



Red Maple Activity: Discussion Questions

The Factory by Catherine Egan

Name: _____

1. Discuss what we learn about the state of the world in the novel, including the way the economy is working and climate change is impacting the way people live.
2. At first, Asher is happy to be away from his school and what has been happening there. What does the book have to say about bullying and friendship?
3. Discuss Director Mach - what we see of her, learn about her, and what you think her motivation is.
4. Asher has a habit of imagining stories for the people he meets. At one point, he realizes he doesn't know their real stories (p. 158). How does Asher's imagination and empathy help him, through the book?
5. Choose one of the friends – Asher, Faith, Troy, or Violet – and discuss what they bring to the group, their strengths, and weaknesses.

6. Discuss Asher's experience and what he overhears between Director Mach and Senator Garrison Broom (Chapter 11). What do you learn about the experiments and about each of these characters?
7. How do the friends react to Avery and Vance's argument, and what they learn (Chapter 18)? What was your reaction at that point in the story?
8. Were you surprised when you found out what was being extracted from the children? Why, or why not?
9. In Chapter 29 we find out in detail what the process at the Factory is about. How does the reveal change how you understood the passages about "things that will not happen"? What is the book saying about the future, taking action, and making choices?
10. What do you think are the main messages of *The Factory*?