

The True Story of Vanilla: How Edmond Albius Made History

Discussion Questions

1. Even though Edmond was a favourite of his master, Ferréol, and received special treatment, why is it important to remember that he is still a slave? (Chapter 1)
2. In which country was vanilla mainly produced? Why could Ferréol and other plantation owners on Réunion not make it? (Chapters 1 & 2)
3. What is the name of the stingless bee that pollinates the vanilla flower? (Chapters 1 & 2)
4. What is a botanist? How did Edmond learn about it if he was not allowed to go to school? (Chapters 1 & 2)
5. What were some of the plants that Ferréol and Edmond worked with to try and help them learn more about the vanilla flower? What were some of the questions Edmond had to ask himself about them? (Chapter 3)
6. How did Edmond learn enough about the vanilla flower to hand-pollinate it? (Chapter 4)
7. Why did no one believe that Edmond had learned how to hand-pollinate the vanilla flower at first? (Chapters 4 & 5)
8. Why do you think it was such a rare opportunity for Edmond to leave Ferréol's plantation? (Chapter 5)
9. What is emancipation? Why did the Réunion government fear it after the new French government, made of **abolitionists**, took over in 1848? (Chapter 6)
10. Why was Edmond sent to prison? Why do you think that no one listened to Ferréol's pleas to have Edmond released from prison at first? (Chapter 7)



11. How did Ferréol help fight the claim that Jean Michel Claude Richard had discovered how to hand-pollinate the vanilla flower before Edmond? (Chapter 8)
12. How does Edmond's story end? (Chapter 8)
13. What are some things that vanilla is used to help make? (All Chapters)

