

## **ALASKA BUSH PILOT DOCTOR**

**By Naomi Gaede-Penner**

1. Why did Doc choose to go to Alaska to practice medicine? What do you think influences a person's choice of career? What influenced yours?
2. What are words you'd use to describe Doc's character and personality? Do you know anyone who reminds you of him?
3. (Chp. 2) Notice how the author mixes Alaska facts with the conversations and drama. How does this build excitement? How is the action stalled? Do you find this annoying or intriguing?
4. What did Doc learn from his first moose hunt? Have you been hunting? What did *you* learn? If you haven't hunted, why would you want to? Not want to? How do you feel about the hunting descriptions throughout the book? Were they too detailed? Did they add or distract from the story?
5. (Chp. 5) Variation in sentence length adds interest in a story. In the middle of page 46, the author uses short, clipped words: "No moose. No sound. No movement." Why do you think she used this style rather than a rambling sentence?
6. Tuberculosis was a deadly epidemic in Alaska during the early 1900s. What diseases are prevalent in the world today? How has a life-threatening or incapacitating disease affected you or your family? If you could eliminate one disease, what would it be? Explain.
7. What were some of the challenges Doc faced as the only physician at the Tanana hospital and along much of the Yukon River?
8. What do you learn about Doc's wife and children in this book? Why do you think the author didn't provide more information? Who *would* you like to know more about?
9. (Chp. 8) How do feuds get started? Have you ever been in a dispute where you feared for your safety? What did you do? What are appropriate ways to resolve differences and anger? What fuels tensions? How can people learn to handle conflict without violence?
10. What purpose do the flashbacks serve?
11. (Chp.14) "How could he go home, the only boy that evening without the trophy-wound to prove his manhood among his peers?" What do you think this means? What might be a "trophy" symbol for a young person today? Would it be different for a boy than a girl? What might symbolize manhood or womanhood today?

12. (Chp. 18) When a writer describes people who may be viewed as “different,” or as “novel,” they can feel exploited, put on display, misrepresented, or ridiculed. Or, they can feel honored, respected, and affirmed for their traditions and values.
- What makes the difference?
  - How might the Anaktuvuk villagers feel if they were to read this chapter?
  - Would you make changes if you were to rewrite it? What would those be?
13. Doc and his family got to know and appreciate people of a different culture. Describe a time when you were with someone of a dissimilar nationality, culture, or region. How did you feel? How did you relate to him or her? What was difficult for you? What did you learn about yourself?
14. (Chp. 22) What is “blind faith”? Have you ever experienced it? How did it turn out? Explain.
15. What was your favorite story? Why?
16. What would be *your* prescription for adventure? After reading *Alaska Bush Pilot Doctor*, what are you motivated to do?
- Try an extreme sport
  - Do something outside your comfort zone
  - Explore the unknown – wilderness, mountain top, ocean, third-world country, inner city
  - Do some kind of volunteer service
  - Live in an environment conducive to adventures
  - Use your natural abilities and individual passions with the result of an adventure
  - Read more adventure stories
  - Try something new
  - Pursue some activity or trip that you’ve been thinking about
  - Watch for the extraordinary to pop into an ordinary day
  -

Don't be left out! Live life like an adventure!