

# Like Bug Juice on a Burger

Recommended for Grades 3-5

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## **Book Summary: Like Bug Juice on a Burger**

Eleanor's grandma surprises her with a trip to Camp Wallumwahpuck, where Eleanor's mom went when she was younger. Initially, she is excited to go after hearing how her mom had a good time there. But her excitement quickly fades when she battles homesickness, bugs, food she dislikes and being placed in the second-lowest swim group.

Another camper, Joplin, becomes her friend and gradually helps Eleanor to make it through camp, but not before Eleanor sends her parents a letter telling them she wants to come home.

## **[Spoiler]**

Having gotten a concerned phone call from Eleanor's parents, the camp director meets with Eleanor and invites her to share her feelings on the camp's Wall of Feelings. Eleanor shares her thoughts about first coming to camp and her thoughts now and decides that camp isn't so bad. During the swim test, she makes her best effort and places into the swim group with the rest of her cabin. When her grandma calls to ask how Eleanor enjoyed camp, Eleanor admits that it was sometimes a wonderful surprise.

## **Author Biography: Julie Sternberg**

Julie Sternberg grew up in Baton Rouge, Louisiana reading a lot of books. It took her some time to decide what she wanted to do when she grew up, until she decided she loved books and wanted to write some of her own. She graduated from New School in New York with a Masters of Fine Arts in 2009 after working as a lawyer. Her books have earned positive recognition, which include being Junior Library Guild selections.

She currently lives in Brooklyn, New York with her husband and two daughters.



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## Discussion Questions: Like Bug Juice on a Burger

1. Eleanor is convinced she'll like camp because her mom did when she was younger. Have you ever wanted to do something because someone else had a good time with it? Is this a good way to try new things? Why or why not?
2. When she realizes that her mom won't be coming to camp with her, Eleanor begins to have her doubts. How did you feel the first time you spent time away from your parents? Why might this be an important experience to have?
3. How did Eleanor's parents try to reassure her when they dropped her off at camp? Do you think it helped her? Why or why not?
4. When the bus arrives at camp, Eleanor misses the city. Do you prefer the city or the country? Why? What are some benefits of each?
5. What are some of the ways Eleanor uses to distract herself from being homesick? What are some ways you distract yourself from being homesick?
6. Lunch turns out to be a disappointment for Eleanor when she doesn't like any of the food. How do you think she could've made the most of the situation? What would you do if you were Eleanor, surrounded by food you disliked?
7. How does Joplin help Eleanor make it through camp? Do you think she's a good friend? Why or why not?
8. All the other girls have a highlight of their first day except Eleanor. Do you think she should've tried to answer the question? Why or why not? What do you think would have been the highlight of her day?
9. Eleanor gets the letter from her mom and feels guilty that she doesn't like camp and still wants to go home. What begins to change her mind later? How do the other campers help her get over her homesickness?
10. How did writing the two pages for the Wall of Feelings help Eleanor? Why did she find it encouraging to see that someone else had written a note about disliking camp?
11. How do you think Eleanor's camp experience differed from the one her mom had?
12. How did Eleanor's feeling about camp change at the end of the book? Do you think she'll go back to camp next year? Why or why not?



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