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# *The Marrow Thieves* Discussion Guide

## Book Summary

In a futuristic world ravaged by global warming, people have lost the ability to dream, and the dreamlessness has led to widespread madness. The only people still able to dream are North America's Indigenous people, and it is their marrow that holds the cure for the rest of the world. But getting the marrow, and dreams, means death for the unwilling donors. Driven to flight, a fifteen-year-old and his companions struggle for survival, attempt to reunite with loved ones, and take refuge from the "recruiters" who seek them out to bring them to the marrow-stealing "factories."

## Themes

Cyclical histories, Language, Indigenous oppression, Family, Coming of age, Humans and nature, Trauma, Identity

## Reader Discussion Questions

1. Is *The Marrow Thieves* a coming-of-age story?
2. What did you think of the pacing and frequent use of stories?
3. *The Marrow Thieves* describes an apocalyptic not-so-distant future in which the world has been ravaged by global warming. Do you think this kind of future could plausibly happen in the real world? Why or why not?
4. Oneirology is the scientific study of dreams, and in the book, the plague prevents people from dreaming—except for Indigenous people. As a result, Indigenous people are being hunted for their bone marrow. In the novel, why do you think Indigenous people are immune to the plague that prevents people from dreaming?
5. There were three main romantic love stories in the novel: between Frenchie and Rose, Chi-Boy and Wab, and Miigwans and Isaac. Did you find the love stories believable? Why or why not?
6. Why does Frenchie keep his hair long and wear it in braids?
7. Who is Cherie Dimaline? Why do you think she has written this story?
8. What is the significance of Minerva's story of the Rogarou?
9. What do you think of the ending? Was it satisfying?

10. Was there anything you wanted to read more about or unanswered questions you had at the end of the novel? What do you think will happen next? Verify your thoughts by reading the sequel, *Hunting by Stars* published October, 2021.
11. Having read the novel, what do you think of the cover art? Does it do a good job of teasing at what the content of the book will be?
12. How is the future depicted in *The Marrow Thieves* informed by actual history of Indigenous peoples in North America?

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## About Rogue Reads

Rogue Reads is a community reading program designed to promote literacy and intergenerational book-centered discussion and to foster a sense of community by bringing people together through literature. Rogue Reads aims to engage Jackson County residents in dialogue and bring the community together by promoting tolerance and understanding about differing points of view. Rogue Reads is made possible with the support of the Jackson County Library Foundation.

The book selections for 2021-22 include *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer for adults, *The Marrow Thieves* by Cherie Dimaline for teens, *Indian No More* by Charlene Willing McManis for tweens, and *We Are Water Protectors* by Carole Lindstrom, Illustrated by Michaela Goade for children.

### Join JCLS for Rogue Reads programming related to *The Marrow Thieves*, including:

- **Take & Make Kit: Dream Journals** in December (check branch for dates)
- **Human Trafficking 101** on Thursday, January 13 • 5:00–6:30 PM (online)
- **Tea Time Tuesday** on Tuesday, January 18 • 4:00–5:30 PM (Medford Library)
- **Traditional Birch Bark Art** on Wednesday, January 19 • 4:00–5:00 PM (online)
- **Tween Book Club** on Saturday, January 22 • 2:00–3:00 PM (online)
- **Cree Mittens Craft** on Wednesday, January 26 • 4:00–5:00 PM (online)
- **Fishnet Charms Craft** on Wednesday, February 2 • 4:00–5:00 PM (online)
- **Introduction to Outdoor Survival** on Saturday, February 19 • 1:00–2:00 PM (Ashland Library)
- **Make a Survival Bracelet** on Saturday, February 26 • 1:00–2:00 PM (Ashland Library)

**Don't miss the virtual author talk with *Braiding Sweetgrass* author Robin Wall Kimmerer on Wednesday, February 23 at 5 PM. Pre-registration required. Learn more [jcls.org/roguereads](https://jcls.org/roguereads).**