

Slob

Recommended for Grades 4-7

Book Summary: Slob

Owen is the largest and smartest kid in his class. Though he gets bullied by both classmates and teachers and has promised his mother to eat healthier, he is guaranteed three Oreos in his lunch each day. When his Oreos start getting stolen every day from his lunch, Owen is determined to catch the thief in the act. Meanwhile, he works on a TV receiver he names Nemesis to catch channels from the past. When he gets it working, he's able to view current channels the TV can't pick up on its own.

[SPOILER]

Owen confesses to Nima that his parents were killed in their shop while he was younger and he could hear the gunshot from where he'd been but the killer had never been identified. He wants to build the receiver to go back to the surveillance camera channel and to try to pick up the face of his parents' killer.

When the TV episodes from the past are picked up by Nemesis, Owen believes he's finally done it until he finds out that Jeremy purposely played old episodes that Nemesis would pick up. She confesses that she also stole his cookies as an initiation into her boys' club. Jeremy is kicked out of the club and Owen not only begins to accept his parents' death but to hope that his parents' killer would have someone in his life who thinks the best of him.

Author Biography: Ellen Potter

Ellen Potter grew up in New York City. When she was eleven, she decided she wanted to be an author and write books for that age group. She focused on creative writing at Binghamton University and tried a variety of jobs while she began to write including teaching art, dog grooming and construction work. While she has won several achievements for her books, she is best known for her *Olivia Kidney* series and *Slob*. She lives in upstate New York with her husband and son.



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Discussion Questions: Slob

1. The gym teacher, Mr. Wooly, purposely sets up the non-athletic kids to fail doing a somersault and then punishes Owen when he calls Mr. Wooly out on it. Why would Mr. Wooly do this? Was Owen right to correct his teacher? Have you known a teacher who treated a class like this? What happened?
 2. Andre calls Owen “Flapjack” and teases him about his size, but Owen can never tell whether Andre is being serious or joking about it. Do you think Andre considers himself friends with Owen? Why or why not? How does the story become different if Andre is really a bully?
 3. After Mr. Wooly mistreats Owen, Andre tells him to sue the school and Jeremy said she will beat up the teacher for her brother. Owen’s response is to ignore it. What would be the best response to Owen’s problem with Mr. Wooly? What would you do if you were Owen?
 4. Owen considers taking the three Oreos he didn’t get for lunch from the cabinet. If he had taken the cookies and told his mom, how do you think she would have reacted? What would you do in Owen’s situation? Do you think he made the right choice? Why or why not?
 5. Owen’s sister, Jeremy (Caitlin) is part of GWAB (Girls Who Are Boys), a club of girl who dress like boys and have boy names. What do you think about the club? Why do you think Jeremy joined the club?
 6. Owen tells his friend Nima about his enemy, Mason, stealing his cookies. Nima thinks enemies are helpful because, according to him, staying calm while an enemy attack makes the victim stronger. How is this true? What would be an example of this? What advice did Owen probably want to hear from Nima?
 7. Nima enjoys watching Indian movies with a happy ending. Owen asks if the movies ever have a realistic ending but Nima says they are always the same. Owen claims the movies are false advertising since real life isn’t always so happy. Why would Owen think this? Do you agree with him? Why or why not? Why might Nima enjoy his one type of movie?
 8. Owen blocks the locker room door so Mr. Wooly and his classmates can’t see Mason having the seizure. Afterwards, Jeremy tells him what he did was heroic. Did Owen do the right thing to help Mason? Why or why not? What would you have done in the situation?
 9. Through the story, Owen suspected Mason and then Izzy for stealing his cookies. Why was the discovery that Jeremy was the culprit such a big surprise? Were there any clues in the book that made you suspect her? Should she have cut her hair or stolen the cookies? Why?
 10. According to Owen, The Three-Month Rule says that it takes three months to really change. How did Owen change in those months? What else can change in three months?
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