

Local Wonders: Seasons in the Bohemian Alps by Ted Kooser

Discussion questions

- 1) What are the author's thoughts on travel? Do you agree or disagree? Why or why not?
- 2) Why does the author believe that small changes are so much more noticeable in the country than in the city? What are some of the very gradual changes that go mostly unnoticed in the author's small town? What does the author think of these changes?
- 3) What is the significance of the author's son's treehouse? Why does the author consider tearing it down? Why doesn't he?
- 4) The author frequently mentions garage sales and second-hand stores. Why do you think he is drawn to things that are used or that are old?
- 5) What traits does the author admire most in his mother? His father?
- 6) Why does the author pepper his writing with old Bohemian sayings? Do any of these sayings still ring true? Which ones? Why?
- 7) Do the Bohemian sayings hold true outside of the Bohemian Alps? Outside of rural America? Why or why not?
- 8) What are some of the animals the author encounters on his farm? How does he regard these neighbors?
- 9) How does the author continue to honor his parents after their deaths?
- 10) Why do you think the author writes so much about his outdoor toilet? Why does he invest so much energy in digging a new hole and moving the building -- not once but twice?
- 11) Do you think the author longs for the past? What are some moments that bring up memories of the past for the author?
- 12) How does the author describe his uncle Tubby? What does he admire about his uncle? Why do you think he kept his uncle's recliner?
- 13) The author writes he has chosen a life "...in which I can pass by on the outside looking back in -- into a world of static diorama, the world that Edward Hopper seemed to see." Why do you think the author chose this kind of life? Do you think it suits him? What are some observations he makes from the outside looking in?
- 14) What does the author think of hunting? Why does he say he doesn't hunt? Do you agree or disagree with this logic?
- 15) Why do you think rural life appeals to the author? Is there anything he doesn't like about rural life?
- 16) What are some of the wonders of the Bohemian Alps, according to the author? Do you agree that these things are wonders?