



## Ground School Reading Discussion: Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Wall Kimmerer

1. “Plants tell their stories not by what they say, but by what they do.” What was your favorite plant story in Braiding Sweetgrass and what lesson did you learn from it?
2. Kimmerer challenges us to see a more positive relationship between people and the environment, like the generosity of geese or the gift of strawberries or pecans that nourished her and her family in time of need. We can shift our focus on the negative impacts of people on the land like “brownfields, factory farms, suburban sprawl” to opportunities for reciprocity and renewal. What is your knowledge of positive interactions between people and land?
3. Scientific knowledge and indigenous ways of knowing are complimentary, just like goldenrod and New England asters. Do you think there’s a need for objectivity (science) and subjectivity to mesh together for there to be a fuller appreciation of plants, animals and the natural world? How can scientific knowledge and other ways of knowing benefit each other?
4. In “The Grammar of Animacy,” Kimmerer posits that the word *it* “robs a person of selfhood and kinship, reducing a person to a mere thing.” What would change if the English language reflected the animacy of plants and animals?
5. How does Kimmerer talk about reciprocity? How can we apply the idea of reciprocity to agriculture?
6. What does it mean to be native to a place, according to Kimmerer? Are you native to any place?
7. Were there any characters, ideas or lessons that felt personally challenging to you?
8. What is one takeaway or application point you are going to carry with you this summer?



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