

## BLM 3 – *Indian Horse: Reader Response Questions*

### Section 1 – Chapters 1-10 (pp. 1-42)

1. Read the following passage from page 11 and discuss how Saul’s mother becomes lost because of her children being taken away. How does this impact Saul?

*She was lost to me then. I could see that. She was gaunt and drained from days of weeping, a tent of skin over her bones. When Benjamin disappeared he carried a part of her away with him, and there was nothing anyone could do to fill it. My father tried. He never left her side for weeks. But now that she had lost two children, she would not speak of anything except “the school”.*

2. At the end of Chapter 10, Saul is left completely alone. Who has he lost? Why has this happened? How do you think all of these losses will impact him?
3. Pick your favourite passage from what you have read so far. How does the passage you have chosen relate to the plot of the novel up to this point? How is the passage you have chosen connected to the theme of “lost people”? Discuss.

### Section 2 – Chapters 11-22 (pp. 43-86)

1. Discuss what the game of hockey means to Saul. How does it help him survive at residential school?
2. What does “Zhaunagush” mean? Why do the other children at the residential school call Saul a “Zhaunagush”? What impact does this name have on him?
3. Describe the relationship between Saul and Father Leboutelier. How does the priest help Saul?

### Section 3 – Chapters 23-31 (pp. 87-136)

1. What does being on the Manitouwadge Moose hockey team mean to Saul? How does he become connected to the other players? Why do they make him prove himself?
2. Read the following passage from page 114 and discuss how Saul’s life changes living with Fred and Martha Kelly:

*At home I was asked to help out with household chores. I’d been trained to work at St. Jerome’s. Anything the Kellys asked me to do, I did smartly and well. The first time they thanked me for my efforts I had no words.*

3. Discuss the experience of the team in the café in Chapeau. How are the boys treated? Why does this happen? What do you think it would be like to experience this kind of racism?

**Section 4 – Chapters 32-43 (pp. 137-178)**

1. Compare the hockey game in Espanola with Saul’s experience in White River. How do the racist taunts affect the team?
2. In Chapter 39, Saul recounts a story of two sisters at the residential school. Describe the story. How is this story symbolic of Saul’s experience in Toronto?
3. Read the following passage from page 178 and discuss why Saul choose to become “lost” at this point in his life:

*“I’m just moving on. Time for a change.”*

*He levelled a long look at me. “We’re supposed to be teammates. Wingers. You. Me.*

*Nobody wins alone, Saul.”*

*“I’m used to alone.”*

*“You’re used to thinking you’re alone. Big difference.”*

*“I’m not disappearing,” I said.*

*He shook his head sadly, “Seems like you already did.”*

**Section 5 – Chapters 44-55 (pp. 179-221)**

1. Discuss the connection Saul makes with Erv Sift. How does this relationship help Saul? Why does he leave without saying goodbye?
2. Discuss Saul’s struggle with alcoholism. How does the drinking begin? How does he deal with it? Why do you think this is included in the novel?
3. Saul makes visits to St. Jerome’s and Gods Lake – two very significant places. What does he remember in each of these places? Why are these visits so important to Saul?
4. When Saul returns to Manitouwadge, he is welcomed. How is he welcomed? What does this welcome mean to him? How is returning to Manitouwadge a part of Saul’s healing process?