

# DEAR CANADA

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

### **A Prairie As Wide as the Sea** **The Immigrant Diary of Ivy Weatherall** By Sarah Ellis

1. Ivy's family is "working class." What do you think this means? Why is she angry when her father implies that they are poor? How would you define "poor"?
2. In Winnipeg, Ivy learns something about prejudice. She sees a Chinese person for the first time and realizes that the Chinese are not as scary as the magazines portray them. What stereotypes of people have you seen in books, magazines, television or movies? Why are those images so powerful?
3. Ivy makes a mistake that could cost her family a lot of money when she orders cotton cloth at the general store, instead of thread. What other misunderstandings does she face? Discuss how people who speak the same language can mean different things. Share examples of words or expressions that can mean one thing to one group of people and something different to another. Have you ever faced misunderstandings like these?
4. Why do the boys in Milorie think William is stuck up? Ivy thinks it is harder for William to make friends than for her. Why do you think that might be?
5. Why is Ivy so angry about leaving the farm? How do you think her life will change, living in town?
6. How does Ivy's relationship with her mother change after she helps her deliver the baby?