

## Lost Girl Found Study Guide

### **Pre-reading activities:**

Do some research and find out a bit about Sudan. How many languages are spoken there? How many different ethnic groups live within this country? What is the geography like? How is Southern Sudan different from Northern Sudan?

Lost Girl Found is about making tough and painful choices. What is a tough choice you have had to make? Describe what the choice was and how you made it.

### **While reading:**

How would Poni describe her childhood? Do you think her childhood is a happy one? Why or why not?

How does Poni feel about what happens to her friend Nadai? Why is Poni's friendship with Nadai so significant?

What is Poni's relationship with her mother like? In what ways does she want her life to be similar to her mother's and in what ways does she want it to be different? What life lessons does Poni's mother teach her? Why is it so important to Poni's mother that Poni stay in school?

Poni's brother, Iko, has to jump over a bonfire as an initiation rite. Are there any initiation rites in your culture? What are some of the traditions you know of that mark a transition from childhood to adulthood? What are some rites of passages that other cultures around the world use?

What are some of the reasons that the girls in Poni's village drop out of school? How are these reasons similar to or different from the reasons people drop out of school in your country?

Poni explains the complex process of naming a baby in the Didinga society. Do a bit of research and find out what your name means and where it comes from. Were there any naming rituals surrounding your birth?

What does Poni think when soldiers surround her village? Does she feel safer or less safe with the soldiers nearby? Explain your answer.

When Poni escapes, after her village is attacked, what does she have to do to survive? What would you do if you were stranded somewhere without food or provisions and had to survive?

What did Poni expect Kakuma to be like? What did the refugee camp turn out to be like? Give specific examples from the book to support your statements.

Poni attends a debate in Kakuma where she argues for gun control. What is your view on this topic?

Poni has to leave many people behind in her life. Using specific examples, do you agree with the decisions she makes? Why or why not?

In your opinion, what is Poni's relationship with Lokure like? What do you think of him?

Before Poni goes to The United States, she hears many rumors about this mysterious country. In your opinion, which rumors are true and which rumors are false?

Throughout the book, Lokure, Tihou, and Sister Hannah all give Poni lessons about language and the power of words. What do each of these characters teach Poni?

Many of the girls Poni meets have scars (some that are visible and some that are invisible.) What is the symbolism of scars throughout the book?

After reading the book:

What do you think of the ending of Lost Girl Found? What do you think will happen to Poni after the book ends? Write your own ending or sequel to the book.

Southern Sudan is now an independent nation. Do some research and describe what The Republic of Southern Sudan is like today.

There have been so many books written about the Lost Boys of Sudan. Why do you think so little has been written about the Lost Girls?

What are some of the problems that face Sudan today? Design your own community project that might address some of these problems.