

## Siberia

**WORDS OF THE DAY: GAME ANIMAL:** an undomesticated animal that is usually hunted for food, like deer. **COLLECTIVE:** in this story it refers to a group of people working together and sharing land and assets.

1. You might want to remind the students that they learned a little about Siberia in the past. This is where prisoners of the Soviet Union were sent when they were considered traitors.
2. Tell the students to pay close attention, as they will have to help Tonya make a very important decision at the end of the story. Your decision will determine what choice she will make.
3. When you look at the map, you might want to point out where St. Petersburg is and where Mongolia is too.
4. You should tell them that the Siberians were the ancestors of most of the North and South American Indians of today. DNA tests have proven what was always thought before—that many of these northeast Asians crossed the Bering Strait that led to Alaska (when there was once a land bridge) and settled in America.
5. You should tell the students that many groups today claim to have shamans, including the New Agers, but it is only in Siberia that the word “shaman” most correctly applies.
6. If the students want to know if a shaman can marry and have children, the answer is yes.
7. Now that the Evenki students do not have to live at boarding schools, they still go to school, but return home at the end of their school day. If the parents are off herding, the students are cared for by older siblings or relatives—often grandparents or elderly aunts and uncles.
8. The Evenki have their own language and many speak Russian as well.
9. When the Evenki take their herds to new grazing areas (like the mountain meadows in the spring), they set up tents with cooking facilities where they stay for that period of their migration.

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