Pacific Crossing

Whole-Novel Discussion and Activities

BURNING ISSUES

1. Do you think it was realistic that the Ono family and many other Japanese characters in the book are able to communicate well in English? Is this a believable aspect of the book, or do you think it is a device used by the author in order to allow him to develop the plot and dialogue? How did it affect your impression of the book?

2. If you had the opportunity to participate in an exchange program to Japan, what part of Lincoln’s experience would you like to have yourself? What might you like to do differently during such a trip? Share your impressions and ideas.

3. Is it appropriate for Lincoln and Tony to use so much slang with their Japanese families? Do you think it was helpful for them to teach slang and Spanish expressions to their Japanese hosts? Discuss and give reasons to support your opinions.

4. Mitsuo’s favorite sport is baseball, yet he and Lincoln rarely play any baseball together. Is it selfish of Lincoln to focus only on kempō and not join Mitsuo in playing his favorite sport? Explain your position.

5. If you hosted an exchange student from another country, what sort of experiences would you like to share with him or her? What things would you want to find out about your guest’s native country? Share your ideas with the group.

CHOICES ACTIVITIES

1. **Diction, Imagery, and Tone Writing Letters.** Lincoln and Mitsuo plan to stay in touch after Lincoln returns home. Work with a partner to exchange letters written in the voice of each of the boys. First, write a letter from Lincoln’s point of view. Be sure to use diction and images that capture the tone of Lincoln’s style of speaking. Then, exchange letters with your partner and answer Lincoln’s letter with a response that takes on Mitsuo’s voice. Make sure the content of the letters reflects each boy’s cultural context. Then, use the evaluation rubric to critique each other’s letters.

2. **Tone Writing a Research Summary.** In *Pacific Crossing*, Lincoln practices a martial art called Shorinji Kempō. Conduct an Internet search to learn more about kempō, narrowing the scope of your research to a topic such as the origins of kempō, the basic approaches used, the philosophy and purpose, and the ranks or belts. Try search terms such as shorinji kempo, kempo, kempo + history, or kempo + belts. Report your findings in a research summary, a short, formal report. Share your work with your group or a partner to get feedback on tone and content.