at him as he pushed his way through them back to me. Maybe it was better this way, I thought as he sheepishly sat beside me. If you never fall in love, you never get your heart broken.

1. At the end of this section (pp. 232-294), Ma-ma-oo dies. Discuss why Lisamarie has so much guilt connected to this. How does she deal with this loss?
2. Read the following passage from pages 295-296, and discuss the fusion of story and the modern world that Eden Robinson is exploring. How is this passage indicative of themes from this novel?

Weegit the raven has mellowed in his old age. He’s still a confirmed bachelor, but he’s not the womanizer he once was. Plying the stock market – instead of spending his time being a trickster – has paid off and he has a comfortable condo downtown. He plays up the angle about creating the world and humans, conveniently forgetting he did it out of boredom. Yes, he admits, he did steal the sun and the moon, but he insists he did it to bring light to humankind even though he did it so that it would be easier for him to find food. After doing some spin control on the crazy pranks of his youth, he’s become respectable. As he sips his low-fat mocha and reads yet another sanitized version of his earlier exploits, only his small, sly smile reveals how much he’s enjoying pulling the wool over everyone else’s eyes.

1. Read the following passage from pages 332-333. Compare the story of T’sonoqua to that of B’gwus. Why is this significant to the rest of the novel?

T’sonoqua is not as famous as B’gwus. She covers herself in a cloak and pretends to be an old woman. She will ask for your help, feigning a helpless shake in her hands as she leans on her cane. If you are moved to go close enough for her to see you with her poor vision, she will straighten to her true height, and the hands that grip you will be as strong as a man’s. She is an ogress, and she won’t let go because, to her, human flesh is the ultimate delicacy and young flesh is especially sweet. But discredited scientists and amateur sleuths aren’t hunting her. There are no conferences debating her existence. She doesn’t have her own beer commercials. She has a few amusing notes in some anthropology books. She is remembered in scattered campfire tales. But she is, by and large, a dim memory.

1. Read the following passage from pages 368-369 and discuss Lisamarie’s experiences in “the land of the dead” – both literal and figurative. Why do you think Eden Robinson chose to end the novel in this way?

I wake. The moss is soft and wet against my back. There is a dull aching pain in my hand. I lift it, and the cut is raw, but it has stopped bleeding, and all the blood has been licked away. Its tongue was scratchy, like a cat’s. “You said you would help me!” I yell, but my voice cracks, and I don’t know if they heard me, so I yell it again. They snigger. I push myself up with my right hand, cradling my left hand against my chest. The bushes rustle. “More,” a voice says from the shadows. I stand. “You tell me where Jimmy is first.”

1. This novel, like many novels by Indigenous authors, has an unresolved conclusion. Look up the definition of this literary term. Why do you think that Eden Robinson decided to have an unresolved conclusion? Predict what could happen after the author’s conclusion. Why do you think this could have happened? Use specific details from the novel to support your response.
2. What is the significance of the ocean in this book? Use specific examples to explain the significance.
3. Discuss the inter-generational role of residential schools in the lives of the characters in the novel. How does it affect people’s relationships and personalities? Why?
4. Would Lisa’s life be different if she had chosen Erica rather than Tab as her best friend during her childhood? Why or why not?
5. Speculate what happened to Jimmy using the clues in the novel as evidence. Explain your answer with specific details from the novel.
6. Alcohol and drugs play a prominent role in the story. Describe the role drugs and alcohol plays in the lives of different characters, how it affects them and why. (you can choose a specific character rather than talking about all of them)
7. Describe how Lisa’s relationship with her parents changes as she moves from childhood to adolescence. Why do you think this is? Explain.
8. Describe how Lisa and Jimmy’s relationship changes from childhood to adolescence. Why do you think this is? Explain.
9. Why did Lisa offer her own blood as an offering instead of finding a meat offering? Explain.
10. After you have read the book and formed conclusions about the ending, revisit Lisa’s dreams. Is there any rhyme or reason to them? Why? Explain.
11. What is the role of crows in the book? Why do you think this? Explain.
12. Lisa experiences a lot of grief and death in this novel, from the chickens in the backyard, to the deaths or her friends and family such as Uncle Mick, Ma-ma-oo, Tab and Pooch to her experiences with speaking to the dead with her supernatural gift. How do these experiences affect Lisa? Is the effect positive or negative? Why? Explain.
13. Pick a character in the novel that has a significant influence on Lisa. Explain how they influence her and why you think their influence is significant.
14. Explain how the death or either Uncle Mick or Ma-ma-oo affects Lisa. How does it affect/change her in terms of personality and growth as a person? Why?
15. After Ma-ma-oo returned from the hospital, Lisa started seeing spirits and there was a signal that there was going to be another death. Although the spirits tried to warn her, Lisa ignored the message. Why do you think she ignored the warning? Did any past event influence her decision?