***The Breadwinner* by Deborah Ellis**

**Study Guide**

**Ch. 1-2**

1. How is it that Parvana’s father has a job reading letters to people in the market?
2. When the Taliban said that girls could not go to school, how did Parvana feel about it at first? How and why did her feelings about school change?
3. Why has there been so much fighting in Afghanistan? Who is fighting who? Why all the bombing?
4. How has so much bombing affected Parvana’s life?
5. What was Kabul like before all the fighting?
6. What was Parvana’s family’s life like before all the fighting?
7. Why does Parvana have to haul buckets of water?
8. Father tells Parvana that “The Taliban encourage neighbor to spy on neighbor.” (23) Why would the Taliban do this?
9. What happened to Houssain?
10. Do Parvana’s parents share the Taliban’s values and beliefs? How do you know?
11. Why does Parvana’s father call her “Malali”? Does the name fit PArvana?
12. Why does PArvana try so hard to protect the books from the soldiers?
13. List some of the rules and laws the Taliban has made.
14. Describe what Parvana’s life is like under the Taliban.

**Ch. 3 through 5**

1. Remember that the Taliban ordered all windows painted over with black paint, but Parvana's father refuses to paint one window over.  That one window lets in a little sunshine on clear days.  Why do you think sunlight was so important to Parvana's father that he was willing to risk disobeying the Taliban?
2. How are Parvana and her mother like Malala in chapter 3?  Ultimately, is Parvana braver than her mother?
3. Remember that women are not supposed to be outside without a man unless they have a note from their husband.  Parvana asks Nooria to write a note and forge Father's signature so that they can get away with being outside.  Why does Mother refuse teh note?  What does this say about her character traits?
4. How do the guards respond when Parvana and Mother demand Father's realse?  What does this reponse tell you about life under the Taliban?
5. Father and Mother had actually argued about whether or not they should stay in Afghanistan.  Did they make the right choice to stay?  What was Father's perspective?  What was Mother's?
6. Mother hasn't left the apartment in a year and half, but Father could have taken her outside.  Why does she refuse to go out?  Why does Father believe she needs to go outside?
7. How does Mother respond when she returns to the apartment after the beating?  How does her behavior affect Parvana and the other children?
8. Has Parvana's mother failed them?  Why or why not?
9. Take Mother's perspective for a moment.  What is she probably thinking and feeling right now?
10. Parvana says people in the family "lean" on each other.  How is this true?  In what ways do the characters need each other?
11. What kind of a person would you say Mrs. Weera is? What character traits would you say she has?
12. Now that you've read several chapters, how would you describe Nooria and Parvana?  What are their character traits?

**Chapters 6-8**

1. Why does Parvana's family think it makes sense to have Parvana pretend to be a boy? Why do you think Parvana agrees to it?
2. Before agreeing, Parvana says,  "Cut Nooria's hair!  She's the oldest!  It's her responsibility to look after me, not my responsibility to look after her!" (65)  Do you agree or disagree with what Parvana says?  Why?
3. How does Mother react to Parvana's transformation?
Why does Parvana's interaction in the market with the Talib man (79) cause her to question how she sees Talibs?
4. How does Parvana feel about pretending to be a boy? How does it begin to change the way she sees herself?
5. What motivates Mrs. Weera to move in with Parvana's family?
6. WHy do you think Mother acts more "like her old self" when Mrs. Weera is around? (83)
7. Who do you think might be leaving the presents (the cloth and the bracelet) for Parvana on the blanket?  What might be motivating this person to leave Parvana little gifts?
8. Describe how life is getting better for Parvana and her family. What conflicts do they still face?

**Ch. 9-11**

1. Is opening a school a good idea? Why or why not? Consider how it will affect Nooria and the rest of the family too.
2. Compare Shauzia’s life to PArvana’s. In what ways have their lives been very similar? In what ways have their lives been different?
3. In Chapter 10, find some examples of powerful imagery. (Descriptive details that help you picture the setting.) What mood do those images create?
4. What do you think of the girls’ decision to dig up bones for money? Are they doing the right thing?
5. How do Shauzia and Parvana feel about digging up bones for money? How does the rest of Parvana’s family feel about digging up bones? What do their feelings reveal about their values?
6. How has all the fighting and hardship changed the characters’ values? Why would fighting and hardship have this effect on their values?
7. On page 111, why does Parvana tell Shauzia that they should remember digging up bones? Why would they want to remember something so awful?
8. In Chapter 11, there are examples of great cruelty and kindness. Parvana and Shauzia witness a man’s hands being cut off, yet at the same time strangers are kind to them. Some men tell them not to look, help them pick up their trays and get out of the stadium. Why might Deborah Ellis have chosen to include examples of kindess and cruelty in the same chapter? What point do you think she’s making?

**Ch. 12-14**

1. Why does Shauzia want to leave Afghanistan? Is she being selfish? Is she making the right decision?
2. Why doesn’t Parvana agree to leave Afghanistan with Shauzia? Is she making the right decision?
3. Compare Parvana and Shauzia’s values. How are they different? Why are they different?
4. On page 130, why is Parvana feeling so tired? Why does she actually want to “sit in a classroom and be bored by a geography lesson”? (130)
5. When men stop to buy things from Parvana or to have her read a letter, why does she ask them questions about their lives?
6. One afternoon Parvana hears a woman crying and screaming. When she tries to look, a man says, “What goes on in a man’s house is his own business” (134). Do you agree with the man? Why or why not?
7. What is Nooria motivation for getting married? How does Parvana feel about it?
8. Why doesn’t Parvana want to go to Mazar with the rest of her family?
9. When Parvana is talking with Shauzia, why does she say, “I’m not satisfied with anything anymore”? (138) Why is she feeling this way?
10. What motivates Parvana to help the crying woman she finds on her way home? What does this suggest about her character?
11. How does Mrs. Weera responds to the woman Parvana brings home? What does this suggest about Mrs. Weera’s values and character traits?
12. Describe what happened in Mazar.
13. Why was Homa willing to leave her mother and father’s bodies in the street? How does she feel about her decision now? What do you think?
14. When Parvana hears about Mazar, why does she lie down on her toshak and refuse to move? What motivates her to finally get up again?

**Ch. 15 to end**

1. When Parvana plants the flowers in the market, how are those flowers a metaphor for Afghanistan? Reread page 163.
2. Is there hope for Parvana , her family and her friends? Will their lives get better? Find evidence to support your answer.

***Iqbal* by Francesco D’Adamo**

**Study Guide**

**Ch. 1-3**

1. Why does Fatima have to work for Hussain Khan?
2. What do you think the Tomb is?
3. Why does no one “have the courage to run away” when Hussain Khan and his wife aren’t supervising them?
4. What rules do Fatima and the other children have to follow?
5. Describe what the average day is like for Fatima and the other children.
6. What kind of first impression does Iqbal make? Why do you think Hussain Khan chains him?
7. Why does Karim say, “The master knows that I’m loyal and he needs me”? (17). Why would Karim be loyal to Hussain Khan? Why does he think this way?
8. How did Iqbal come to be a child laborer? What motivated his father to sell him into bonded labor?
9. How are Fatima and the other children supposed to be able to become free? Do you believe this will happen? Why or why not?
10. Hussain Khan says that he is “a fair and good master who give you what you deserve” (5). Is this true? How does Hussain Khan treat the children? Give evidence to support your opinion.

**Ch. 4-7**

1. Explain how Fatima and the other children feel about Karim. What do you think of him
2. Why do the other children refuse to believe Iqbal when he warns them that their debts will never be paid? Why do the other children start to resent Iqbal?
3. When Fatima is talking about how all the children get along, she says, “Since we shared the same fate and the same kind of life, you’d think we children would feel united, but instead we quarreled and separated into little groups.” (25) Why do you think this is? Why aren’t the children united?
4. What motivates Iqbal to go over all his memories every night before he goes to sleep?
5. Describe how Hussain Khan treats the children when the foreigners come. Why does he treat them differently?
6. What motivates Iqal to destroy the carpet?
7. Describe what it’s like in the Tomb. How does the Tomb affect the children put there?
8. What motivates Fatima and some of the other children to help Iqbal when he is in the Tomb? What motivates Karim to go with them?
9. the Tomb many of the children had disliked Iqbal and felt envious. How do the other children feel about Iqbal after he is released from the Tomb? Why does the Tomb change their feelings about him?
10. Why are the children less afraid after Iqbal comes back from the Tomb?
11. In Chapter 7, how has the atmosphere changed in the workshop? What is causing this change?

**Ch. 8-10**

1. What was Iqbal trying to accomplish when he brought the police to Hussain’s home?
2. Why do the police give Iqbal back to Hussain?
3. For so long why was Iqbal the only one who “had enough courage to rebel against Hussain”? (62) Why didn’t the other children rebel at first?
4. Why does Hussain release Iqbal from the Tomb?
5. What motivates the other children to stand up for Maria and ask to be sent to the Tomb with her?
6. What do you think the kite mentioned in Chapter 8 might symbolize?
7. Why are all the other children so amazed by Iqbal’s description of his time in the outside world?
8. During Iqbal’s time escaped from Hussain, he hears a man from the Bonded Labor Liberation Front of Pakistan speak in front of a group of people. How do the people react to the speaker from the Bonded Labor Liberation Front? Why do they react this way?
9. At the beginning of Chapter 10, how has “a new spring arrived” before literally and figuratively? (75)
10. Why do the children want to learn to read?
11. How do the other children teach Maria how to speak again? Why did she stop speaking in the first place?
12. In Chapter 10, Fatima remarks something has changed her and the other children and the way the feel about each other. She says, “Now we were united, strong, friends and something more.” (75) What has united the children?
13. Do you think the fight that helped Iqbal escape was planned or not? Back up your opinion with evidence.

**Ch. 11-12**

1. What motivates Eshan Khan to finally save the children from Hussain Khan?
2. Why don’t the children immediately leave when Eshan Khan sets them free?
3. Why does Fatima start to cry once she’s safe in the Bonded Labor Liberation Front house?
4. Why do Fatima and Maria stay with the Bonded Labor Liberation Front instead of going home to their families?
5. Why do many of the other children choose to go home instead of staying with the Liberation Front?
6. What motivates Iqbal to stay with the Liberation Front instead of going home?
7. Why is Eshan Khan reluctant to let Iqbal stay and help the Liberation Front?
8. Describe everything Iqbal does to help the Bonded Labor Liberation Front?
9. Why does Iqbal say that the Liberation Front should target the moneylenders?
10. When Eshan Kahn is talking about the moneylenders he says, “They’re afraid of…our voice. They get rich and fatten where there’s silence and ignorance.” (96) What does he mean? How do the moneylenders benefit from silence and ignorance?
11. When the Liberation Front speaks in front of crowds, who are the few people who show approval? Why are they the only ones to show approval?
12. Why do “they” attack the Liberation Front’s headquarters? What is their motivation?
13. When the Liberation Front tries to talk to one of the men working at the brick factory, he never looks up or stops working. (103) Why is that? Why isn’t he happy to see them?
14. Why does Iqbal feel that seeing the adults work in the brick factory is almost worse than seeing the children?
15. Describe what life is like for people who work at the brick factory. (Why can’t any of them ever get ahead and save some money?)
16. Why does Iqbal admit to Fatima that he’s scared? Why doesn’t he want her to tell anyone?

**Ch. 13 to end**

1. Why is it so important that Iqbal won the award from Reebok?
2. Why doesn’t Iqbal want to travel?
3. When Iqbal is practicing the speech her will make in Sweden and Boston, why does he insist that as long as there is child labor in the world that, “*nobody can say: It’s not my business*”? (111) Why does he insist child labor is everyone’s business? Is this true?
4. When Iqbal gets on a plane, why does Fatima say, “Iqbal had taken the biggest kite”? (112) How is a plane a kite?
5. What winds up happening to Iqbal? How does he die?
6. When Maria finds out that Iqbal is dead, why does she say, “I know it’s not true”? ( 118) How can Iqbal not be dead?
7. Why does Maria tell Fatima that they should tell everyone their story?