

Red Weather: Discussion Questions for Readers

1. Neva's acknowledged reason for traveling to Central America is to look for her parents. What other reasons might she have? What reasons does she have to stay?
2. Identity is one of Neva's important struggles. What different identities does she inhabit over the course of the novel? Do these different identities ever conflict with each other?
3. Why is Neva so reluctant to accept friendship with Deb and Kira?
4. What kinds of love are portrayed in this novel? What role does love play a role in the decisions that Neva makes?
5. Did the novel change or challenge your ideas about the lives of Native Americans in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries?
6. During the course of this novel, Coatepeque's seasons change from dry to rainy. How does this change in weather affect Neva? The country as a whole?
7. The earthquake is a pivotal point to the conflict of the novel. What does it do to the country physically, politically? Does it affect Neva? How? Have you ever experienced a literal or figurative earthquake (or another type of natural disaster)? How has it affected your life?
8. Do you think Neva's parents were right in their choice to try to end the sterilization of Native American women, even though their actions, however inadvertently, resulted in the death of a young Indian man?
9. When Neva made the trip to La Loma, what did you expect her to discover?
10. Kira says to Neva, "Live a long life. Never look back." Do you think that this is good advice? Why or why not? Do you think that Neva will follow this advice? Could you follow it after having the kinds of experiences that she has had?