

*FROM 'A' is FOR ANAKTUVUK:  
TEACHER TO THE NUNAMIUT ESKIMOES*

**By Naomi Gaede Penner**

Many of the questions are general rather than chapter-specific. You may find it helpful to look over the questions before you begin reading, and then refer to them as you complete each chapter. Pick and choose the ones that best fit your interests, your family, or your book group. Keep a notebook and jot down your responses as you go throughout the book.

1. What was one of the first incidences where Anna stretched herself from familiar and comfortable way of life?
2. What is a comfort zone? What comfort zones did Anna move herself out from or into? What were the results for her personally, as well as for individuals around her?  
Discuss.
  - a. Personal conveniences
  - b. Work and career
  - c. Friends and family
  - d. Environment
  - e. Roles and responsibilities
  - f. Other\_\_\_\_\_
3. What comfort zones would be challenged if you were to have lived in her situations? What comfort zones have you moved from in the past five years? What were your feelings? Your fears? Responses by other people to your decisions?
4. Anna is portrayed as whole-heartedly embraces by the Natives in Tanana and in Anaktuvuk. What might have been other reactions by the people? Why?
5. How did Valdez and Tanana prepare her for Anaktuvuk Pass?

6. Discuss what it would be like if you were without roads, air travel, or boat travel – and without television, radio, internet, and phone service?
7. What part did getting mail play in Anna's life? Relationally? Emotionally? Mentally?
8. Anna was the first permanent school teacher for the Nunamiut Eskimos. What qualities did she have that enabled her to carry through with the responsibilities this required?
9. Anna faced a number of disturbing issues, including but not limited to high infant mortality, lack of accessible healthcare, primitive economy, community hunger, and survival in a harsh environment. Not only did she step forward to be the school teacher, but she became inextricably involved in the community. Review how the above issues and others you can identify were ameliorated because of her presence and concern. Do you think Simon Paneak and the elders had any idea how wide-reaching their demands for a school would be? Why? Why not? How?
10. What qualities do you think the Nunamiuts had to survive in their way of life and culture? What would you consider "unsurvivable" in a situation?
11. What draws people together in difficult and demanding environments?
12. Why was Anna drawn farther north?
13. What intangible gifts did the people in Tanana and Anaktuvuk give her?
14. What did you enjoy most about Anna's story?
15. What is *your* prescription for adventure? After reading *'A' is for Anaktuvuk: Teacher to the Territory*, what are you motivated to do?
  - Use your natural abilities and individual passions with the result of an adventure
  - Do something outside your comfort zone
  - Explore the unknown: wilderness, mountaintop, ocean, third-world country, inner city
  - Do some kind of volunteer service
  - Live in an environment conducive to adventures
  - Read more adventure stories
  - Try something new
  - Pursue some activity or trip that you've been contemplating

- Watch for the extraordinary to pop into an ordinary day
- Pass along this book to someone else to enjoy

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