

## Argentum's Song Discussion Questions

### Chapters 1 to 5

1. How do your experiences with a parent or guardian affect the way that you relate or don't relate to Argent's relationship with Simon? (8r-1.6)
2. How does what is said and what is left unsaid in the dialogue between Argent and Martha complicate the plot? What details support your conclusion? (8r-1.5)
3. What does Russell want you to understand about Franklin's decision to approach the fire at the end of chapter three? How is this information communicated? (7r – 1.5)
4. Bildad uses the phrase 'Festering wounds!' in his discussion with Simon even though there are no wounds present. What do you think he is trying to convey through that idiom? What clues led you to that conclusion? If this is a common idiom in this world, why might it have come into being? (7r-3.2)
5. Why might Russell spend so much time describing the audiences interaction with the tinker before the show begins in chapter 5? What might he be trying to make us believe? (8r-1.7)
6. What hints does Russell drop that Martha's contract was going to be sold earlier in the chapter? Did you figure it out before she did? When? (8r-1.8)

## Argentum's Song Discussion Questions

### Chapters 6 to 11

1. Russell spent some time living in the foothills of the Himalayan mountains after university. How might this experience have affected the choices he makes in describing Phoentown and mountain valley in the last few chapters? What is one sentence that you think might have come from his own experience in mountain towns? (8r-2.1)
2. Russell is intentionally paralleling Simon's quest with Argent's in chapter 7. What are some of the similarities? What are some of the differences? What reason might he be highlighting these in this short chapter? (8r-1.7)
3. Why do you think Russell stops the chapter where he does in chapter 8? Why would he make us wait to find out what happens to Martha? (7r-1.7)
4. Earl has a very different perspective than Franklin in chapter 9. If you were in Earl's shoes how would you have handled the situation? (7 – 1.6)
5. What might be Russell's purpose in contrasting the symbolism of Argent's father's sword with his mother's tin flute? (8r – 2.4)
6. What do the words 'Thrall' and 'Liege' mean in the context of chapter 11? What clues helped you discover that? (8r-3.2)

## Argentum's Song Discussion Questions

### Chapters 12 and 13

1. Find a partner, take turns reading a chapter out loud to each other. (8r-3.3)
  - When reading - try to vary your speed and intonation for emphasis and to maintain their attention.
  - When listening – Provide a 'criticism sandwich' for the performer when they are done. Tell them something you liked about it, something they could have done better, and end with something else that you liked.
2. How was experiencing the story orally different than reading it on the page? Which did you enjoy more? Which do you think would help you remember details better? Why? (8r-4.1)
3. Write a short chapter (one or two pages) imagining what might have happened to Argent in the Warren. (7w-2.1)
4. Identify 3 language choices (adverbs, adjectives, similes, metaphors, exaggeration, personification etc.) that you made in your writing and explain why you made those choices. (7w-2.3)

## Argentum's Song Discussion Questions

### Chapters 14 to 18

1. Chapter 14 is intentionally full of unanswered questions. Who are the weirs hunting? Who got away? Make a list of at least three other questions you are left with in this chapter. See if they are answered in chapters to come. Why might Russell choose to have a chapter like this here? (9r-1.2&1.4)
2. What would you like to have done if you were in Franklin's shoes in chapter 15? What might you actually have done? Have you ever been in a situation where you could relate to his inability to follow through on the plan he wanted to do? How would you feel in that situation? (9r-1.5)
3. What does Argent's dream in chapter 16 remind us of earlier in this story? Why might Russell have included this here? (9r-1.6)
4. Why might Russell have chosen to write chapter 17 from Runt's point of view rather than from Argent's? In your opinion was this an effective choice, or would you have preferred to have it continue on from the last chapter? (9r-1.7)
5. Chapter 18 breaks the action. Russell slows the reader down to give them a breather (Maybe a place to put a bookmark). Was this chapter worthwhile or would you have preferred to skip it? Why? (9r-1.7)

## Argentum's Song Discussion Questions

### Chapters 19 to 22

1. What is the effect or mood created by chapter 19?  
What words contribute to that effect? (9r-2.3)
2. In these chapters Argent consistently refers to his father as 'Simon'. Why is this significant? How do you think he primarily feels about his relationship with his father? What do you think he wished it was like? Think of a relationship you wished were different. How does it make you feel? (7r-1.6)
3. How reliable does Argent's understanding of Ferus seem? How much of what Argent passes on to Martha do you think he got directly from Ferus? What parts do you think he assumes based on what he was told growing up? If you were in Argent and Martha's shoes, how would you determine what was true?
4. How do you think the creator, Ferus, feels about their hunt for truth about Him, even if they get some details wrong?
5. What do you think is trying to be communicated through the choice of pronouns (it, she etc.)? Do you find this to be an effective technique? How else could it be accomplished? (7r-2.4)

## Argentum's Song Discussion Questions

### Chapters 23 to 30

1. Allegorical stories (like this one) use symbolism to greater or lesser extents to communicate key themes. The weir virus is one of the key symbols in this book. What idea in the real world might this symbol be trying to remind us of? What is another possible allegorical symbol we have come across and what do you think the meaning might be? (7r-2.4)
2. We now have confirmation that the first three perspectives that we were introduced to (Argent, Martha & Franklin) have been the only voices that we experience the story through. Why do you think that these voices were chosen? What is unique about their perspectives? What is similar? (7r-1.7)
3. We have less information about Franklin's relationship with his father than we do with Argent's relationship with Simon, but there are hints and bits of information dropped throughout the story (like at the end of chapter 30). Make a table comparing and contrasting similarities and differences between the two father/son relationships.

## Argentum's Song Discussion Questions

### Chapters 31 to end

1. As Argent finally remembered what happened in the Warren, what surprised you about it? What felt right about it, like it fit the story? Authors often try to make their big reveals 'surprising yet inevitable'. This means they try to drop enough hints so that it doesn't feel like it comes out of left field when it arrives, but to keep the reader from being sure about their correct guess until either the reveal or slightly before it.
2. In your opinion what, if any, reveals in this story felt 'surprising yet inevitable'? What, if any, reveals felt forced and like they didn't fit the universe that was created here, or like they were too obvious from the start?
3. Earlier I asked about what you thought about Ferus' feelings about Argent and Martha's hunt for truth. Two decades ago it was Simon and Bildad who were youth, trying to figure out the truth about Ferus. How do you think Ferus felt about Simon and Bildad's hunt for truth when they started? How do you think he feels about where Simon and Bildad are now? What, if anything, do you think changed?

4. In chapter 32 Argent verbally refers to Simon as 'father' for the first time in the book. What is the significance of this change? Do you think it was a conscious or unconscious choice? Why? (7r-1.5)
5. At this point in the story does the author's choice of voices seem justified? How might the meaning of the story have been different if it had been told from the perspective of Simon, Bildad and Earl instead of Argent, Martha and Franklin? What can this choice tell us about some of Russell's possible purposes in telling the story? What about possible bias? (7r-1.9)
6. When you first started reading this book, who did you think the 'enemies' or 'villains' were? Did that label ever shift for you? Who were some of the characters that held that label and when did you feel it shifted one way or the other?
7. Who do you think held the label of 'enemy' or 'villain' from Ferus' perspective?
8. At various points Argent experiences unfulfilled expectations. His father's expectation on him, his expectations on himself, his expectations of what Ferus values or will do, his expectations of his mentors' actions. How does this affect him throughout the story? How might it affect his faith?
9. What was the topic, purpose and intended audience of this book? (7w-1.1)