

**After watching the 8th fire, explain some big ideas that you learned.**

The big ideas that were focused on in the *“8th fire: Indigenous in city”* were generally centered around First Nations identity. Many indigenous people who had moved from reservations or from somewhere that wasn’t the city where struggling with how to keep some of their traditions alive and “transition” into the modern world. A theme I noticed is that many if not all of the First Nations people who had become successful were working on issues that focused on First Nations people and their well being. I think they mentioned in the documentary that this was out of a sense of needing to heal after events like residential schools and the 60’s scoop and give back to their community. It seemed that there were two sides shown of being an indigenous person in the city, the first is the one I described previously, thriving and being successful while being focused on helping your community. The second side that was shown was that of the people being helped. These were First Nations people who had fallen into alcoholism or drug issues like Herb Varley’s father. A lot of these issues were caused because many indigenous people who grow up in cities don’t have the best start, often living in dilapidated housing with limited access to facilities like recreational centers and parks, etc.

**What connections can you make to our book?**

One of the connections that really stood out for me was when Brooklyn’s friend was arrested, and the police officer came and “checked in” on all the First Nations people who were there. There was clearly a prejudice against Brooklyn and his friends. This reminded me of when Junior mentioned that a lot of people he knew including his dad had been pulled over for “driving as an Indian”. Another connection I made was the issues with alcoholism. Junior has grown up with people who relied on Alcohol, that story was a lot like the one told by Herb Varley and his father. The last connection that I will mention is the whole idea of wrestling with your identity as a First Nations person, many people in the documentary felt as though they either needed to center their life around First Nations culture or erase it completely, something Junior definitely struggled with. When Junior was first going to Reardan he didn’t know what to do, he didn’t know how to be himself in either place.

**Did this help you understand our main protagonist better? Explain.**

I think having watched the 8th fire didn't as much further my understanding on Junior's struggle but provided me with a visual connection to Junior's story. One of the common themes in the 8th fire is that the struggles the indigenous people face seem to be widespread, which Junior mentions. What I mean by that is that almost every issue First Nations people face, every other First Nations person knows what it feels like or at least has a connection to it i.e. having a family member or yourself with alcohol issues, having to change a part of your identity to fit in, etc.