

Vermilion Sunrise by Lydia P. Brownlow

Discussion Questions

[Note: These are designed to be “spoiler-free” questions.]

General

- (1) What do you see as Leigh’s main goal at the end of her first day on the planet? Does that remain her main goal or does it change? Do you feel she’s achieved her goal by the end of the book?
- (2) Leigh and Lex are the two point-of-view (POV) characters in *Vermilion Sunrise*. How might the story be different if it were told solely in Leigh’s POV? Solely in Lex’s?
- (3) The colony has a unique leadership structure. Do you think it works well? What are its strengths and weaknesses?
- (4) The watery setting affects the plot in some obvious ways, but how else does it affect the novel? For example, the tone of the story? What about the characters’ responses to the ocean-dominated world? Are there any characters who might have reacted differently if they’d landed on a different landscape?

Personal Connection

- (1) When colonists arrive on the planet, they’ve each brought three items from Earth. If you were in that situation, what items do you think you’d find in your bag? Why?
- (2) Many new friendships evolve over the course of the novel. If you landed with the third landing party, which character would be most likely to become your friend? Why? Does your answer change if you were a member of the first landing party?
- (3) The first two landing parties have created three work groups. If you were a colonist, for which of those three would you volunteer? Why?
- (4) What do you think would be the most difficult part of the colonists’ situation? Are there characters who struggle with that difficulty? In what ways do you think you’d handle it similarly to them, and in what ways would you handle it differently?

Science/English Connection

- (1) Read through the Astrobiology information on author Lydia P. Brownlow’s website: <https://www.lydiapbrownlow.com/astrobiology.html> (Astrobiology is one topic on the “Science behind the Science Fiction” part of her site.) We are all shaped by our natural surroundings. In what ways (both positive and negative) does the biology of the planet affect the characters in *Vermilion Sunrise*?
- (2) The four main conflicts in literature are person vs. person; person vs. self; person vs. society; and person vs. nature. How does the person vs. nature conflict drive the story in *Vermilion Sunrise*? In what ways does the specific biology of the planet contribute to this conflict? In what ways is it driven by the fact that the planet’s nature is largely unknown?