

Trapped

Book 3, Tales of Friendship Bog

Discussion Questions

CHAPTER 1

1. Why did Pibbin go into the tunnel? (*He wanted to pass out cookie chips.*)
2. What worried Pibbin about the tunnel? (*He thought it might have been made by a snake, a skunk, or a weasel, all of which would eat him.*)
3. How many cookie chips did he have left? (*Six.*) How many had he passed out? (*Nine.*) Why did he want to finish passing them all out? (*He could earn a star and pin it onto his backpack.*)
4. How could Pibbin tell that a snake didn't live in this tunnel? (*He found the storeroom with bags and knew that a snake wouldn't stack up bags.*)
5. How did he get across the deep crack? (*He crept along the wall of the tunnel.*) Why didn't he jump? (*It might have been too far for him to jump.*)
6. Why couldn't he poke his leg all the way out of the net? (*The hole was too small.*)
7. What did he see in the window? (*He saw a little face.*) Did he get a good look at the face? (*No, the net swung away and then he couldn't see it.*)
8. Where was the larger hole that he squeezed through? (*It was at the top of the net. [See the picture.]*) Why do you think he did the hard work of getting out of the net and jumping to the ground? (*Answers will vary but should include the idea that he was afraid someone might come who would eat him.*)
9. Do you think it was the person belonging to the little face that shouted at him? (*Probably not. The loud voice would have come from a larger animal.*)
10. What was odd about the words the animal shouted to him? (*The words were out of order: "Back come."*)

CHAPTER 2

1. What things did Cheeco show Pibbin first? (*a spoon, acorns, a button, and eggs*)
2. Why would Pibbin rather have red bugs? (*Answers will vary but could include: Pibbin likes to eat, especially bugs.*)
3. What was Cheeco's treasure? (*a nickel*) What did Pibbin think it looked like? (*a small silver plate*)
4. Why didn't Cheeco want to talk about his treasure? (*Answers will vary. Later in the story we will find out.*)
5. What does Marteena Whitefoot look like? (*She's a brown mouse with tiny white feet and big soft ears.*)

6. Who made the cookie chips? (*Carpenter Frog*)
Who wrote the invitation on the back? (*Ma Chipmunk*)
7. What are the names of the three peepers? (*Bo, Mo, and Slo*)
What is their job? (*Answers will vary but could include: they gave out the news of Friendship Bog.*)
8. The peepers told Pibbin three things about Marteena. Which did you like best? (*Answers could include: she makes things happen; she knows everybody; she bakes good grasshopper cookies.*)
9. What did Marteena want Pibbin to do? (*Find Duffy.*) Why did she think he could do it? (*He found the story shell for Gaffer.[Book 2]*)
10. Why didn't Pibbin want to take on the job? (*He thought it would be too hard and he wanted to finish handing out chips so he could get a star.*)

CHAPTER 3

1. Who are Zip, Duffy, and Alix? (*Zip is the mother squirrel, Duffy is the missing baby, and Alix is his big brother.*)
2. How can you tell Alix felt sad? (*His tail drooped and his eyes were dull.*)
3. Why do you think Zip acted so strangely? (*Answers will vary but could include the idea that she was upset and worried about her baby.*)
4. What was written on Zip's leaf? (*koot*) What did Alix and Pibbin think it meant? (*They didn't know.*)
5. What made Pibbin decide to look for Duffy? (*His friends needed his help.*)
6. Why did Pibbin want to start by talking to Cheeco? (*Marteena had told him that Cheeco was playing with Duffy.*)
7. How did Pibbin find out where Cheeco had gone? (*He asked the peepers to ask the other peepers, and they did.*)
8. Do you think Ma Chipmunk is in charge of the Cookie Fest? (*Probably, yes.*)
9. What makes you think so? (*Answers could include: she wrote the invitations on the chips; she says she wants it to be the best Fest ever; and she reminds Pibbin about his chips.*)
10. Why are the Bog-Keepers putting on a Cookie Fest? (*to welcome the flying squirrels who are moving in*)
11. If Pibbin is going to get a star, when do all his cookie chips have to be passed out? (*The deadline is tonight.*)
12. Why do you think Pibbin is worried about talking to Cheeco? (*Cheeco makes up things and doesn't always tell the truth.*)

CHAPTER 4

1. What was Cheeco doing when Pibbin arrived at his house? *(He was sitting on the sofa, eating a bowl of seeds.)*
2. Why did Cheeco keep yawning? *(He had been up all night and he was tired.)* Do you think he might have had another reason? *(Answers will vary but could include: he didn't like Pibbin asking about Duffy and wanted him to go away.)*
3. While Pibbin was hopping up to the Dike, he looked for three of his friends to ask about Duffy. Who were they? *(Sheera, a turtle; Miss Green, a green snake; and Chewink, a towhee.)*
4. What made Pibbin keep going up to the Dike instead of stopping to sit on a lily pad in the sun? *(Answers will vary but could include: he remembered the sad look on Zip's face.)*
5. What was the Dike? *(a ridge of land across the top end of Friendship Bog)*
6. Can you find the Dike on the map at the end of the story? Would it be a good shortcut to Green Swamp? *(Yes, otherwise you'd have to go all the way around the top of Friendship Bog.)*
7. Did anyone at the bridge site know anything about Duffy? *(No.)*
8. Uncle Dip said something about a group of animals called the Bog-Keepers, and so did Ma Chipmunk. What do you think they are trying to do for Friendship Bog? *(Answers will vary but could include: they are trying to take care of the families that live there, especially the young ones; they like to welcome new families.)*
9. The beavers and frogs were working with Uncle Dip to build the bridge. Why do you think they'd be good members of his team? *(Answers will vary but could include the following: beavers are strong, good at handling logs, and don't mind the water. Frogs are good swimmers and could do small jobs.)*
10. Why was Pibbin so excited to see Chewink fly over? *(Answers will vary but could include: he was hoping it meant that Chewink had good news about Duffy.)*

CHAPTER 5

1. Why did Alix and Pibbin decide that Zip hadn't written the words on the leaves? *(Answers will vary but could include: her words wouldn't have been written as neatly.)*
2. What does Alix do when he is worried? *(He chews on his paw.)*
Do you know anyone who chews on their fingernails? *(Answers will vary.)*
3. Why did Pibbin suggest asking the Bog-Keepers to help? *(Answers will vary but could include: he didn't know what to do and/or he would rather be passing out cookie chips.)*
4. What did Alix say about the idea of asking the Bog-Keepers? *(It might take them too long because they would have to call a meeting first.)*

5. When Pibbin couldn't think clearly, his mind felt like soft mud. What about you? *(Answers will vary.)*
6. What made Pibbin realize that he couldn't find Duffy by himself? *(Answers will vary but could include: he knew he wasn't good at puzzles; he remembered that Uncle Dip was using a team to build the bridge; Alix was depending on him.)*
7. Do you think it was a good idea to use the peepers for sending a message to Leeper? *(Answers will vary.)*
8. Which of the peepers do you like best? *(Answers will vary.)*

CHAPTER 6

1. Why did Alix take the boxes higher in the tree? *(Answers will vary but could include: he wanted them to have a better place to look at the leaves; he wanted to get them away from Ma Chipmunk.)*
2. Why do you think Leeper grinned when he saw the leaves with strange words? *(He likes puzzles.)*
3. What made Alix decide to go to Carpenter's workshop? *(It would be a better place to work, with no breeze and plenty of space to spread out.)*
4. What did the beads look like? *(wooden balls or acorns, painted in bright colors)*
What were they for? *(to decorate the bridge)*
5. How you ever tried backward spelling in a message? *(Answers will vary.)*
6. How did Pibbin figure out what the strange letter was? *(He used to make his N's backward too.)*
7. What did they learn from Nisk's notes? *(Answers will vary but could include: he wanted Zip's tree and probably had taken Duffy so she would change her mind.)*
8. Why did Nisk want Zip's tree? *(Answers will vary but could include: he might have been running out of space in his tree; her tree had a nice storage shed; he wanted a safer place for his collection.)*
Do you think Nisk should have tried to get Zip's tree? *(Discuss.)*
9. What did Ma Chipmunk remind Pibbin about? *(the deadline for handing out cookie chips)*
10. Why do you think Pibbin went with Alix and Leeper instead of handing out the rest of his chips? *(Answers will vary but could include: he wanted to find Duffy more than he wanted to get the star; he was part of the team and decided to stick with it.)*

CHAPTER 7

1. How can you tell that Alix is angry? *(He looks angry, and he shouts.)*
Why do you think he is angry? *(Answers will vary but could include: he's worried about Duffy.)*

2. Did Alix agree that Duffy would have taken a walk with Cheeco for no good reason? (*No.*) Why or why not? (*They were building a tree house together, and Duffy would have wanted to do that, rather than take a walk.*)
3. What does Duffy like to eat? (*pine-seed candy*)
4. Who gave the silver plate to Cheeco? (*Nisk*) Why? (*because Cheeco brought Duffy to talk to him*) Do you think it was wise of Cheeco to take Duffy to Nisk? (*No.*) Do you think Cheeco meant for Duffy to get hurt? (*Probably not. Discuss.*)
5. How did Nisk get Duffy to come into his house? (*Nisk promised to give Duffy some pine-seed candy.*)
6. How did Cheeco get away from Alix? (*He jerked away and ran quickly up the tree.*)
7. What made Pibbin think Cheeco was telling the truth? (*Marteena had seen them together, and Pibbin had seen the silver plate.*)
8. What warning did the peepers give? (*a fox was coming*)
9. Pibbin shivered as he watched the fox. Do you think he was cold? (*Answers will vary, but this information may be helpful: frogs don't feel the cold. Pibbin was afraid.*)
10. Why did the fox sit down by the tree? (*He could probably smell the trail left by Alix, and he decided to wait for him to come back down.*)

CHAPTER 8

1. What did Marteena keep in her storeroom? (*bags of nuts and seeds*)
2. Who helped Nisk when he was hurt? (*Answers will vary but could include: Uncle Dip, who found him, and the Bog-Keepers, who helped by bringing food and settling him in a tree house.*)
3. How did the injury to Nisk's head change him? (*Answers will vary but could include: he couldn't remember what happened; now he gets his words mixed up.*)
4. Marteena said that she and many other animals had back doors. Do you think a back door would be useful for a mouse to have? Why? (*Answers may vary but could include the following: Yes, because if an enemy came in her front door, she could use the back door to escape.*)
5. Why didn't Alix come into the hole where Pibbin and Marteena were sitting? (*He was too big.*)
6. Why was Pibbin worried that the tunnel he had found might be Nisk's back door? (*Answers will vary but could include that he thought the tunnel was a scary place, and he didn't want to go back.*)
7. What did Marteena say about Nisk that worried Pibbin? (*Nisk was very smart and much bigger.*)
8. How did Leeper know that the tunnel belonged to Nisk? (*The gate had Nisk's backward N on it.*)

CHAPTER 9

1. Why do you think Pibbin and Leeper could hop more quietly through the dried leaves than Alix? *(Answers will vary but could include: squirrels are heavier than frogs, so Alix's feet would disturb the leaves and make more noise.)*
2. What surprising thing happened when they walked across the leaves? *(A net fell down around them.)*
Why was it a surprise? *(When Pibbin got caught in the net, it came up from under the leaves.)*
Who do you think changed the net-trap? *(Nisk.)*
3. How did they find the door into the next part of the tunnel? *(Leeper found it behind the hanging vines and roots.)*
4. What do you think the ropes in the small room were for? *(Answers will vary but could include that idea that Nisk used them for the net trap.)*
5. Why do you think Alix took the lead? *(He was bigger and stronger.)*
6. Why did Alix have trouble climbing up the side of the hole? *(It was a deep hole, with steep, slick sides.)*
7. What helped Pibbin climb up out of the hole? *(the sticky pads on his toes)*
8. How did Alix get them out of the basket-cage? *(He chewed a hole in it.)*
9. Why did Alix call Nisk a crazy old galoot? *(“Galoot” refers to “a strange or foolish person.” Alix was worried about all the strange things that were happening, and since Nisk had caused them, he thought Nisk was strange and a bit crazy.)*
10. Why did Alix step back after he opened Nisk's back door? *(He thought Nisk might have put a trap there too.)*

CHAPTER 10

1. What kinds of food did Nisk collect? *(Answers will vary but could include acorns, pine cones, dried mushroom, dried berries, and corn cobs.)*
2. Which of the “odd” things do you think is the most interesting? *(Answers will vary.)*
3. Do you think Pibbin knows what beans are? *(Probably not. That's why the sign on the can didn't make sense to him.)*
4. How did Alix know what the can was? *(Answers will vary but could include that he'd seen cans at the places where people go camping.)*
5. How did Alix get Duffy out of the can? *(He pulled off the string and pushed the lid back.)*
6. Why did they decide to try the new tunnel? *(Duffy knew the front door had a trap, and the new tunnel might not have any traps in it.)*

7. Why do you think Alix carried Duffy? *(Answers will vary but could include the idea that Duffy might have trouble keeping up with them or that Duffy wasn't feeling very strong.)*
8. What made Leeper think another trap might be ahead of them? *(The tunnel seemed to be climbing a hill and was becoming narrow again.)*
9. Why did Pibbin and Leeper have trouble digging through the pine cones? *(Both frogs are smaller than the cones, and the cones kept rolling into the spaces they cleared.)*
10. Alix said "Ow!" when he ran into a post. What happened next? *(Something fell down with a crash.)*
11. Did Nisk hurt Duffy? *(No, he gave him pine-seed candy and told him stories.)*
12. What made Pibbin decide to go back into the tunnel? *(Nisk sounded as if he might be hurt.)*

CHAPTER 11

1. What did Nisk look like to Pibbin? *(Nisk looked very big and red, and he wore a red-spotted bow tie.)*
2. Why did Leeper shout at Nisk? *(Answers will vary, but could include: Nisk was making a lot of noise, and he might not have heard what Leeper said to him.)*
3. Do you think Nisk talks in a strange way? *(Answers will vary.)* What did Marteena say is the reason Nisk talks like that? *(His head was injured.)*
4. Is Nisk proud of his tunnels? How can you tell? *(Yes. He uses words like marvelous and clever to describe them.)*
5. Why did Nisk let out a cry when Pibbin said his tail might end up being bent? *(Answers will vary but should include the idea that Nisk is proud of his tail.)*
6. What reason did Nisk give for making all the traps? *(He was afraid that Zip and others would steal his belongings.)*
What words did Nisk use to describe Zip? *(He called her selfish and terrible.)*
7. Did Nisk realize that Pibbin and Leeper and Alix were the ones he heard in the tunnel? *(Answers will vary but could include the idea that he thought it was Zip.)*
8. What did Leeper think the sinkers looked like? *(gray lumps of metal)*
[Notes for further discussion: sinkers are lead weights that a fisherman ties to his line so it won't float on top of the water. Using sinkers helps him to fish for bottom-feeders, like catfish. Sometimes a fisherman's line gets tangled in the weeds or lily pads at the edge of the water, which is why Nisk thought the sinkers grew there.]
9. Why did the trap fall on Nisk? *(Answers will vary but could include that Alix had bumped one of the posts, and Nisk had not finished working on the trap, so it collapsed. Nisk said, "Wrong posts, and fixed I should have before I went out.")*

10. How did Pibbin & Leeper get the sinkers off the gate? (*Pibbin climbed up with Carpenter's saw and cut the string.*)
11. How did Pibbin scold Nisk for what he'd done to Zip? (*Pibbin said Nisk was selfish and that he was going to tell the Bog-Keepers about it.*)
Do you think it was brave for Pibbin to say that to a big squirrel? (*Answers will vary.*)
12. Pibbin wished he had earned a star, but what did he try to think about instead? (*the cookies at the Cookie Fest and seeing a flying squirrel for the first time*)
What do you do when you're disappointed about something? (*Answers will vary.*)

CHAPTER 12

1. What did Pibbin like the least about Cookie Fest? (*the speeches*)
What did he like the most? (*the cookies*)
2. How many young animals earned a blue star? (*fifteen*)
3. What had the friends and neighbors brought for the Cookie Box? (*cookies; other food; useful things*)
4. When Pibbin and Leeper talked to Uncle Dip about Nisk, was Uncle Dip angry? (*Answers will vary, but should include that he wasn't really angry. Nisk would have to be punished, but Uncle Dip wanted to help him.*)
5. What did Pibbin like about Uncle Dip's speeches? (*They were short.*)
6. How did Faye, the flying squirrel, "fly" down from the top of the tree? (*The web of skin between her arms and her legs helped her to glide.*)
[*Note for further discussion: flying squirrels have a thickly-furred membrane that stretches from their forelegs to their hind legs. It is attached at the wrists and ankles.*]
7. Which gift did Faye like the best? (*Cheeco's shiny plate*)
Why do you think Cheeco put his treasure in the Cookie Box? (*Answers will vary but could include the idea that he probably felt sorry for the wrong he had done in order to get it.*)
Discuss: *Cheeco not only said he was sorry but he did something about it.*
8. How did Pibbin end up getting a star? (*He earned the Star of Courage that was awarded by the Bog-Keepers.*)