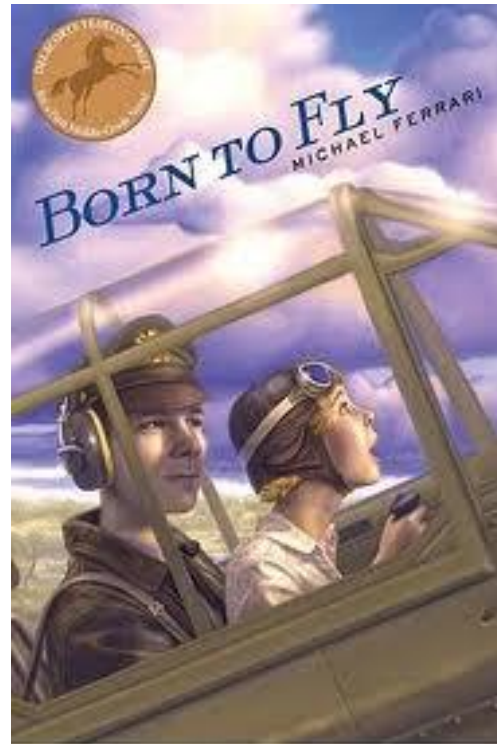


**Born to Fly by Michael Ferrari
(Random, 2009)**

It's 1942 and Bird McGill longs to be a pilot. When a young Japanese-American boy joins her class, everyone suspects him of being a spy, but it is up to Bird and Kenji to discover the real spy.



Discussion Questions

1. Bird's father takes her up for a plane ride on Dec. 7, 1941 - the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Can anyone tell me about this incident?
2. Why didn't her classmates come to Bird's birthday party?
3. Why is Bird surprised that Kenji can recite the pledge of allegiance in English?
4. Once Kenji arrives, everyone starts to pick on him. How does Bird feel about that (at first)? Why? When does her opinion of Kenji start to change?
5. Why did Kenji's parents send him to live with his uncle? How does Kenji feel about this?
6. Why does everyone seem suspicious of Kenji and his uncle, but they are not suspicious of Deputy Steyer, Father Krauss, or Mr. Ramponi?
7. The story takes place during 1941 and 1942. In what ways was life different for kids like Bird and Kenji, than it is for you today? In what ways was it similar?
8. At school, Farley and Raymond bully a younger boy and steal his candy bar, but when Farley finds a letter from the boy's father, he makes Raymond give it back. P. 29. Why? Why do you think Farley bullies other kids?
9. After her non-party Bird goes to sit on the roof of the barn, and her father joins her. Bird's dad tells her to "just be yourself, and (a friend) will find you." Do you think Bird and Kenji are a good match to be friends? Why?
10. In the beginning of the story, Bird and her mother don't seem to get along. By the end of the story, how has their relationship changed? Why?
11. Why doesn't Bird tell the court about "the man in black?" Do you think she did the right thing?
12. When Bird and her family along with Kenji go to church and other people move away from them, Father Krauss reads from the Book of Exodus – "Never falsely charge a stranger with evil: for remember you yourselves were strangers in the land of Egypt." What does this quote mean?
13. In the end, Bird gets to fulfill her dream to fly the P-40, something almost no one thought she could do. What gives her the strength and courage to do this?
14. At the end of the book there is a dream sequence where Bird sees her father come home, Why do you think the author put in this dream sequence.

*Many of the questions above were adapted from Michael Ferrari's
website <http://michaeljferrari.com>*