

Reading Guide Questions--The Breadwinner

1. Why was Parvana with her father in the market and not at school?
2. Why did father call Parvana "Malali" when the Taliban soldiers came?
3. What did the soldiers at the prison do with father's photo?
4. Why did Nooria send Parvana to get food for the family?
5. Why didn't mother go to the market?
6. What plan did Mrs. Weera and Nooria come up with in order to feed the family?
7. What job did Shauzia tell Parvana about so that they could make more money?
8. What happened when Shauzia and Parvana went to the stadium to see a soccer game?
9. Why did Shauzia want to go to France?
10. Why did Nooria agree to marry the man chosen for her?
11. What information did Parvana learn from the woman she found crying at the end of the story?
12. What did father and Parvana decide to do about the information she gave them?
13. What effect do you think the United States invasion of Afghanistan had on families like Parvana's?

## Reading Guide Questions/**Answer Key**

1. Why was Parvana with her father in the market and not at school?  
Parvana was not in school because the Taliban did not allow girls to go to school.
2. Why did father call Parvana “Malali” when the Taliban soldiers came?  
Father called Parvana “Malali” because Malali was a heroine in Afghanistan who helped to lead an army into battle. He wanted her to be strong, like Malali, while he was gone.
3. What did the soldiers at the prison do with father’s photo?  
The soldiers tore the picture into pieces, which Parvana gathered up after hiding them under her chador.
4. Why did Nooria send Parvana to get food for the family?  
Nooria sent Parvana because they had no more food, and Nooria was not allowed to go without a male escort.
5. Why didn’t mother go to the market?  
The mother had been beaten by the soldiers when they went to the prison in an attempt to free father. She did not move from the toshak for days because she was depressed at their failure.
6. What plan did Mrs. Weera, Mother and Nooria come up with in order to feed the family?  
The plan was to change Parvana into a boy by cutting her hair and dressing her in boy’s clothing so that she could shop for the family and later work to earn a living.
7. What job did Shauzia tell Parvana about so that they could make more money?  
The job was digging up bones from a bombed cemetery and selling them to a “bone broker.”
8. What happened when Shauzia and Parvana went to the stadium to see a soccer game?  
When the girls went to the stadium they witnessed a group of prisoners being punished for theft by having their hands chopped off.
9. Why did Shauzia want to go to France?  
Shauzia wanted to go to France because her family was always fighting. She and her mother had to live with her father’s family since he had died, and they had no other place to go.
10. Why did Nooria agree to marry the man chosen for her?  
Nooria knew the family of the man chosen to marry her. If she married him, she could go to Mazar-e-Sharif where the Taliban was not in control and she could attend school and not have to wear a burqa.
11. What information did Parvana learn from the woman she found crying at the end of the story?  
The crying woman told Parvana that Mazar-e-Sharif were taken by the Taliban, and many in the town had been killed.

12. What did father and Parvana decide to do about the information she gave them?

They decided to go and find the rest of the family--Mother, Nooria, Maryam and Ali. They hoped they were in a refugee camp outside the city.

13. What effect do you think the United States invasion of Afghanistan had on families like Parvana's?

This question is an opinion and so many answers are acceptable. If the Taliban was removed from Afghanistan, some freedoms would be given back including school for girls, no curfew, more choice in music and television, and no blacked windows. If the Taliban is in power, fewer freedoms would be allowed.

## Vocabulary Definitions

cease - to stop

blunt – speaking very directly

burqa – a long dress that the Taliban said women would wear whenever they went outside

chador - a piece of cloth worn by females to cover their hair and shoulders.

pakul – a gray or brown woolen hat worn by afghan men and boys.

collide - to come together, to crash

derision – to make fun of

embedded - enclosed in something

embroidered – pretty sewing on fabric done with needle and thread

hover – floating in the air

intricate – very fancy or complicated

labyrinth - system of paths where it is easy to get lost

landmines- explosive devices meant to hurt people or equipment

militia - an army composed of ordinary citizens rather than professional soldiers

nan - bread

resolve - end

shalwar kameez- pajama like clothing worn by men and women

snippet - a small piece

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Vocabulary Assessment

### Word Bank:

cease	blunt	burqa	chador
pakul	collided	derision	embedded
embroidered	hover	intricate	labyrinth
militia	resolve	snippet	

1. Parvana laughed when she was a tea boy and \_\_\_\_\_ with a donkey in the market.
2. The shalwar kameese was beautifully \_\_\_\_\_ on the sleeves where it was stitched with care.
3. Nooria and her mother had to wear a \_\_\_\_\_ whenever leaving home, even with an escort.
4. Parvana wished she had her \_\_\_\_\_ when she found Homa, and they had to walk home in the cold.
5. Parvana no longer had to wear her \_\_\_\_\_ after she was dressed as a boy.
6. The Taliban was called a \_\_\_\_\_ or army in The Breadwinner.
7. The pattern on the cloth was \_\_\_\_\_ or complex in the way it was made.
8. Shauzia did not feel she could \_\_\_\_\_ the conflicts in her home between her mother and grandparents.
9. The market was like a \_\_\_\_\_ and Parvana was afraid she might get lost there is she wasn't careful.
10. The landmine was \_\_\_\_\_ in the ground and covered with soil so that it couldn't be detected.
11. Parvana's father hoped his time in prison would \_\_\_\_\_, and he could go home.
12. Nooria often talked about Parvana with \_\_\_\_\_, she wasn't always very nice to her.
13. Mrs. Weera spoke in a \_\_\_\_\_ manner, she said what she thought and did not try to hide the truth.
14. Parvana heard just a \_\_\_\_\_ of the conversation between her mother and Mrs. Weera.
15. The skulls in the cemetery seemed to \_\_\_\_\_ over the girls as they worked, propped up over them.

## Vocabulary Assessment Answer Key

1. Parvana laughed when she was a tea boy and **collided** with a donkey in the market.
2. The shalwar kameese was beautifully **embroidered** on the sleeves where it was stitched with care.
3. Nooria and her mother had to wear a **burqa** whenever leaving home, even with an escort.
4. Parvana wished she had her **pakul** when she found Homa, and they had to walk home in the cold.
5. Parvana no longer had to wear her **chador** after she was dressed as a boy.
6. The Taliban was called a **militia** or army in The Breadwinner.
7. The pattern on the cloth was **intricate** or complex in the way it was made.
8. Shauzia did not feel she could **resolve** the conflicts in her home between her mother and grandparents.
9. The market was like a **labyrinth** and Parvana was afraid she might get lost there is she wasn't careful.
10. The landmine was **embedded** in the ground and covered with soil so that it couldn't be detected.
11. Parvana's father hoped his time in prison would **cease**, and he could go home.
12. Nooria often talked about Parvana with **derision**, she wasn't always very nice to her.
13. Mrs. Weera spoke in a **blunt** manner, she said what she thought and did not try to hide the truth.
14. Parvana heard just a **snippet** of the conversation between her mother and Mrs. Weera.
15. The skulls in the cemetery seemed to **hover** over the girls as they worked, propped up over them.



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