

I SURVIVED

BOOK CLUB

Name: _____

I Survived The California Wildfires, 2018



CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS AND ESSAY ASSIGNMENT

CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS:

1. How does Josh feel about his father? How do you know? How do you think he feels when he sees his father in handcuffs?

2. What does Josh think about Greg saying Josh's dad won't have to go to jail for too long? What's happening in that scene? What doesn't Josh know yet?

3. What can you infer about Aunt Nicole and Holly based on the fact that Bubbles and King Kong live with them, and why?

4. In your own words, explain the 100-year-old policy in America regarding fighting wildfires. What's the problem with this policy?

5. What do Lucas and Eleanor mean when they talk about surviving the River Complex Fire and feeling like there's an "invisible rope" connecting them to the other members of their team?



CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS AND ESSAY ASSIGNMENT *(CONTINUED)*

6. When Josh runs into the woods, he feels like he's been tricked by his parents. How does Holly help him through these feelings? What does she tell him, and how does it connect to King Kong?

7. Why do you think all the animals are heading in the same direction when they're fleeing from the fire? What does this say about their instincts?

8. How does Holly's understanding of animals help save her and Josh from the fire?

9. Why does the feeling of being left behind by Lucas—when he brings Holly up to the helicopter first—hurt Josh more than his burns? Why does Holly get to go up first?

10. Why is it hard for Josh and Holly to say goodbye? How is this connected to a story that Eleanor and Lucas told them?

ESSAY ASSIGNMENT: Answer the organizer questions on the next page to help you brainstorm a two-paragraph essay about how Josh "sheds his skin" in this story, just like King Kong. Then use the information from your organizer to write your short essay.

CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS AND ESSAY ASSIGNMENT *(CONTINUED)*

TWO-PARAGRAPH ESSAY ORGANIZER FOR *I SURVIVED THE CALIFORNIA WILDFIRES, 2018*

First, answer the questions below to brainstorm ideas for your first paragraph:

What is Josh like at the beginning of the book? What does he believe about his dad?

List the two big things that happen to Josh—one involving his dad, one involving the fire—that change him, for your second paragraph:

1. _____

2. _____

Next, answer the questions below to write a concluding statement for the end of your second paragraph, explaining how Josh shed his skin like King Kong.

What does Josh realize about himself after these two big things happen to him? How is he different at the end of the book from the beginning of the book?

Now, write your essay on the back of this page or on a computer using your answers above.

ANSWERS

CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS:

1. Josh looks up to his father and wants to make him proud. I know this because he's excited to tell his father that he made the winning point in the game. When he sees his father in handcuffs, he feels like someone must have made a mistake, because his father never could have done anything to deserve that.
2. Josh thinks that Greg is making a dumb joke, but Greg knows or suspects something that Josh doesn't know, which is that Josh's dad did do something wrong, and he is going to go to jail for it.
3. I can infer that Aunt Nicole and Holly are caring people who love animals, because they have turned their home into a small reptile shelter since reptiles aren't accepted at the local town shelter.
4. For the last hundred years, the policy in America has been to fight wildfires no matter what. The problem is that some forests need wildfires to burn dead trees and brush. Then strong, new trees that survived the fire can get even stronger and healthier.
5. Eleanor and Lucas feel like they are tied to the people with whom they fought the River Complex Fire because they experienced something scary together, and they helped each other get through it. They have a shared experience that other people haven't, and because of that, they now have a special bond.
6. Holly helps Josh through his feelings by telling him about when her father died, and how her whole life changed. She says she got used to it, and it felt like she had shed her skin, which is what King Kong does earlier in the book.
7. The animals are heading in the same direction because they have good instincts. Their instincts are leading them toward the river, which is the safest place to be.
8. Because Holly knows that animals have good instincts, she realizes that she and Josh should follow them. Then she realizes that the animals are heading for the river, which might provide safety for them too. When the deer leaps over the flames into the water, she figures out that they can use the zip line to do that too.
9. It hurts Josh to be left behind because he's scared, and he doesn't want to be alone in the water. But he knows that Holly is badly hurt and needs more help than he does, which is why she gets to go up first.
10. It's hard for Josh and Holly to say goodbye because they now have a special bond, after surviving the fire together. This is like what Eleanor and Lucas told them about the bond they share with the people who fought the River Complex Fire with them.

ESSAY ASSIGNMENT: Answers will vary but should include how, at the beginning of the book, Josh believes his father is innocent. After learning that his father is not innocent, and he and Holly help each other survive the wildfire, Josh is able to move forward with the knowledge that he can handle difficult and scary things.