

Book Club Discussion Guide



Beyond the Orange Shirt Story by Phyllis Webstad, Page 1 (April 2022)

Beyond the Orange Shirt Story

By Phyllis Webstad

About the author:

Phyllis Webstad (nee Jack) is Northern Secwepemc (Shuswap) from the Stswecem'c Xgat'tem First Nation (Canoe Creek Indian Band). She comes from mixed Secwepemc and Irish/French heritage. She was born in Dog Creek and lives in Williams Lake, BC, Canada. In 2018 Phyllis Webstad launched her children's book called "The Orange Shirt Story" to share her story in her own words. The Orange shirt story tells the story of young Phyllis having her orange shirt taken away on her first day of residential school and never to see it again. A simple orange shirt has become a conversation starter for all aspects of residential school across Canada and beyond. Phyllis has inspired thousands and thousands of people to honour residential school survivors and their families and share the call on September 30th of each year that "EVERY CHILD MATTERS." Phyllis is well respected for her work, her courage and for striving to heal our communities and Nation through speaking her truth.

Source: Publisher's website: (<https://medicinewheel.education/>)

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About this book:

Beyond the Orange Shirt Story is a unique collection of truths that articulate the lives and experiences of some Residential School Survivors and their families. Compiled by Phyllis Webstad, Residential School Survivor and Founder of the Orange Shirt Day movement, this book will give readers an up-close look at what life was like for many Survivors — before, during, and after their Residential School experiences. These personal Survivor accounts, relayed in a number of one on one interviews, are authentically shared in their own voices.

Source: <https://medicinewheel.education/>

Discussion Questions:

(General nonfiction questions to get book club discussions off to a good start.)

1. If your book offers a cultural portrait—of life in another country or region of your own country, start with questions a, b, and c:

a. What observations are made in the book? Does the author examine economics and politics family traditions, the arts, religious beliefs, language or food?

b. Does the author criticize or admire the culture? Does he/she wish to preserve or change the way of life? Either way, what would be risked or gained?

c. What is different from your own culture? What do you find most surprising, intriguing or difficult to understand?

2. What is the central idea discussed in the book? What issues or ideas does the author explore? Are they personal, sociological, global, political, economic, spiritual, medical, or scientific?

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3. Do the issues affect your life? How so—directly, on a daily basis, or more generally? Now or sometime in the future?
4. What evidence does the author use to support the book's ideas? Is the evidence convincing...definitive or...speculative? Does the author depend on personal opinion, observation, and assessment? Or is the evidence factual—based on science, statistics, historical documents, or quotations from (credible) experts?
5. What kind of language does the author use? Is it objective and dispassionate? Or passionate and earnest? Is it biased, inflammatory, sarcastic? Does the language help or undercut the author's premise?
6. What are the implications for the future? Are there long- or short-term consequences to the issues raised in the book? Are they positive or negative...affirming or frightening?
7. What solutions does the author propose? Are the author's recommendations concrete, sensible, doable? Who would implement those solutions?
8. How controversial are the issues raised in the book? Who is aligned on which sides of the issues? Where do you fall in that line-up?
9. Talk about specific passages that struck you as significant—or interesting, profound, amusing, illuminating, disturbing, sad...? What was memorable?
10. What have you learned after reading this book? Has it broadened your perspective about a difficult issue—personal or societal? Has it introduced you to a culture in another country...or an ethnic or regional culture in your own country?

Source: LitLovers (<http://www.litlovers.com>)