

## Discussion Questions

1. What is your impression of the boys as a group? How do they interact with each other and with their coach? Does the time in the cave change their relationships? Describe a few of those trapped in the cave and how the author conveys their personalities.

2. Why did Coach Ek and the boys have reason to believe it would be safe to visit the cave? What unexpected forces of nature worked against them? What role might climate change have played in this? Explain geographical features and aspects of weather that made the rescue difficult. What made their days in the cave dangerous?

3. Different groups involved in the rescue had different opinions about how it should be done. At one point, the author writes, “Relationships between the diving team and the Thai authorities become tense.” (p. 99) What are the different opinions? How is conflict resolved at this point and other times during the rescue?

4. Cultural differences crop up at various times in the rescue. In the situation in the previous question, the Thai military considered the divers rude. Later in the cave, the divers “seem stunned that the kids are so upbeat.” (p. 140) Discuss these and other cultural differences. How would understanding each other’s culture help in these situations?

5. Why was there resistance to a dive rescue? What were the other possible rescue solutions, and what were the problems with each alternative?

6. Even if you know before reading the book that the boys survived, the narrative is suspenseful. What is innately dramatic about the story? What emotions does it raise in you as a reader? What narrative techniques does the author use to intensify the suspense?

7. The author draws readers into the story through imagery and figurative language. She also uses words related to the senses to make scenes come alive. Find examples of these narrative devices and discuss their impact. Also discuss the use of the present tense and its effect on the narrative.

8. How do the visual aspects of the book help convey information, personalities, and emotions? How do the maps and diagrams make the rescue operation easier to understand? Discuss the use of sidebars and what they add to your understanding of technical topics and of Thai culture.