

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**“Trap Lines” by Thomas King**

1. Read the following information about First Nations Reserves in Canada. The text is from page 41 of the City of Vancouver’s 2014 “First Peoples: a Guide for Newcomers” publication. Next, read an excerpt from the University of Saskatchewan’s Pakkisiimon Nuye?áh Library System about traplines.

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| <p><b>6.4. RESERVES</b></p> <p>Before Europeans arrived, First Nations and Inuit peoples had the use of all the land and water in what is now Canada. Their <b>traditional territories</b> are large. Often Nations’ traditional territories overlapped and they shared resources according to traditional protocols. With the arrival and settlement of Europeans, First Nations people and Europeans came into conflict over who would control these lands and resources.</p> <p>One way that the British and Canadian governments seized control of land was through a system of <b>reserves</b>. The Government of Canada divided First Nations people into <b>bands</b> and told them that they had the use of only a certain piece of land, and no longer had the right to their <b>traditional territories</b>. These small pieces of land are called “reserves.” The <i>Indian Act</i> defines a reserve as land that has been set apart by the Federal government for the use and benefit of an Indian band.<sup>11</sup></p> <p>First Nations people were not consulted when reserves were created. They did not give consent. They were not compensated for the lands that were taken from them.<sup>12</sup> Since their creation, reserves have been moved, reduced and their resources taken without compensation to First Nations.<sup>13</sup> When the government created reserves, it did little to consider First Nations’ societies and their use of traditional territories.<sup>14</sup> The government divided up lands and peoples and Nations that had existed for hundreds if not thousands of years.<sup>15</sup></p> | <p><b>Choosing a Trapline</b></p> <p>Choosing a trapline is a complex process, and binds two key factors: local resources and regulations. A trapline is established in a remote region of the forest, near good fur regions and game trails. Trappers spend time walking, snowshoeing, snowmobiling and canoeing their proposed trapline to find game trails, dens, and habits of their target animals. Natural environmental constraints, particularly local animal populations, are important but an imbalance in the local animal ecosystem can be carefully targeted and manipulated over time. For example, if the beaver population is low, a trapper can focus on another, more abundant local pelt until the beaver population recovers. Targeting fox and coyotes may allow rabbits to flourish.</p> <p>Historically, some traplines were developed by family units and passed down through the generations, but these are rare. More often, individuals and family units trap in different regions of the forest each year, in response to external factors such as major forest fires, over-trapping, natural reduction or abundance in local furs, disease, proximity to a trading post or itinerant traders, or proximity to family, friends, or fur partners.</p> |
| <p><small>Wilson, Kory, and Jane Henderson. “First Peoples: a Guide for Newcomers.” Province of British Columbia, 2014.</small></p> <p><small>“Trapping and Trapline Life.” <i>Trapping and Trapline Life   Our Legacy</i>, 21 Feb. 2018, digital.scaa.sk.ca/ourlegacy/exhibit_trapping.</small></p>   |  |

Consider how difficult it is to choose a trapline and how the history of fur trapping and the reserves are linked to the title of the story. Observations? You can discuss what you already know about the fur trade or reserves.

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2. The narrator says of his son: “he has, at eighteen, come upon language, much as a puppy comes upon a slipper” (King 33). Explain this **metaphor** to describe the narrator’s son. Also, start keeping track of the **figurative language** that the narrator uses to describe people, situations, and other things.

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3. Using the narrator and Christopher’s strange conversations between pages 34 to 38, explain what the narrator means when he says that Alberta “called these conversations father and son talks” and that “she didn’t think much of them” (37).

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4. At the end of the story, Christopher takes the green tackle box before moving to British Columbia and Alberta tells the narrator, “you could have told him you loved him” (46). Is it clear that the narrator was successful at relaying his love for Christopher? What evidence supports this idea?

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5. This narrative is disjointed in the way that there are the narrator’s own childhood stories mixed in with his stories about Christopher. What message might “Trap Lines” try to convey about communication?

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