

Discussion Questions

for

The Prize: Tales From a Revolution - Vermont

Chapters 1-5

- What conflicts predating the Revolution have touched the Clark family, and how do the memories of those events affect the attitudes of the members of the family as fighting breaks out?
- How do the early hostilities between the Colonies and the British directly impact those living around the shores of Lake Champlain?
- How is Caleb's relationship with Samuel defined as the story opens?

Chapters 6-10

- As Caleb's role within the settlement changes, how do the attitudes toward him of his neighbors and family change?
- When Polly and Elijah share an unspoken understanding over his experience in battle, what have they come to share?
- How do Polly's prejudices against all things French affect Caleb's interactions with Captain Mallett?

Chapters 11-15

- Without the near-tragedy between them, would Caleb and Captain Mallett's relationship have continued to grow, or would it have remained relatively distant?
- How does Polly's role in the Clark household defy the conventions of the time? How does Elijah's role reinforce these conventions?
- When the Continental Congress' Declaration of Independence reaches the settlement, why does it cause Polly such distress?

Chapters 16-20

- How does Captain Mallett's past constrain his role in the events of the present war?
- What does Caleb's reaction to Captain Mallett's history reveal about his character?
- Does Elijah's advice to Caleb reflect his own behavior, and will it be possible for Caleb to follow it?
- How do Caleb's interactions with John and Elias cement his full transition into adulthood?

Chapters 21-25

- How do the Malletts show Caleb that his actions were understandable and right, no matter how much he feels stained by them?
- In what way are the larger events of the war echoed by the events unfolding in the settlement?
- How is the empty house symbolic of the characters' emotional emptiness?

Chapters 26 & 27, Afterword

- How does Caleb's heroism solidify Captain Mallett's opinion of him?
- As the war winds onward, are the sacrifices made by each of the characters proven to have been worthwhile?
- In what ways did the events on Lake Champlain affect the overall outcome of the American Revolution?