

## Strong as Fire, Fierce as Flame Discussion Questions

Please note, you can find a pronunciation guide for *Strong as Fire, Fierce as Flame* at <https://supriyakelkar.com/pronunciation-guide/>

1. The first lines of the book are “My father taught the village boys right outside our little earthen home, but I wasn’t a boy, so I didn’t get to learn. That didn’t stop me from trying, though.” What do these lines tell us about how things are in Meera’s life? What do they tell us about Meera’s character?
2. To “**other**” someone is to treat or think of a person or a group of people as alien to oneself or one’s group. What are some examples of othering in the book?
3. Meera has a very complicated relationship with Memsahib. In what ways does Meera find comfort in Memsahib? How does Meera’s thinking change when she realizes what Memsahib really thinks of the South Asian people whose land she is colonizing?
4. Meera cares deeply about the caged koel, Lal, at the Keenes’ bungalow. What do you think Meera feels when Lal flies away from his cage? How do you think he has changed her?
5. What are Meera and Bhavani’s strengths and weaknesses? How does Meera’s friendship with Bhavani challenge her? How does it change her over the course of the story?
6. What do you think the title, “Strong as Fire, Fierce as Flame” means?
7. How does Meera feel about her sister-in-law, Sheela, when she first sees her? How does Meera feel when she first runs into Sheela at the market in Indranagar? How is that different from Meera’s interaction with Sheela the next time they meet at the market?
8. What does Ravi’s kite mean to Meera? How do you think she feels when she flies it?
9. What does the word “**decolonize**” mean to you?

10. Why do you think the author chose to include such a detailed historical note at the end of the book?
11. Look at the cover (art by Kate Forrester, design by Sheila Smallwood). What symbolism do you see there?

