

## Discussion Questions for Two Moon Princess

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1. As the story opens Princess Andrea is competing in the Pages Games. She wants to prove to her father that she is as good as any boy and totally ready to become a squire. But her father dismisses her efforts as child play and tells her she must join her mother and be with her ladies from then on.

Why do you think Andrea's father doesn't want her to be a squire? Do you agree with his decision? Why?

2. Over the following months, Andrea tries hard to comply with her mother's wishes and behave like a lady. But spending so much time inside the castle and submitting her will to her mother's doesn't agree with Andrea's independent spirit. Andrea feels like a fake.

Have you ever being in a situation in which you feel that you didn't fit in? What did you do about it?

3. In Andrea's world your choices in life are predetermined by whether you are a boy or a girl and by who your parents are. As a Princess, Andrea's future will include to marry some lord her father wants as an ally. After seeing her sister Rosa being wooed by Don Julián, Andrea is more than willing to leave her father's castle and try her chances in that other world where her uncle lives.

Do you think it took courage on Andrea's part to leave everything she knew behind?

4. Andrea's ancestors came to Xaren-Ra from Spain thirteen centuries ago. That is why Andrea speaks an old-fashioned form of Spanish and no English at all. When Andrea first arrives in California, she is frustrated because she can't understand John. [maybe make this broader, have you ever had trouble making yourself understood? Imagine you are in a situation like that, where people don't understand you. What can you do to better communicate?]

Have you ever been in another country where they didn't speak English? Did you have trouble making yourself understood?

5. Andrea loves California. She loves the clothes, the food and especially the freedom girls have in this new world. Yet it must have been difficult for her to adapt to a culture so different from her own.

Have you ever moved to a new place where you didn't know anybody? Was it difficult to get used to the new environment and to make friends?

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6. Despite missing her family, her old nurse and Flecha, her horse, Andrea wants to stay in California.

Given the choice, if you are/were a girl where would you want to live: in Andrea's world or in California? Why? And if you are/were a boy?

7. When Andrea watches the balcony scene between Romeo and Juliet in Shakespeare's play, she remembers Don Julián's passionate interchange with Rosa.

In which way do you think that Don Julián and Rosa's story parallels Romeo and Juliet's? In which way do you think it differs?

8. On her first week-end in California, her uncle, Tío Ramiro, takes Andrea to visit several Spanish missions. Tío Ramiro wants Andrea to understand what happens when two civilizations at different stages of development meet. He fears Andrea's world would be destroyed if ours learn about it, as the Native American culture was destroyed when first the Spanish and then the English came to California.

Do you think his fears are justified?

9. John's first reaction when coming into Andrea's world is to rationalize the differences between Xaren-Ra and Earth by believing he is at an Amusement Park.

Apart from the two moons and the different constellations in the night sky, what do you think would be the main give-away pointing to the fact that Andrea's world, Xaren-Ra, is not Earth?

10. As the story ends, Andrea is back in California and so is Julián. But their plans are quite different. Julián has come to learn how to build dams and canals to help his people, then he is to return to his world. Andrea, on the other hand, wants to stay in California forever.

What do you think will happen next? Do you think Andrea will give up her dreams of freedom and return to Xaren-Ra with Julián or do you think she will stay in California without him? What would you do if you were Andrea?