



If you use Viking Quest novels for your family read-aloud times, school, or homeschooling, you'll find additional resources and discussion questions for earlier novels in this series on my website: www.loiswalfridjohnson.com.

- I. Courage? What is it? For five novels we've talked about the courage to win. We've seen courage in the lives of Bree, Devin, and Mikkell in many different ways. But how can you and I have courage in our own lives? Does having courage mean that you are never afraid? If not, what *does* it mean to have courage?

2. Who was your favorite character in this novel? For what reasons? How did you feel about what happened to that character? Why do you feel that way?
3. What did you think was the most exciting part of the novel? Why?
4. How did the houses that Leif built help him deal with the climate he knew in Greenland? What did Leif and his expedition use for cooking? warmth? protection? Can you think of a modern-day style of house that reminds you of the houses that Leif built? (If you live in a cold climate it will be easier for you to answer.) How is that house similar to Leif's? How is it different?
5. When Leif stepped into the small boat to go ashore at the place that became his base, Bree realized the importance of what she was seeing. What do you think would be the most exciting part about being the first person to step foot in a new land? What might be the dangers and hardships of being the first person or group in a new land?
6. Have you had circumstances in your life where at first you didn't understand the importance of what was happening? (An example might be moving to a new

home or location.) How did such a time affect the rest of your life?

7. When the *Greenlanders' Saga* says that Leif named a place Helluland or Markland, it means that with the naming, he claimed these lands for himself and his family. Have you ever had the opportunity to name a new place? Where? How did you choose the name? If you haven't named something, think about a place that interests you and decide what you would like to call it.
8. When characters talked about the L'Anse aux Meadows location being a gateway, what did they mean? Find that gateway on your map. Where does it lead? Give your reasons why this location could be important to Leif.
9. Make a list of words that are unfamiliar to you. Look up their meaning. How can you use these new words in your writing or conversation? How does the place where you live affect the words that you know or don't know?
10. When Mikkell told Bree he would do what he promised, what did you think he would *really* do? Why did you feel that way?

11. When Bree talked with Mikkell about how she had rescued him from drowning, what was the cause and effect that he saw in his own actions? What did he decide to do about it?
12. What are some possible reasons why people in earlier times married younger than they often do now?
13. Why was it important for Bree to wait and see whether Mikkell would live what he said he believed?
14. What did you think about Vikings before you started reading this series? How have your ideas changed?
15. Now let's talk about courage again. How did Mikkell feel about trying to set right what he had done? What made him most afraid? What kind of help did he get? Would you call him courageous? Why or why not?

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

- A. If you'd like to find the markers given in the first chapter of this novel, use a detailed Newfoundland/Labrador map. Imagine yourself standing on Belle Isle, a high, rocky island described by Helge Ingstad as a fairy-tale castle rising from the sea. Give Belle Isle the name of Current Island, then look south toward what is now called the Strait of Belle Isle (Straum-

fjord or Current Fjord). The distinctive markers named are presently called Cape Bauld (the round head of a cape) and Cape Onion (to the right), which form the entrance to the L'Anse aux Meadows area. Then Great Sacred Island (with high vertical rock rising from its shore), Beak Point, and the headland called the rocky ridge in this story. The building site known in the novel as Leif's Camp is now called L'Anse aux Meadows National Historic Site and is located on Epaves Bay.

- B. In the story Bree looks for a baby seal, known by later settlers as a “whitecoat.” When I asked David Morrow, Park Interpreter, Gros Morne National Park of Canada, how a mother seal would react to Bree's curiosity, he said, “The mother harp seal might let a person quite close to the pup, depending on the circumstances. If the adult female has a lead of open water nearby, she will desert the pup and escape to the water.” In Viking times the usual predators on ice floes were polar bears. How could that affect a mother seal's behavior? Using reference sources, what else can you learn about the behavior and habits of seals? How far do some of them travel? What international agreements and laws protect seals now?

C. What can you find out about the eastern New Brunswick area that would make that location for Hóp a strong possibility? (Try an encyclopedia such as *World Book*, the Internet, or travel guidebooks from your local library.)

If you or your family would like to visit the L'Anse aux Meadows Viking site in Newfoundland, see the acknowledgment section for the contacts you need.

Thank you for the heartwarming response you have shown toward the Viking Quest series. Thank you for your letters, e-mails, and enthusiasm. I'm sorry that with this novel we need to say good-bye to this series. I also like Bree, Devin, Mikkel, and their families and friends. I hope you'll keep thinking about them for a long time.

Courage is catching. May you receive the gift of contagious courage from those around you. Even more important, may you live in such a way that you inspire courage in others.

As always, every book I write is a special letter from me to you!

Love and blessings—

Lois