

**Discussions Questions for
A Boy Called Bat (2017)
by Elana K. Arnold**

Chapter 1 – After School (pages 1-5)

1. Why are people picky eaters? Is it easy or hard to respect someone else's food preferences?
2. Are there good techniques for getting people to try different foods?
3. Is it important to say, "Please"? Is it true that you don't have to say, "Please" (p. 5) if it's somebody's job?

Chapter 2 – Bat's Cave (page 6-11)

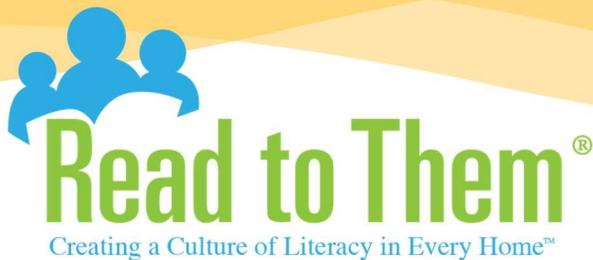
4. How do you like your room? Are there specific things you like a certain way? Is there anything that has its own specific place?
5. Do you have siblings or parents who like their room a certain way, too? Is it hard or weird to respect someone else's way of doing things if it is different than yours?

Chapter 3 – No Vanilla Yogurt (pages 12-16)

6. Is it an emergency when your Mom is 15 minutes late?
7. Do you or anyone you know have trouble controlling or tamping down their anger? How do you manage it? How would you describe that feeling?

Chapter 7 – Every-Other Fridays (35-41)

8. "Every-Other Fridays made Bat uncomfortable, like his skin was on too tight." (pp. 35-36) Have you ever had that skin-too-tight feeling? What makes you feel that way? Would you describe this sort of discomfort a different way?
9. Do any of you pretend you're sick to stay home from school? What do you want to stay home from school to do – specifically? Anything special?



10. Bat can recognize his Dad's car because it's a conspicuous yellow convertible. Can you recognize your parent's car coming down the street? If so, how? What's distinct about it?
11. Does anyone's family have a family – or personal – honk (like Bat's Mom's three happy honks)?

Chapter 8 – Sixteen Eyelets (pages 42-51)

12. Why are "Balls supposed to be kept outside?"
13. If you were Lucca, would your feelings have been hurt about the cream cheese sandwich?
14. Why was Bat looking at Mr. Grayson's eyelets?

Chapter 10 – A Very Long Day (pages 58-64)

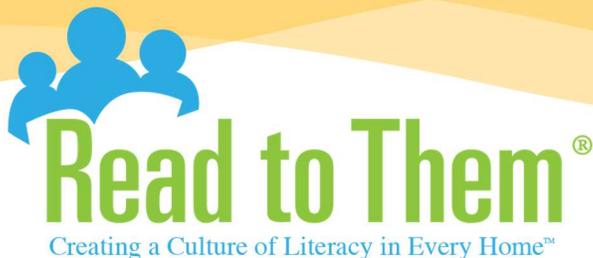
15. Bat prefers to do projects himself. Do you like collaboration? What do you like about it? What don't you like about it?
16. Bat says, "I'm using the glue." (p. 63) Is this rude?

Chapter 11 – Apartment 2A (pages 65-71)

17. When you spill on your shirt, does it ruin your drink or your meal? Do you know anyone - family or friend - who it does ruin it for?
18. Bat's Dad says about the chili, "Maybe you'll like it tonight." (p. 71) Anyone ever say this to you? Were they ever right? Can you acknowledge a food you didn't used to like - or didn't think you liked - and you changed your mind? Ever tried to convince anyone else to eat a food *you* like that they didn't think they'd like?

Chapter 12 – Finally (pp. 72-77)

19. Waiting is hard for most people. What do you do to pass the time when you have to wait? Do you get anxious when someone is late?



Chapter 13 – What’s in a Name (pp. 78-84)

20. What would you name a baby skunk?
21. Is it important for names to be meaningful? Do you know the story behind your name?

Chapter 14 – Sleeping Arrangements (pages 85-90)

22. What does it mean that Bat is willing to clean the gross plates in order to earn the responsibility of taking care of Thor?
23. Have you ever offered to do a chore you hate in order to get something else?
24. Have you ever heard or used the phrase, “Let’s revisit this conversation?” (p. 90) When? Why?

Chapter 15 – Dr. Jerry Dragoo (pp. 91-94)

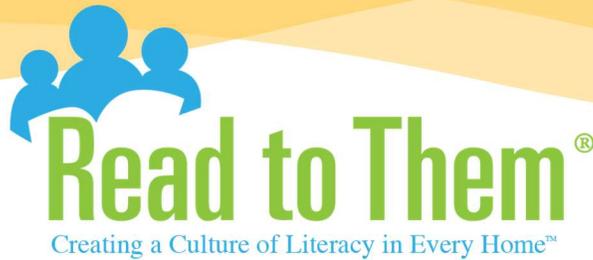
25. Is there an expert or famous person you would like to meet?

Chapter 16 – A Correspondence (pp. 95-102)

26. “I’m all ears.” (p. 98) Mr. Grayson says that to Bat, and Bat thinks of that expression literally, as if Mr. Grayson was actually covered with ears. Can you think of other expressions that would be odd if taken literally?
27. Bat asks Mr. Grayson for help contacting Dr. Dragoo. What adults can you ask for help?
28. What do you think of Bat’s plan to email a scientist with his questions about a baby skunk? Would you ever do something like that?

Chapter 17 – At the Clinic (pages 103-116)

29. There are a lot of sounds and distractions at the clinic that would normally bother Bat, like barking, phones ringing, talking, flickering lights. Why don’t they bother him at the vet clinic?
30. Bat is “99.9 percent sure” that he is going to be a vet like his mom. Are you 99.9 percent sure of anything?



Chapter 18 – Dinner Date (pages 117-125)

31. Why is Bat so confused about his ‘compliment’ to Janie about being good at whining? Was it a compliment? Could it have been meant as compliment?
32. Do you think Ezra is Janie’s friend because he likes the part of her that are weird? Is that why they’re friends? Consider this question and share your response.

Chapter 19 – A Blessing of Sorts (pages 126-131)

33. Why didn’t Janie appreciate the ‘nice’ thing Bat did with her unicorn pajama top so that Thor would recognize Janie, too?
34. It’s very important to Bat that people get the specifics right when they’re talking to him. When he’s talking to Janie, he gets distracted or annoyed because Janie makes imprecise references. He notes that “skunks aren’t rodents” and humans are animals. Why is this so important to him? Is it important to you? Is it annoying to you when people you’re talking to focus on these little matters of precision and ignore your main point?

Chapter 20 – Problems (pp. 132-139)

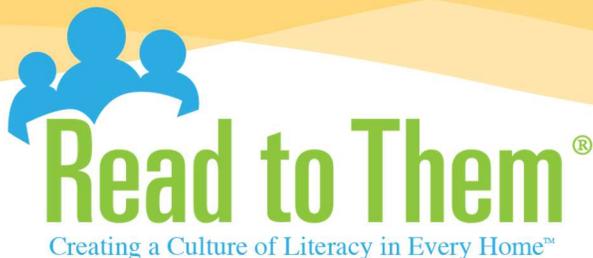
35. Bat is very focused on details that are important to him, like the fact that skunks are not rodents. Is it frustrating to you when people get the details wrong? Is it frustrating to you when people focus so much on the details that they miss the bigger point?

Chapter 21 – Organizational Systems (pp. 140-148)

36. Bat’s mishap in the candy store must have been really embarrassing. Can you identify with that feeling? What can you do about it?

Chapter 22 – Baseball and Braiding (pp. 149-154)

37. Were you surprised that Janie let Bat braid her hair? Why do you think it was so important to Bat?



Chapter 23 – Windows (pp. 155-164)

38. Do you agree with Bat’s mom that “you can tell a lot about a person by looking into their eyes”? (p. 161)
39. This chapter contains a lot of colorful imagery about the sky and eyes. Have you taken the time to really notice the colors in the sky in the morning or in someone’s eyes?

Chapter 24 – A Reply (pp. 165-175)

40. Do you think Mr. Grayson was right to make Bat wait until recess to read his email response from Dr. Dragoo?

Chapter 25 – Houseguests (pages 176-182)

41. Bat says that Janie and Ezra are both annoying, but they are both his friends. Can someone be annoying and also be your friend? Explain.
42. Why does Janie think Mom should let Bat keep the skunk?
43. Is taking care of a skunk like not getting tired of your children?

Chapter 26 – How to Know Someone (pages 183-192)

44. Do you think it would be fun to watch YouTube videos about skunks with your friend?

End of the book

45. How has Bat changed over the course of the book? Have you changed, too?
46. What did you learn from this book?
47. Which character from this book would you like to be friends with?