

MINNESOTA COLD READING GROUP GUIDE

1. Is *Minnesota Cold* an appropriate or deceptive title for this novel? Can you think of the different ways the phrase is employed within the book? Does the title have different meanings for different characters?
2. Sallie has become “domestic” according to her friend Paula. How do you think the tasks of family maintenance like food preparation might be divided if basic services like electricity disappeared and access to goods interrupted? How would families accustomed to living in modern cities adjust to a rustic life?
3. What characters do you sympathize with most in the novel, and why? Which characters are the least sympathetic? Do your sympathies shift over the course of the novel?
4. Parent-child relationships play intricate roles in *Minnesota Cold* beginning with Sallie’s separation from Marcus then her difficult relationship with Elizabeth. How do you respond to Sallie’s belief that Elizabeth’s distancing begins with Marcus arrival in the Dodge household? What motivates Elizabeth’s loyalty to the Minnesota Territory leadership team instead of her family? How is Elizabeth’s relationship with Dylan different than Sallie’s relationship with her sons?
5. Children are often center stage during *Minnesota Cold*’s turning points. From Marcus’ abduction to the presence of boarder children in the Dodge home through Mercedes’ return to Canada and the treatment of Megan’s offspring, what is the author saying about adults’ responsibility for youngsters? What symbolism does the Butterfly Slaughter have?
6. The potential for extending quality life has been developed by medical scientists in *Minnesota Cold*. Sallie finds the possibility of living beyond her natural lifespan emotionally and morally difficult. Faced with the same decisions about taking these rejuvenation drugs, what would you consider?
7. Breeder communities pose many ethical issues in Minnesota’s future. Why do Minnesota’s leaders support these communities? What do the eyeless twins signify? What issues might face the breeder community offspring as Minnesota moves forward?
8. Sallie, while rejecting Doug’s slow timeline, does agree with him in believing revolution can be achieved through information and restoration of democratic traditions. Weaver believes his use of operatives and weapons is more pragmatic. Why is Benjamin chosen to partner with Sallie and Weaver in leading North Star?
9. What would you want to talk with Sallie about at the end of *Minnesota Cold*?