

## *Pibbin the Small: A Tale of Friendship Bog*

### Discussion Questions

#### CHAPTER 1

1. Where did Pibbin go to look for Sheera? (*He looked beside Friendship Bog and at her home pool.*)
2. Why did the other animals come to see Sheera? (*They wanted her advice when they were sick.*)
3. How did Sheera save Pibbin's life? (*She let him hide under the edge of her shell.*)
4. How many animals were standing at Rumble Road by the time Pibbin arrived? (*Nine: Gaffer, Carpenter, a squirrel, three mice, a rabbit, and two rabbit children.*)
5. Was Rumble Road a paved road? (*No, it was sand.*)  
How can you tell? (*Answers may vary, but Sheera was "lying in the sand" and the road in the picture looks like sand.*)
6. Why did Gaffer want to get Sheera away from the road? (*Answers may include: it was a dangerous place and he didn't want anyone else to be injured.*)
7. How did they move Sheera? (*with Carpenter's wagon*)  
Do you think it was a hard job? (*Probably, but everyone helped.*)
8. What three things did Sheera's friends suggest to help her? (*ferns, worm juice, and cold water*)  
What did Pibbin think of their advice? (*He didn't do any of them, so he probably wasn't convinced that they would help.*)

#### CHAPTER 2

1. What is the special sound that Pibbin makes? (*"Wonk."* [**Note:** *this is the call of the Pine Barrens Treefrog.*])
2. Why did Pibbin worry about the owl seeing him? (*Owls eat frogs.*)  
Why did he think he would be safer in a bush? (*Answers will vary but could include: it would be harder for an owl to see him and to get at him.*)
3. What does Sheera eat? (*spiders, bugs, and berries*)
4. Why do you think Pibbin wanted to have a shell like Sheera's? (*Answers will vary but could include the idea that he thought it was beautiful.*)
5. What color are Sheera's eyes? (*Golden.* [**Note:** *female box turtles usually have golden or brown eyes; males usually have orange or red eyes.*])
6. Why did Pibbin want to see the waves at Silver Sea? (*Sheera had told him about their many colors.*)  
Does Silver Sea sound like a place you'd like to visit? (*Answers will vary.*)

7. Do you know of anyone with a wooden leg? (*Answers will vary.*)  
Do you think a person really could have a wooden leg? (*Answers will vary, but it could be noted that doctors today can make replacement legs that bend and look real.*)
8. Why didn't Gaffer tell Pibbin that he should go and get the leaves for Sheera? (*Answers will vary but could include the idea that he wanted it to be Pibbin's decision.*)
9. Why did Pibbin feel so small? (*Perhaps he was afraid of the long trip.*)
10. What made Pibbin begin to think he might be brave enough to take the trip? (*The bus and the nice old toad would make it easier.*)

### CHAPTER 3

1. What did Gaffer say about Pibbin's pal? (*He should be quick and smart*)  
Why? (*Answers will vary.*)
2. Why did Pibbin think Carpenter would make a good pal? (*He was smart, and he was fast with a hammer.*)
3. What made Carpenter say that Pibbin was still small? (*Pibbin couldn't handle the long stick that Carpenter wanted.*)
4. What did Pibbin think of Cheeco? (*Answers may include the ideas that Cheeco was too loud, too bouncy, and selfish.*)
5. What made Pibbin finally decide to go and get the Sweetberry leaves? (*Sheera's leg wasn't getting better and he didn't want her to have a wooden leg.*)
6. Why do you think Sheera's eyes grew brighter? (*Answers will vary, but probably she was glad that Pibbin would be getting the leaves for her.*)
7. How do you think Pibbin felt after Bug Master left? (*He probably felt discouraged and scared.*)
8. Do you think the peeper frogs made Pibbin feel better? (*Yes.*)  
How can you tell? (*He sounded determined when he spoke to them.*)

### CHAPTER 4

1. What was Corey afraid of? (*Answers may include that he was afraid of crossing Rumble Road and of running into enemies such as a coon or a fox or snapping crabs.*)
2. How did Corey try to help? (*He gave them a map and later promised to take care of Sheera.*)
3. Do you think having the map was a good idea? (*Answers will vary.*)
4. What kind of frog is Leeper? (*a leopard frog*)  
Look at the picture of Leeper on page 38. How does Leeper look like a leopard? (*He has spots too.*)

5. Why did Pibbin think Leeper would be a good pal? (*He was the best jumper in Friendship Bog, so he would be quick.*)  
How did Leeper show that he was smart? (*He sat down and studied the map.*)
6. What worried Pibbin about Rumble Road? (*Answers will vary but may include: it was wide; he didn't like dry sand; a truck might come.*)
7. What danger did Pibbin run into at Bullfrog Bog? (*A water bird [blue heron] tried to get him.*)
8. What could Leeper do that Pibbin wished he could do? (*a tricky dive*)
9. What could Pibbin do that Leeper couldn't do? (*climb trees*)
10. Why didn't Pibbin jump away when the green snake spoke to him? (*He was so scared he couldn't move.*)

## CHAPTER 5

1. Why did Pibbin decide to listen to the green snake? (*She was friendly and too small to eat him.*)
2. How would the beavers have made the stream turn into a pond? (*They built a dam that blocked the stream.*)
3. How did the map help Pibbin and Leeper at this point? (*Answers will vary but could include the ideas that it showed the marker stone for the bus and told them that they were going in the right direction.*)
4. How did Leeper help Pibbin to “use what you’ve got”? (*Leeper showed Pibbin how to do leaps and kicks with the legs he already had. [Note: Frog photos on the website show an important difference between the two: leopard frogs have feet that are partially webbed, and treefrogs have suction cups on their toes.]*)
5. What did Pibbin think the Shore Express looked like? (*a dusty house on wheels*)  
What do you think it looks like? (*Answers will vary.*)
6. Why wasn't Fridd driving the bus? (*The driver said he was sick.*)
7. Did Pibbin still want to go to Silver Sea? (*Yes.*)  
How can you tell? (*He was still thinking about the beautiful waves.*)
8. Why did Pibbin decide not to take the side-trip to Silver Sea? (*He wanted to get back to Sheera as soon as he could.*)
9. Why didn't Leeper keep the toad from grabbing Pibbin? (*Answers will vary. The old chipmunk was holding onto Leeper, and the toad moved quickly.*)
10. What kind of person do you think the toad-driver was? (*Answers will vary.*)

## CHAPTER 6

1. Why did the toad-driver grab Pibbin? *(Answers will vary, but he probably wanted to get Sheera's hoop.)*
2. If you were Pibbin, what would you have done to keep the hoop safe? *(Answers will vary.)*
3. How could Pibbin climb up the wall of the bus? *(He had sticky pads on his toes so he wouldn't slip.)*
4. Why didn't the toad-driver try to keep him from escaping? *(Answers will vary but could include: he'd have to stop the bus first, and Pibbin moved too fast.)*
5. How did Pibbin get up onto the roof of the bus? *(He kicked at a loose board until there was room for him to slip through.)*
6. How did Leeper happen to find the hoop? *(Answers will vary but may include: he was following the bus and saw it lying in the road.)*
7. How did Leeper know which way was west? *(He looked at the North Star.)*  
Did Pibbin know about the North Star? *(No, Leeper showed him.)*
8. What worried Pibbin when he saw Wild Bog? *(He wondered about the Black Snapping Crabs.)*
9. How did Pibbin and Leeper know the hawk had gone? *(The mice had started moving, and they wouldn't do that until the hawk left.)*
10. What made Pibbin and Leeper stop and listen? *(the sound of snoring)*  
Have you ever heard someone snore? What did it sound like? *(Answers will vary.)*

## CHAPTER 7

1. Do you think Pibbin had ever seen a woodchuck before? Why or why not? *(He probably hadn't, because he looked carefully at its ears and body and tail. He compared them to what he knew.)*
2. Why did Pibbin decide to wake up the doctor? *(He was worried about Sheera.)*
3. Do you think the doctor liked Sheera's hoop? *(Yes. She said it was pretty, and she pinned it onto her door.)*
4. What did Sheera's hoop look like? *(It was gold with three red jewels. [Note: see the illustration on the back cover.]*  
What do you think the hoop was? *(Answers will vary. The author thinks it is an earring that someone lost. Sheera found it and called it a hoop because of its rounded shape.)*
5. What did Pibbin worry about while he was waiting for the doctor to come back? *(the long trip back.)*
6. Why do you think the doctor said that maybe they could get some fresh leaves? *(She probably saw how disappointed Pibbin looked, and she wanted to help her friend.)*
7. What did Pibbin find out about the snapping crabs? *(They had died out.)*
8. Do you think Pibbin felt impatient while the doctor was talking about her garden? *(Yes.)*

What makes you think so? (*He wondered whether she was going to talk all day.*)

What did he do while he was waiting for her to finish? (*He did two high hops and a sideways kick.*)

## CHAPTER 8

1. How could Doctor Diggitt tell that a thief had been to her bushes? (*All the big leaves were gone.*)
2. If a Sweetberry leaf doesn't have red spots, is it ripe? (*No.*)
3. Why did Doctor Diggitt suggest other things that might help Sheera? (*She probably didn't think they'd get the leaves back from the thief.*)
4. Why did Pibbin feel scared when he guessed that the toad-driver might be the thief? (*Answers will vary but could include: the toad-driver was much bigger than Pibbin, and he had already pushed Pibbin around.*)
5. In the swamp, what did Pibbin and Leeper find that told them the toad had come this way? (*Answers may include: yellow scraps, prints in the mud, bent moss stems.*)
6. Why was Pibbin glad that Leeper was in front of him? (*Leeper was big and strong, and he could handle the toad-driver.*)
7. Do you think Leeper had a chance to fight the toad-driver? (*Answers will vary, but it seems that the toad driver surprised Leeper and hit him first.*)
8. Why didn't the toad see Pibbin? (*Probably because he jumped behind a tree.*)

## CHAPTER 9

1. What made the toad-driver drop his club? (*Pibbin kicked mud into his eyes.*)
2. Do you think Pibbin was glad he'd practiced his leaps and kicks? (*He probably was, because otherwise he might not have been able to jump high enough to fight the toad-driver.*)
3. How did Pibbin and Leeper keep the toad-driver from fighting back? (*They covered him with a box and sat on it.*)
4. How did they know that the bicycle driver was Fridd? (*He had a scar on his chin and he wore blue boots.*)
5. Why was Fridd so angry? (*Answers may include the ideas that his nephew had robbed his friends, had stolen his bus, and had driven it into the mud.*)
6. How do you think Pibbin felt when Doctor Diggitt said that the leaves were ripe? (*He was glad, but he was also in a hurry to get back to Sheera.*)
7. Why did the toad-driver steal the leaves? (*He wanted to get rich.*)  
Do you think he tried to get the hoop from Pibbin for the same reason? (*Answers will vary.*)

8. Why did Fridd tell Pibbin and Leeper to go west to the Toop River? *(They had already come so far into the swamp that continuing on to the Toop River would be the easiest way for them to return to Friendship Bog. [Note: The map at the end of the story will be helpful.]*
9. How did Leeper think the scar on a tree might be like Fridd's scar? *(Answers will vary but could include: it would be a mark that showed where something had hit it.)*
10. What two things made the mist dangerous? *(It could keep them from seeing the snakes and from finding the right way to go.)*

## CHAPTER 10

1. How did the map help them now? *(They saw where the river was, and they noticed the mark for a tall tree.)*
2. What did the scar on the tree look like? *(Answers will vary but could include: long, ragged, white, stripe.)*
3. Why did Leeper feel better when they reached the small bog? *(He knew where he was.)*
4. Why was Pibbin glad to see Singing Stream? *(He knew it would lead them to Friendship Bog.)*
5. How can you tell that the leaves helped Sheera? *(Answers will vary but could include the idea that she began to feel warm and comfortable, so her leg probably stopped hurting.)*
6. How did Pibbin make Corey feel better? *(Answers will vary but could include: he reminded Corey of how he'd helped them; he told Corey what Gaffer had told him about the importance of having a big heart.)*
7. What do you think made Pibbin the happiest when he returned? *(Answers will vary.)*
8. Do you think Pibbin and Leeper were good pals for each other? *(Answers will vary.)* Do you think they will go on another adventure? *(Answers will vary.)*