



# Treasure Mountain

- - Critical Thinking Questions - -

## Building prior knowledge

1. Research Chamawa Indian School. Go to <http://www.chemawa.bie.edu/> for information. Why was this school created? What was its purpose? Who was the main population? When and why was the school moved to Salem from its original place of Forest Grove? What types of things did the children learn there?
2. What do YOU treasure?

## Chapter 1

1. What does Hoxie mean when he says the Grand Ronde Reservation is folded up? How did it get “folded up”?

## Chapter 2

1. When Hoxie and Irene reach Della’s house she only speaks to them in Chinook. What is Chinook and where did it come from? *Hint:* download the Chinuk Wawa app on your tablet or phone to learn more about it!
2. Irene refers to Della as an “old blanket indian”. What does she mean by that?
3. Based on Della’s interactions with the kids when they arrive at her house, how do you think she feels about them being there? Do you think she really wrote a letter inviting them to come or did something else happen?
4. Do you think the skunk represents anything? Why or why not?

## Chapter 3

1. How does Irene feel about Della? How do you know?
2. What are some everyday items you use and probably take for granted?
3. What does the word assimilate mean? Why would settlers want the tribes in Oregon to assimilate?
4. Why do you think Della never assimilated into the settler’s way of life?

## Chapter 4

1. Della lived off of the land. She set traps to catch her meat and gathered various plants and berries. Research different types of plants in Oregon that tribes used as a source of food. *Hint:* The read aloud will help gather information for this question.
2. Does the closing of Chemawa Indian School in the story coincide with the actual events of Chemawa?
3. Della didn't trust anyone but herself to carry the flour back from the store. Why do you think this is?

## Chapter 5

1. The tax man showed up to Della's house very abruptly. How would you have reacted towards his superior attitude towards one of your family members?
2. Do you feel that someone should have to pay taxes on a piece of land they've "owned" before settlers came? Why or why not?

## Chapter 6

1. What do you think the curse is that's inside the chest?

## Chapter 7

1. The letters on the two rocks are as follows:
  - a. ➡ TKSTA ++ 4 and an upside down 5
  - b. ⬆ DF + T (N or W) +
  - c. Can you make anything out of the code? What are your ideas?

## Chapter 8

1. The stories that Della tells are important in her beliefs. Why are these stories important to her and her culture?
2. What is the importance of oral storytelling to tribal people?
3. Do you believe Hoxie and Irene should be digging and searching for the chest? Why or why not?
4. Predict what the man will do now that Irene is stuck inside of his fence.

## Chapter 9

1. Why do you think the man of the property took a liking towards Irene and Hoxie?

## Chapter 10

1. How do you think Jim, the tax man, feels towards the Indian family? Why?
2. Della scorned Hoxie for singing a song that was not his. Why do you think she did this? Research the meaning of songs to the Grand Ronde Tribe.
3. Research different types of Oregon plants that can be used as medicines and how they are prepared.

## Chapter 11

1. How do you think Della knew of Hoxie's birthday?
2. What is your theory on how beeswax got where it was? Whose story do you believe Della's or the settlers? Why?

## Chapter 12

1. How do you think Della would react to Hoxie and Irene pursuing the chest?
2. What are Hoxie and Irene's intentions if they find the chest? Because of their intentions do you feel they are justified to be looking for a chest that Della disapproves of?
3. Were you disappointed to read that Hoxie had only found a beaver tunnel and not the chest? Why or why not?

## Chapter 13

1. Why do you think Della told the kids to beat on the drum? How would beating a drum make her feel better?
2. On page 157 Hoxie thinks to himself, "But as he looked at Della lying there, so gray and frightening, he was somehow ashamed of his thoughts."
  - a. *"Maybe she was a little queer in her beliefs. Maybe they weren't the same as his. But this was American. Everyone was entitled to his own views. If Della refused to accept the ways and teachings of the white man, no one could make her do it. What she believed were the things Hoxie's own grandparents and great grandparents had believed. And she had been kind to him in her own way."*

- b. What kind of realization did Hoxie have? What made him have this change of heart?
3. How did Della try and break the fever she had? Why was it so dangerous?

### Chapter 14

1. Based on what you know about Della, do you think she would have wanted to go to the hospital? Why or why not? Have you ever been in a similar situation?
2. Do you believe that Della and her husband were paid the money for their land and Della's husband hid the money before he passed? Why or why not? What are your other suspicions?

### Chapter 15

1. Based on chapter 15, does anything sound "fishy" about the transaction between Della's husband and Mr. Brandt? Why or why not?

### Chapter 16

1. Ted played the middle man between Della's husband and Mr. Brandt. Do you think he took the money and ran off with it? Why or why not?
2. How has Hoxie's perspective of Della's life changed since the beginning of the book and now in chapter 16? Give examples of how his perspective has changed.
3. How did the check end up in Della's box of sacred things?

### Chapter 17 and 18

1. Hoxie and Irene came to their great aunt Della's not knowing what to expect. How did they feel once they arrived at Della's house? How do they feel now about Della and her home? What changed all of their feelings?
2. What was the treasure that Hoxie and Irene came to find?
3. Get creative and rewrite the ending of Treasure Mountain.