

A Curriculum Guide for

The Wolf Chronicles, Book 2: *Secrets of the Wolves*

By Dorothy Hearst

Discussion Questions for Grades 7–10

The questions below correlate to the following Common Core Standards: (RL.7–10.1, 2, 3, 4) (RL.8.5) (RL.7–8.6)

1. Kaala's relationship with Ruuqo and Rissa is complicated, and often fraught with tension. Discuss how their perceptions of each other change throughout the course of the novel, and compare it to their relationship in *Promise of the Wolves*.
2. Kaala says to Torell: "Ruuqo and Rissa wouldn't betray a promise. They told Zorindru they would help us, and they won't go back on their word." Do you think it was a mistake for Kaala to have absolute faith in Ruuqo's ability to do what was right (as opposed to what was easy)? Were you surprised by Ruuqo's ultimate decision to agree to Milsindra's offer, even after Kaala informs them of the revelation that they are indeed meant to be the guardians of the humans?
3. With Tlitoo's aid, Kaala observes several dreams, one of which is Ruuqo's dream about his brother, Hiiln, and one of which is Kivdru's dream, where Kaala finally meets Indru. Discuss the importance of these two dreams.
4. In *Secrets of the Wolves*, Kaala loses three dear friends who were integral in helping and supporting her attempt to bring peace to the Wide Valley: Trevegg, Yllin, and NiaLi. How do you think this loss will affect the future of the pack and Kaala's plans? What has Kaala learned from each of the three throughout the course of the book?
5. Kaala refuses to kill DavRian because it goes against the promise of the Wide Valley. Do you think she should have killed DavRian when she had the chance? Or do you agree with Trevegg's assessment that it was the easy thing, but not the right thing, to do?
6. When Kaala refuses to kill DavRian, Jandru calls her *drelshan*, but does not tell her what it means. If *drelshik* means bad luck, what do you think *drelshan* means? Do you think Jandru has finally realized that Kaala is meant to be the savior (and not the destroyer, as many suspect)?
7. "I wanted much to bite down on that arm, to show HuLin I was not a wolf to be bullied. But I had a more important task to think about. I forced my fur to stay flat, my lips to remain relaxed over my teeth." Kaala goes against her nature, forcing herself to be subservient to HuLin, in her attempt to achieve the human tribe's trust. Discuss this decision. Do you feel that Kaala is missing the bigger picture by dismissing subservience as a means to an end?

8. The triangle between Kaala, Ázzuen, and Pell is central to this book. Discuss how the dynamic of their relationship is both a help and a hindrance to Kaala's plans. Which wolf do you feel would make a better mate for Kaala?

9. Dorothy Hearst writes about human behavior through the eyes of another creature: Did this make you think about human actions or decisions in a new or different light? How are we like the wolves? How are we different?

10. Power, and the balance of power, play an important role in every relationship throughout the novel. How does each character, at one point or another, manipulate or abuse their power in attempt to achieve a particular end? Discuss the idea of power in the broader sense (for example, between wolves and humans, Greatwolves and wolves, pack leaders and their packs, or even ravens and wolves) and in terms of several key relationships such as the one between Ruuqo and Rissa, Tlitoo and Kaala, or among Kaala, Ázzuen, and Marra. How is the power hierarchy helpful? How is it detrimental?

11. After Unnan leaves, Trevegg advises Kaala: "If you wish to be a leaderwolf someday, Kaala, you had better learn how to get along with wolves you don't like. You never know which wolves will serve you well." Do you agree this is a lesson Kaala should take more to heart? Discuss this idea in relation to characters such as Ruuqo or Torell.

12. Torell says: "I think protecting oneself at the cost of one's freedom is a fool's choice." Do you agree or disagree with his judgment? Why or why not? Do you think Kaala agrees?

13. Choose one adjective you think best describes the character of Kaala and share it with the group. Were you surprised by how others in your group perceived her? What are her strengths and her weaknesses? How are your perceptions of these altered throughout the story? How do you think she herself changed throughout the story?

14. The title of the novel is *Secrets of the Wolves*. Discuss the various secrets that were revealed throughout the book. Which was most surprising or unexpected to you?

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