

Discussion Questions for *Under a Flaming Sky* by Daniel James Brown

(Some questions taken or adapted from <http://www.danieljamesbrown.com/newsletter.htm>)

1. Did you like the book? If yes, why? If no, why not?
2. Did you know anything about the Great Hinckley Fire before reading the book? Did you learn anything new?
3. How did you find the pace of the book? Did the author's method of unfolding the events make you feel you were living through the disaster?
4. Does anyone have a personal story connected to a fire to share? Do you have any family ties to the area, or to the immigrant generation?
5. Were you surprised by anything that you learned from this book?
6. Do you have unanswered questions? If the author were here, what would you ask him?
7. Why do you think some people – like Blair and Root and Best – acted so heroically during the firestorm while others thought only of themselves?
8. Why did some people remain calm and focused in the face of danger while others panicked?
9. How do you think you would have reacted if you had been in Hinckley that day?
10. Who do you admire most in the story?
11. Who, if anyone, do you blame for what happened at Hinckley?
12. Do you think a firestorm like this could happen in our forests today? Could an entire town be destroyed by fire?
13. What, if anything, does the story of the Hinckley firestorm tell us about our own age?
14. How was the Hinckley firestorm similar or dissimilar to modern disasters like Hurricane Katrina, the Minneapolis bridge collapse, or 9/11?
15. What are the similarities and dissimilarities in the way people and the government responded to the Hinckley firestorm and the way people and the government responded to Katrina? To 9/11?
16. Are there any additional comments you would like to share?