

*“Nya sighed and picked up the big plastic can. Yet another walk to the pond.”*

**Comprehension Questions:**

1. Why does Dep say the water coming from the borehole is muddy?
2. What are the orphans like Salva from Sudan being called in America?
3. Where does Salva go from Ifo to prepare for his trip to America?
4. What one thing does Salva remember clearly from his preparations to go to America?
5. What does Salva have to drink on the airplane that reminds him of his family?
6. How many planes does Salva have to take to get to his new home?
7. Describe Salva’s new family.

**Extension/Discussion Questions:**

1. Salva stops just before leaving the airport because he realizes he is leaving his old life behind him. After his long journey, why do you think this particular place and moment makes him have this realization?

**Literature Connection: *Peter Pan***

The orphaned boys from Sudan have come to be called “Lost Boys.” This is a reference to the book *Peter Pan* by J.M. Barrie.

In *Peter Pan*, the Lost Boys are a group of young orphans who join in Peter’s adventures, fighting pirates and saving an Indian princess. Despite the fun and freedom they enjoy, the Lost Boys choose to leave Neverland at the end of the story and find families.

Why is this an appropriate name to give to boys like Salva?

## Chapter 16

### **Comprehension Questions:**

1. What do the men in the village start doing after the first spray of water?
2. What has Salva not seen in his first month in Rochester?
3. What does Salva focus on to block out the confusion of his new life?
4. How long had it taken Salva to get from Ifo to Rochester?
5. What does Salva decide to study in college?
6. Salva gets an e-mail from his cousin. What does this message tell him?
7. How long does it take to get Salva's trip back to Sudan organized?

### **Extension/Discussion Questions:**

1. Salva has trouble learning English because of some of the words and sounds that change for no reason. Have you ever felt the same frustration that Salva feels? What are some examples from English that you find confusing?
2. As Salva is traveling through Sudan to see his father, he says that he remembered everything like it was yesterday, yet his memories of Sudan also feel distant. Explain what Salva means in your own words.

## Chapter 17

### **Comprehension Questions:**

1. What does Nya's father tell her is being built near the tree?
2. How long has it been since Salva and his father had seen each other?
3. What has happened to the rest of Salva's family?
4. What had made Salva's father sick?
5. What does Salva think about that helps him get over his stage fright the first time he speaks in front of an audience to raise funds for his project?

### **Extension/Discussion Questions:**

1. Nya's father tells her that even the girls will be able to go to the new school. How does this show change in Sudan since the time Salva was a child?

## Chapter 18

### **Comprehension Questions:**

1. What does the leader of the workers do before the villagers use the new well pump for the first time?
2. Who is working the well pump when Nya gets water? Why would this person be the one to work the pump this first day?
3. What other changes will be coming to the village because of the new well?
4. What does Dep tell Nya that surprises her?
5. What does Nya say to the leader of the work crew?
6. Who is the leader of the work crew?

### **Writing Activity: RAFT**

RAFT stands for Role, Audience, Format, Topic

Imagine you are Salva's father. You are writing a letter your wife (Salva's mother) telling her that your son, Salva, is alive and that you have seen him.

See page 22 for a rubric that can be used for grading this and other RAFT projects. You can assign your own percentages to each category in the rubric to fit your goal(s) for the assignment.

## A Message from Salva Dut

### Comprehension Questions:

1. Who does Salva thank for helping him when he was in danger of starving?
2. Where did Salva go to college?
3. What is the name of Salva's project?
4. What two things does Salva say helped him overcome his difficulties?

### Extension/Discussion Questions:

1. Salva states that "Quitting leads to much less happiness in life than perseverance and hope." Can you think of other people (famous or in your own life) who would agree with this statement? Choose one of these people and discuss how Salva's statement applies to this person's life and accomplishments.

For more information on Salva's organization:

<http://www.waterforsouthsudan.org/>

To see a video about Salva and his work:

<http://www.waterforsouthsudan.org/salvas-story/>

### Whole Novel Discussion Questions:

- The author tells the story of two people whose lives eventually intersect in this novel. Which of the two do you feel is the more important character? Explain.
- What do you feel is the biggest obstacle Salva had to overcome? Support your answer with details from the story.
- Salva's organization drills wells for people all over southern Sudan, even if they, like Nya's village, are from a different tribe than his own. What does this tell you about Salva's character? What lessons can be learned from Salva's choice to help others, even those who could be considered an "enemy?"