

Larry Kwong became the first player of Asian descent in the NHL when he played one shift with the New York Rangers in 1948. Even though Larry’s achievement happened more than 75 years ago, his contribution to hockey is only now being recognized. He broke hockey’s color barrier and fought racism and discrimination at every step of his career. From his humble beginnings on the outdoor rinks in Vernon, British Columbia’s Chinatown, all the way to playing at Madison Square Garden and in the NHL, this inspiring hero has a timeless story for young readers.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Chapter One: Humble Beginnings

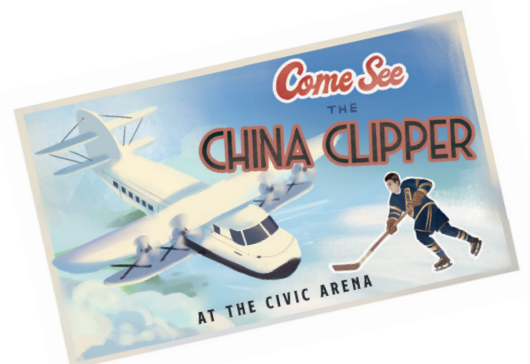
1. How were Chinese Canadians viewed by others in Canada in the early 1900s?
2. What did the Canadian government do to stop Chinese people from coming to Canada? What do you think about those laws?
3. Why was 1929 a difficult year for young Larry?
4. How was Larry expected to act in public? Why was he taught to behave that way?

Chapter Two: Hockey Night in Chinatown

1. How did Larry get hooked on hockey?
2. Larry dreamed of making it to the big league. What is your dream?
3. How do you think Larry felt when he was refused a haircut? How would you react?
4. Why was Larry “the longest shot” to make it to the NHL?

Chapter Three: The China Clipper

1. How did Larry convince his mom to let him keep playing hockey?
2. Why was Larry so determined to pursue a hockey career?
3. Why was the incident at the US border such an upsetting experience for Larry?
4. What racial barrier did Larry break in his hometown?



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Chapter Four: Blazing a Trail

1. How did Larry feel when he wasn't allowed to work with his teammates in Trail?
2. Why couldn't Larry play professional hockey in the United States in 1943?
3. Why was Larry shocked when he was drafted into the army during World War II?



Chapter Five: King Kwong

1. Why was Larry given the Key to New York's Chinatown?
2. Why do you think Larry was cheering for Jackie Robinson?
3. How did Larry do in his second season with the New York Rovers?
4. How did Larry feel about having to wait so long to be called up to the NHL?

Chapter Six: A New York Minute

1. Larry was very nervous before his big game in Montreal. When do you get nervous or anxious? How do you deal with it?
2. How do you think Larry was treated by the Rangers?
3. Why is Larry's NHL game still a big accomplishment?

Chapter Seven: Brave Hero

1. What hockey strategy did Larry pioneer long before Wayne Gretzky?
2. Larry faced racist jokes, slurs and violence. People still experience that. What can we do to fight racism today?
3. Larry was determined to elevate his game and his team in 1950-51. Did he succeed?
4. Why do you think no other NHL teams offered Larry a tryout?

Chapter Eight: Hockey Ambassador

1. How did Larry help to grow the sport of hockey in Europe?
2. Larry kept a positive attitude despite many challenges in his long life. How have you made the best of a difficult situation?
3. Do you think Larry Kwong should be remembered as a hero? Why?
4. Where do you see unfairness today? How could you make things better?

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Chad Soon is a fourth-generation Chinese Canadian. His parents encouraged him to do what he loved: draw, read and play hockey. Growing up on Vancouver Island, Chad dreamed of being an NHL star. He went as far as bantam house-league hockey before realizing that he wasn't going to be the next Larry Kwong. Chad now teaches in Larry Kwong's hometown of Vernon, BC, where he realized another dream: writing a book about his hero.



George Chiang grew up loving and playing hockey in Etobicoke, Ontario. George is the composer of the internationally acclaimed musical *Golden Lotus* and the author of the children's books *The Railroad Adventures of Chen Sing* and *The Pioneer Adventures of Chen Sing*. He has directed and/or produced award-winning music videos for his songs, including *A World Away (Remix)* and *Old Montreal*, among others. George's acting credits include roles in *Eloise at the Plaza* and *McKenna Shoots for the Stars*. He lives in Stouffville, Ontario.

