

One Book for Nebraska Teens 2017
Discussion Questions for
The Legend of Bass Reeves by Gary Paulsen

1. If you were to describe Bass Reeves to someone who'd never heard of him, what would you say?
2. Why didn't Flowers talk? (page 14) did he ever talk?
3. What made Bass such a natural at working with animals?
4. What did the coyote say to Bass? (page 7)
5. What did it mean to see horse tracks without shoes?
6. Mammy answered the question – what's war by saying "War is something white folks do when they want something." – (page 28) What do you think of this statement?
7. Why didn't Bass know about the Alamo or Mexico?
8. Do you think it was safe for women and children in the west after what happened to the Garnett family?
9. What do we learn about Mister's past and do you think this might have had something to do with his drinking problem– a kind of post-traumatic stress? (page 37)
10. Why was it dangerous for Bass to be better at playing poker than mister?
11. Why did mammy insist that Bass run away after the fateful night of poker playing?
12. How did the skills Bass grew up with make him such a survivor?
13. Explain the differences between book smart and common sense in relationship to how Bass made such a good man working to track criminals.
14. What did you think about the cover of this book?

15. What does the title mean – “being the true and fictional account of the most Valiant Marshall of the West?”
16. What does it mean when you say – someone is honest as the day is long?
17. Why do you think it is we romanticize the criminals from this part of our history and have not been taught about someone as honorable as Bass Reeves?
18. Did you find it difficult to believe that Bass Reeves arrested his own son? What does this say about his values and his view of the law?
19. The book said that blacks, whites, and Indians attended his funeral. What does that say about Bass Reeves?