



*Discussion Questions*

5. One of the pieces of advice that Corey gives to Rigel is “Adults say a lot of things they don’t mean.” (p. 176) Do you believe this is true? If so, why do you think adults lie to kids?
6. In Alaska, Rigel wrote a report about a wolf named O-Six. (p. 168) What happened to O-Six and what lesson did Rigel learn from it about dealing with wild animals? Why is it so hard for her to follow that lesson when dealing with Blueberry?
7. Corey and his friends secretly give Rigel the book *The Hitchiker’s Guide to the Galaxy*. (p. 234) This is a book that is about people searching for answers to a variety of things, although the answers are never quite what they think they will be. Why did Corey and the group give Rigel the book, and how do the themes in the book mirror what happens to Rigel throughout the story?
8. Rigel is not the only character in the book to evolve. Willow also undergoes some changes after moving to Connecticut. How does the character of Willow change, and who is she by the end of the novel? (p. 246)

*Extension Activities*

1. Without a computer or phones for email and social media, Rigel and her sisters are made to write physical letters to the people on the mainland in order to stay in contact with family. Often adults will write similar letters to family and friends during the holidays to update them on the events in their lives over the past year. Write a letter to a friend or a family member, updating them on what has happened in your own life over the past few months. End the letter by asking them to write back, and make sure to mail the letter when you are done!
2. When Rigel is struggling the most, she counts down the days before she can return to Alaska. The countdown is what gives her peace and hope during times when she feels as though things are completely out of her control. Whether it is a blanket, a favorite stuffed animal, a book, a piece of jewelry, or other items, humans have always tended to cling to the familiar when they are stressed or worried. What do you hold on to (whether physically or metaphorically) when times are tough? What items or thoughts bring you peace in times of upheaval? Explain your comfort item or thought and describe its origin.
3. When Rigel and her sisters moved to Connecticut, they weren’t allowed to bring all of their possessions with them. Willow brought magazines, Rigel brought salmon jerky, and Izzy brought her jump rope. If you had to leave home forever and could only bring one belonging with you, what would you bring? (For this exercise, you must pick something that is NOT technology related.)
4. Middle-school cafeterias are a place of much anxiety for many students. Create a plan for your school to help ease the “cafeteria anxiety” of middle school. Whether it is an activity, a rule, or whatever else you can think of, how can you help your school make the cafeteria a “safe space” for everyone so no one feels like they need to hide during lunch?
5. Rigel befriends a crow in Connecticut that becomes her best friend. Do some research on the personality traits of crows and their interaction with humans. Throughout the story, how is Rigel herself like a crow? How do her personality traits match with those of crows?

