

Blue Jasmine by Kashmira Sheth

Discussion Questions

1. When Papa asked Seema if she would like to live in Iowa, she answered, "I don't know." What did you think of her answer? How would you answer if your father told you at the end of 5th grade that *you* were moving to another country?
2. On page 4 Seema wonders if Mommy was scared about the move. What do you think?
3. Pretend you are Seema's friend and she asked you whether it would be better to stay with her cousins in India or go with her parents and sister to America. What would you say?
4. Dadaji said that when someone goes away it is harder for the people left behind. Do you agree? Why or why not?
5. Please read the middle paragraph on page 32. What do you think of this description of America?
6. Did you see any examples of kindness? If so, what were they?
7. Could we please list some differences between Seema's life in India and in Iowa?
8. Mommy told Seema to be thoughtful and kind and friends will follow as clouds follow the wind. What do you think of Mommy's advice for a first day at a new school? Is there anything you would add?
9. Did your opinion of a character change during the story?
10. Did you feel sorry for anyone in the story? If so, could you tell us about it?
11. Seema learned that Americans say "pulling your leg" sometimes when they mean teasing. What other expressions do we have that would be new to Seema?
12. On page 71 Raju gave Seema clues about a gift he has for her. At that point in the story what did you think it was?
13. If you moved to a different country with just your immediate family, who would you like to bring with you also?
14. What did you think of Carrie when you first met her? Why did you think she acted that way?
15. Did anything in the story make you angry?
16. Dadima has several sayings such as "show compassion, and you will be showered with love." Is there a wise person in your life who teaches you such things? Would you be willing to share one of the things you have learned?
17. Why do you think the author chose the title? Could the blue jasmine be a symbol for Seema? You might want to re-read page 119 where she decided to call hyacinths blue jasmine and page 127 where she draws this flower next to her signature.

18. Seema was wondering if she should invite Carrie to her birthday party. Near the bottom of page 131 she gives a reason to invite her. What would Dadima say about this?
19. When Seema wondered if Carrie was just pretending to be a friend before the party, what did you think? Did you think that Carrie had really changed?
20. Seema tells Mukta that getting used to an American school is like a chutes and ladders game. Have you ever experienced something like that?
21. Did anything in this book surprise you?