

DEAR CANADA

DISCUSSION GUIDE

An Ocean Apart **The Gold Mountain Diary of Chin Mei-ling** By Gillian Chan

1. Why are Ivor and his friends so mean to Mei-Ling? Why wouldn't Mei-Ling want the woman to speak to the boys about their behaviour?
2. Did Ivor deserve the punishment he got from Sergeant-Major Bundy? How do you think Mei-Ling felt about it?
3. It would have been unusual for a Chinese immigrant to bring his young daughter with him. How does the author explain this? Is this a "realistic" explanation?
4. Why would Bess steal the kewpie dolls? Why didn't Mei-Ling stop her?
5. Mei-Ling feels very lonely, unable to talk to either her school friends or her friends in Chinatown about her life. Why does she feel so isolated? Would other immigrant children feel the same way? Is there anyone else in the story who might feel the same way? Why or why not?
6. What would you do about Ivor if you were Mei-Ling?
7. Is Mei-Ling's character like Anne of Green Gables? How? In what ways is she not like the character?
8. Why won't Mei-Ling's mother come to Canada?