**A Long Way Gone Questions**

**Chapter 15**

p.126 – 137

1. As chapter 15 begins, a dreadful, nightmarish routine is, by now, firmly in place—“In my head my life was normal,” Ishmael writes (126). How long has he been a soldier?
2. What happens to Ishmael and Alhaji, and a few other select boys, in the town of Bauya?
3. Where are these boys taken and by whom?
4. Who is Mambu?
5. Why does Ishmael take a liking to him?

**A Long Way Gone Questions**

**Chapter 16**

P. 138 – 151

1. Benin Home, where Ishmael undergoes psychological, emotional, and social counseling, as well as physical and medical attention, is where he keeps hearing the “this isn’t your fault” remark from various staffers and professionals. Does he ever really accept this mantra? Explain.
2. Describe the children’s initial response to rehabilitation.
3. What behaviors did Beah and his friends display that suggests they may have been going through drug withdrawal?
4. Given the chance, would you work with children in this rehabilitative setting? Why or why not?
5. Why did it make the child soldiers so angry when the staff repeatedly told them the things that happened weren’t their fault?

**A Long Way Gone Questions**

**Chapter 17**

p. 152 – 166

1. Who is Esther, and why does Ishmael take a liking to her?
2. What is the significance, on pages 164-165, of Beah’s first dream about his family?
3. How does this dream demonstrate his inner conflict (man vs. self)?
4. Beah writes on page 153, “I had come to believe that people befriended only to exploit one another.” Does it make sense that he feels this way? What about the boys who were his friends before he joined the army?
5. Music comes back as Beah goes through rehabilitation. What role does it play? Is its role different than earlier in the story? Explain your answer.
6. What purpose do the flashbacks to wartime serve in this chapter and chapter sixteen?

**A Long Way Gone Questions**

**Chapter 18**

p. 167 - 178

1. Describe Beah’s transition from child soldier back to child as he describes it. Discuss the steps that Beah takes to recapture his humanity.
2. Beah finally writes on page 169, “I believe children have the resilience to outlive their sufferings, if given a chance.” Do you agree?
3. Beah meets his uncle in this chapter. Are you nervous for him or hopeful that Beah will finally move in with stable family members?
4. What evidence in this chapter suggests that happiness for Beah might always be fragile?
5. What evidence in this chapter suggests that happiness for Beah can become more permanent?

**A Long Way Gone Questions**

**Chapter 19**

p. 179 - 192

1. As he is leaving Benin Home, Ishmael says farewell to his friend Alhaji, who salutes him while whispering, “Goodbye, squad leader.” “I couldn’t salute him in return,” Ishmael writes (p. 180). Why?
2. What worries does he have about his repatriation?
3. Is he entirely honest with his uncle’s family?
4. What is the “open metal box” (p 186) that Ishmael is so confused by? Why and where has he encountered this box?
5. Why didn’t Beah date girls for very long once he moved in with his uncle, aunt, and cousins? (p. 184)
6. Why didn’t Beah’s uncle believe he was going to the United States?

**A Long Way Gone Questions**

**Chapter 20 & 21**

193 – 218

1. How does Ishmael’s experience of New York City differ from what he had pictured beforehand?
2. What does he like most about New York? What doesn’t he like?
3. Why is he visiting New York in the first place?
4. Identify some of the meaningful personal and professional contacts that our narrator makes there.
5. How does uncle Tommy die? And how, if at all, is his death facilitated or even triggered by the civil war fighting that has reached Freetown and its environs?