



## Guests

*Michael Dorris*

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### Guests Michael Dorris

Moss is frustrated. His father has invited outsiders who dress in strange clothes and speak an odd language to the village's special harvest meal - and no one but Moss seems to care how that will change the way things have always been. No matter whom he talks to, no matter what he says, people just smile and tell him, "Someday you'll understand why." Impatient for answers, Moss impulsively goes into the forest alone for the first time, hoping to find some clue during his "away time" as to who he really is and who he should become as a man. But even in the woods, nothing is quite the way he expects it to be, and before he finds his way home, Moss must see the world as a more complicated - and much more interesting - place. Learning from the subtle morals of old stories as well as by simply listening to the people around him, Moss grapples with the ultimate truth of being a grown-up: you are who you are.

### Guests Details

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Author : Michael Dorris

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## From Reader Review Guests for online ebook

### **Katie (Katrina) Means says**

A young Native American boy doesn't want the Guests (colonists/settlers) to mess up his favorite feast day, and he's tired of everyone telling him he'll understand things when he's older. So Moss decides to leave, then meets Trouble and a porcupine. He learns what it means to be a man but also that maybe being self-centered doesn't always work either. This would be good for upper elementary or a maybe a little younger. Wonderfully simple yet thought-provoking story.

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### **Rebecca A. says**

This ALA Notable gives the story of the first Thanksgiving with the Pilgrims from the perspective of a Native American boy who's not very happy with having to put up with these guests who lack the basic decency to bring their own empty bowls.

But that's not even really the heart of the story! That's just an example of how the author has deeply absorbed and communicated the culture in which young Moss inadvertently triggers his Away Time, and meets, not only his animal mentor, but a young woman of the tribe who has run away. Her name is Trouble.

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### **Amy • A Magical World of Words says**

Sweet and easy to read. And there was a good message underneath :)

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### **Shanna says**

Moss is a spoiled brat who becomes reflective and empathetic after talking with his friend in the forest.

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### **Lea says**

This is a very sweet story of a young Native American boy who, upset about the strange guests coming to the annual feast, runs into the forest and, literally and metaphorically, finds himself lost. With a little help from a friend and a porcupine spirit guide, he finds his way back to the village and finds himself closer to knowing his true self.

The plot of this book is simple, but it is elevated by the writing which I found to be subtle, spiritual, and poetic.

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### **Phoebe says**

Always a good one to read and recommend this time of year, since there are not very many chapter books like it...

The first Thanksgiving from the Native American point of view, this story draws the reader deeply into the life of Moss and his family, who are preparing for their yearly harvest feast. This year, strangers are coming to share the meal, and Moss is confused and unhappy with his father for inviting them. As he hovers on the brink of adolescence Moss makes some discoveries about himself and the world around him, in this gentle coming-of-age story.

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### **Elizabeth Lancaster says**

This book tells the story of Moss, a young native american boy. He is not happy that his father has invited strangers to their annual feast. In his anger, Moss runs off to the forest alone and meets some interesting new friends. He learns a lot during his time away and grows as a person before coming home.

I really enjoyed this book. I found the culture that was presented in the story very fascinating. I also believed that the book contained some great lessons for students.

I would love to use this book to introduce native americans to my class. I would also use the smaller stories within the book. I would have the students draw out the short stories and read them aloud to me or their peers.

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### **Betsy Brainerd says**

I'll be using this for our Thanksgiving book club. Moss is not happy that his family's annual feast is going to be "ruined" by the intrusion of invited guests (Pilgrims). He's also anxious to have his time away to signal coming of age, struggling with how to be a good and unselfish son, and helping a friend with her family struggles. Very well written and easy to relate to his feelings.

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### **Hannah Jones says**

I know better then to pick up the story belt, but I want to hold it. I pick it up and I am admiring it, then it drops. It breaks and the pieces go everywhere. I know my father will be upset but I take it to him. He sends me to my grandfather and I'm afraid of what his reaction will be. He calmly tells us he is unable to put it back together to tell the original story. I am now given the task of replacing the story. The problem is, I don't know any stories. How am I supposed to come up with a new one?

Guests is a really good story. It's simple but I really love how it was written. The author writes in a way that all the characters in the story know what's going on but your left wondering what is happening. It piques your curiosity and makes you wan to read more. I also loved the names in the story. Some of their names were moss, trouble and running woman. They are based on the characters personalities. I really liked that in the end moss feels like he understands himself and that he likes who he is. I think those are two very important things,

This book would be good to show that you don't always know what is going on in other peoples lives and you shouldn't judge them. Another lesson could be to not desire to be other people, be happy with who you are and what you bring to the table.

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### **Adrienne Rosal says**

I'm really glad I found this one on a give away table . Totally loved it!!!

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### **Candelaria Silva says**

In a coming of age story that chronicles a taboo encounter between a young adolescent boy and girl, Dorris recreates a time before the first Thanksgiving. It has adventure, young love/attraction, and shows that kids defy authority and get in trouble as part of their development throughout the ages. In the three books he wrote for children, he recreates what Native life was on its own and not in relationship to the European invaders. The books are hauntingly beautiful in their simplicity and ability to draw you all the way into their stories.

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### **Gale says**

“Coming of Age in a Clash of Cultures”

Moss is an immature Native American youth in an unspecified tribe—still in that awkward stage between childhood and warrior status; the conflicted youth longs to embark on his own Away time (i.e. Vision quest, a rite of passage). This particular day he resents his family’s (indeed, the entire village’s) obligation to entertain guests, whose white skin and odd clothing, language and customs are completely alien to all he has experienced and respects.

Gradually Moss finds himself sulking in the woods; then he astonishes himself by trying to impress a misfit girl from a distant clan, who is also seeking solace from Nature and respite from her own family. Startled into unplanned action Moss feels compelled to plunge rashly into the primeval wilderness—totally unprepared for quality Away Time. Does he seriously believe that he can slip into the woods as a youth and emerge some days later to be recognized and accepted as a man? Can two lonely, misunderstood pre-teens find their respective ways back home? Will Moss be able to interpret and follow the advice from a matronly porcupine?

Despite several un-Indian expressions, behavior and conversation, this short tale is surprisingly well told—instantly capturing the reader’s interest. Moss learns important lessons that critical day of the unwanted guests: about hospitality, maturation of the heart and mind, plus the value of a caring family. This book provides good multicultural fare. One wonders if the first Thanksgiving encounter between Native Americans and the Pilgrims was anything like this...

(April 15, 2013, I welcome dialogue with teachers.)

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### **Ashleigh Cutler says**

"You are who you are, and no one but you can tell you the truth about that."

This book about the first Thanksgiving is one of my favorites. Moss is amusing, yet real. Trouble, the girl he befriends, is fun to read about. It's an interesting book no matter what. And I've never forgot the one line above.

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### **Julia says**

A nice little story. There are messages in here without being too preachy. There are little stories that a few of the characters tell and they feel authentic. You get a good feeling of the characters in the short time.

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### **Suzi says**

I liked the simplicity of the characters. I related to their questioning of roles in their families and their society even though I am adult. Or maybe that is why I related to it! :-)

It is a different viewpoint on the First Thanksgiving. The discomfort felt by both the natives and the whites is probably closer to the truth than the kumbaya version in most books for children.

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