



Phontaine's Gifts—The Survival Legacy

In this prequel to “The Scoloderus Conspiracy,” Blankinship tells a forceful tale about wide-spread devastation in North America. We experience the struggle of a grocery store manager when thousands of desperate people crowd into his empty store searching for food. He takes us into an RV that holds supplies and people for a cross-country journey to make a stand against desperation. Join these families as they struggle to survive and protect their children. Meet the people who refuse to believe it is happening, those who discover they are not prepared, and those few who will survive because of Phontaine's Gifts.

1. What made you want to read this book? Why did you suggest it to your club?
2. Did *Phontaine's Gifts* live up to your expectations? Why or why not?
3. How do you think you would react in a major disaster such as the one described in the book? How do you think children would react in this situation?
4. Did the author do a good job of portraying the various reactions of adults and children in the book?
5. What was your first impression of Newton, his predictions, and his plan to save the world?
6. Would you have trusted Newton and Maggie's interpretation of events? Would you have dedicated your life to work on their plan to save the world?
7. What was your impression of Newton and Maggie's preparedness, once the disaster actually began? Were you surprised? Why?
8. Why do scientists often know and accept a set of facts while the public is clueless?
9. What do you think of the government's choice to withhold information from citizens about the potential disaster?
10. What did you think of the governments “Egg Basket Solution” to protect government officials during a crisis? Do you think the local citizens had a right to protest that plan? Do you think the local citizens understood the nature of the disaster?



11. How do you think it would affect the everyday lives and survival of citizens if the government made no plans to keep government officials safe during a crisis?
12. Who do you see as the “hero(s)” in the story? Why
13. Did you relate to a particular character(s) and their reactions or motivations? In what ways?
14. Do you think Newton and Maggie were part of the problem, part of the solution, only interested in their own families safety, or all three? Why?
15. Did Robert Nelson’s determination to reunite with his wife and family endear him or was he irritating?
16. Do you think Jennifer Nelson’s determination to keep Robert at arms length from herself and the family was justified?
17. How did the responsibility for the new puppies change Robert’s perspective on the future? How would you characterize Robert relationship with Jennifer after he took on responsibility for his new puppies?
18. How did Jennifer’s impression of Robert change once the survival plan was set in motion? Was it Robert’s attitude that affected Jennifer, or was it meeting Sylvia?
19. Would you be skeptical like Jennifer? Or would you believe the unthinkable was really happening?
20. Ethan William’s dreams, and subsequent ideas about the family’s destination, introduced the question about the “paranormal.” How would you explain his knowledge, impressions, and how he led the family to the Academy – coincidence, miracle, intuition, paranormal communication?
21. We are accustomed to the National Guard helping in emergencies. Were you surprised when they showed up at the Williams’ home to confiscate their food? Did that seem realistic, do you think it could happen in a major crisis?
22. The story spans more than 30 years in the lives of Newton and Maggie. How did their relationship change and how did it stay the same?
23. As the book ends, Cynthia and Sylvia agreed to a partnership between the Academy and the government. Do you think this is a wise choice?
24. Would you let Morgan and Madison have one of your helicopters?