

Native American Literature
Discussion Questions

***When Thunders Spoke* by Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve**

Created by Dorothea M. Susag for OPI library project

1. What is the tradition surrounding the Butte of Thunders? What does it mean to the Dakota Sioux?
2. How might the trader, Mr. Brannon, exploit Norman in the beginning of the story and then later when he visits the Two Bull family in their home?
3. Describe the reservation from Norman's perspective.
4. What is the conflict between traditional Dakota ways and the ways of the dominant Christian culture as expressed by Norman's mother and the local pastor?
5. How does the conflict affect Norman, his father, his grandfather, and his mother?
6. What was Matt Two Bull's dream and how does it affect Norman?
7. How does Grandfather explain coup stick to Norman? What happens to it? What does Grandfather want Norman to do with it? How does this decision put Norman in conflict with his mother?
8. What changes occur in the Two Bull family as a result of Norman's finding the coup stick?
9. Are the non-Indian or Indian characters realistic? How may they represent or contradict stereotypes?
10. How does Norman change and grow through the novel? What does he learn?