

Sign of the Beaver Discussion

Chapter 1

1. Why was Matt alone in the cabin? (His father had gone back to Quincy to bring the rest of the family to Maine.)
2. Where did he live before and where does he live now? (Quincy; Maine)
3. How old is he? (12)
4. Do you think he's too young for this responsibility? (Yes!)

Chapter 2

5. Why did the days go by so quickly while he was alone? What kinds of things did he do? (He did many chores like hunting, fishing, gardening)
6. In Matt's opinion, what was one of the "annoyances" in the Maine territory? (Indians)

Chapter 3

7. Who was Matt's visitor in Chapter 3, and what did he want? (Ben; meal and place to sleep)
8. What did Ben steal? (his father's gun)

Chapter 4

9. While he was fishing for trout, what happened in his cabin? (bear attack)

Chapter 5

10. After the bee incident, who rescued Matt? (Attean & Saknis)

Chapter 6

11. Because of Matt's injury, what did Saknis, the elder Indian, make for Matt? (a crutch)
12. Who did he bring with him, and what was the attitude of the other Indian? (Attean; grumpy)
13. Because of his lost boot, what else did Saknis bring Matt? (moccasins)
14. What gift did Matt give Saknis? (Robinson Crusoe book)
15. What treaty did Saknis create? (You teach; Attean bring food)
16. Why did Saknis want Attean to learn to read? (To learn white man's signs to read the treaties)

Chapter 7

17. What was Attean's initial attitude about the reading lessons? (grumpy)
18. How long did Attean think it should take to learn to read? (a month)

Chapter 8

19. Where did he begin the story about Robinson Crusoe, and did Attean actually listen? (shipwreck; yes)

Chapter 9

20. What was the first thing that Attean taught Matt? (snares)
21. Why did Attean object to the part in Robinson Crusoe about the "rescue of Friday"? (Friday kneeled to him and offered to be his slave)

Chapter 10

22. What was the relationship between Friday and Crusoe in the book, and how is Crusoe paralleling *The Sign of the Beaver*? What was the first thing Attean suggested that made the boys more like friends or companions? (Fishing)
23. Contrast the ways the Attean and Matt fish? (Attean used a spear, and Matt used a fishing pole)

24. What did Attean show Matt about fishing? (how to make hooks)
25. What meal did the boys share after fishing, and how did Matt compliment the chef? (fish; best fish I ever ate)
26. In most cultures, sharing a meal signifies what? (friendship)

Chapter 11

27. What pet did Attean have, what was his name, and what was the pet's disposition? (dog, no name, grumpy)
28. What does the "sign of the beaver" on the tree mean? (the land belongs to the beaver clan)
29. How did Attean teach Matt not to get lost in the forest? (to leave not-so-obvious signs)

Chapter 12

30. What weapon did Attean help Matt make? (A bow)

Chapter 13

31. What had happened to the fox in the woods? (caught in a trap)
32. Why did Attean want to leave the fox? (Because it was on turtle territory)
33. Who do you think was learning more? Matt or Attean? (Matt)

Chapter 14

34. After he finished Robinson Crusoe, what did Matt read to Attean? (The Bible)
35. What myth did Attean share that paralleled the Bible? (Noah and the flood)

Chapter 15

36. "On the day of their greatest adventure," what or whom did they encounter? (A Bear)
37. What did they do to the bear, and what did Attean tell the bear afterward? (Killed it; he apologized for killing it)
38. What compliment did Attean tell Matt that day? (You move quick like an indian)

Chapter 16

1. What reason brought Matt to Attean's village? What do you remember about the visit? (bear ceremony)
2. What was the agenda for the ceremony? (story, dance, feast, more dance)

Chapter 17

3. Why couldn't Attean go on the deer hunt? (no gun)
4. What happened to Attean's mother and father? (killed by white man while picking berries; father went to avenger her death and never returned)

Chapter 18

5. In Chapter 18, he counted ten sticks. How many days had gone by? In which month was his family supposed to return, and what month did he presume it to be? (70; August; September)
6. What did Matt find in the trap? (Attean's dog)
7. Since he couldn't free Attean's dog, what did he do next? (go to the village)
8. Who helped him rescue the dog, and what did she do with the blanket? (Attean's sister; so the dog couldn't see what she was doing)

Chapter 19

9. Why did grandmother invite Matt to the village? (he rescued the dog)
10. What did Matt almost lose to gambling? (his shirt)
11. What was "almost as good as being back in Quincy"? (playing with Indian boys)

Chapter 20

12. What was “manitou,” and why did Attean want to find it? (manhood; he wanted to hunt)

Chapter 21

13. What did Saknis offer Matt, and what was Matt’s response? (Live with Indians; no)

Chapter 22

14. How did Matt gain Attean’s respect? (by waiting for his family)

15. What gifts did Matt receive from Saknis, grandmother, and Attean? (snowshoes; maple sugar; dog)

16. Where was Attean’s tribe going and why? (west; more white man in Maine)

17. What did Attean think of land ownership? (man does not own land like animals do not own land)

18. What gift did Matt give to Attean? (his father’s watch)

Chapter 23

19. In preparation for the winter and the coming of his family, what kind of things did Matt make? (cradle, broom, stored food, shovel, doll for Sarah,

Chapter 24

20. As he sat down to read Robinson Crusoe, why did Matt feel content in his cabin? (warm fire, fend for himself)

Chapter 25

21. Who shows up in the last chapter? (his family)

22. What delayed them? (typhus)

23. What happened to the baby? (lived only five days)

24. Did Matt find his own “manitou,” and if so, who confirms it? (yes, his father tells him that he’s “done a man’s job” and that he’s proud)