

# The Wind and The Drum Discussion Questions

*The Wind and the Drum* is a classic novel of the struggle to survive, not only as an individual, but as a culture as a whole.

I have chosen Tuuli – a fourteen year old Saami girl to personify this struggle.

Strangers have come demanding the sacred drums and have threatened the reindeer.

While journeying alone to the Mount of Four Winds, Tuuli must overcome challenges, real and mystical, to survive and return to her people.

1. The title: *The Wind and the Drum* has a double meaning. Why is this important to the book?
2. Tuuli does not reveal that the little fawn has a lame leg. She hides the sacred Drum of Four Winds. She tries to block her ears to the wind whispering to her. She worries that she has brought troubles to her people. Does she have any blame for what happens? How would the lives of the Saami be different if she had given up the drum?
3. Consider the coming of strangers who demand the Saami give up their ancient beliefs and accept new ones. Does this have relevance in today's world?
4. Compare and contrast the lives of Native Americans and how they were treated when the settlers came and how the strangers treated the Saami.
5. When Tuuli is on the Mount of Four Winds, she sees into the future. How does this strengthen her endeavor to save the Saami way of life?
6. The Saami were reputedly magical, mystical, and healers. Even in the Finnish folklore *The Kalevala*, they are imbued with magic and the ability to sing magical verses. What do you think? Is contacting the spiritual world with song a folkloric fantasy or could there be something to it?
7. The interpretation of dreams is important. What do you think of Tuuli's three dreams? #1 The persistent mosquitoes #2 the red squirrels and foxes all running into the river #3 the two wolves. Do you think that dreams have meaning?
8. In a global view, is it better for everyone to be alike, or should differences be celebrated? Do cultural differences and languages enhance lives globally? Or do they present complications to understanding and cooperation?
9. Does this story have a happy ending?