

# Toad Rage

Recommended for Grades 3-6

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## **Book Summary: Toad Rage**

Limpy, a young cane toad, doesn't understand why humans purposely drive over cane toads. After months of collecting his dead relatives from the roads, he decides to go to the humans and find out why they hate his kind so much. When he comes to a zoo and finds humans petting other types of animals, he decides the best course of survival for his kind is to make humans like them. When he learns about the Games mascots, he knows that making the cane toad an official mascot will save his kind. When his attempt to get attention at the games ends in failure, Limpy and Goliath are rescued by a snail that shows them they aren't the only ones who were denied by the mascot committee.

## **[SPOILER]**

Faced with the sewer full of denied mascots, Limpy encourages each animal to play to its strengths and shows them how their Games would be far more impressive than the humans'. However, he is stunned when the other animals refuse to let him be in the Games because he is too ugly to them. He finds out that the girl who helped him has been denied a place in the Games because her blood tested positive for poison when he accidentally scratched her. Limpy goes to the girl who takes him to the lab and proves she didn't cheat.

When the girl wins, she holds Limpy on the winner's platform. His excitement is short lived when he realizes that people want real stuffed cane toads instead of stuffed animals. He and Goliath purposely disgust viewers on camera and return happily to their lives in the swamp where Limpy shows his family how to pole vault over the cars.

## **Author Biography: Morris Gleitzman**

Morris Gleitzman was born January 9, 1953 in Sleaford, Lincolnshire, England. He grew up loving to read, but when his family moved to Australia in 1969, he was so shocked by the change of climate that he didn't read for nearly a year. When he did start reading again, he decided to start writing as well. He received his degree in journalism and went on to write screenplays for the next ten years. His first book, *The Other Facts of Life*, written in 1987 began as a screenplay and he went on to write dozens more books and earn several awards. In addition to books, he is also a columnist for *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Melbourne Age*, and *Young Telegraph*. He has two children: Sophie and Ben. They currently live in Australia.



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## Discussion Questions: Toad Rage

1. The story takes place in Australia. While you were reading the story, what setting were the words making you imagine? How did the vocabulary help to create the setting?
  2. Limpy collects his dead relatives after they've dried out and stacks them in his room. Why does he do this? Do you think his relatives would appreciate it? Why or why not?
  3. Compare the attitudes of the different toads towards humans. Where would the toads be if they all followed Goliath's example of ambushing cars in the roads?
  4. At the gas station, Limpy sees the humans petting animals and goes up to them mistaking them as friendly. His second plan is to disguise himself as a butterfly. Why do none of Limpy's plans work? What would you do if you were Limpy?
  5. Limpy feels sympathy for a girl being yelled at even though one of his uncles once told him it isn't natural to feel sympathy for another species. Why might being sympathetic to other species be unnatural for a toad? Why is being sympathetic natural for a person?
  6. Limpy thought the girl would help him become a Games Mascot but instead she used him and Goliath to get back at someone. Do you think Limpy is right to continue to trust her? Why or why not?
  7. Why do you think the kookaburra, platypus and echidna had been chosen as Australia's mascots? Would you choose a Cane Toad for a mascot? Why or why not? What would the three mascots for the United States be? Why?
  8. Limpy finds out that his kind is originally from South America and brought to Australia to eat the cane beetles. Why is this such a revelation for Limpy? If you had to choose an animal species to import to another country, which species would you choose and why?
  9. Limpy and Goliath find a group of other animals who were rejected as Games' mascots and cheer them up with the idea that they can compete in their own Games. However, the other animals decide that the toads are too ugly to compete. Why did the other animals come to this conclusion? How is it unfair? Have you ever been excluded like Limpy was?
  10. Limpy finally gets people to recognize cane toads, but, instead of the stuffed animals he dreams of, the humans want to make stuffed cane toads using real toads. Why do you think Limpy's solution to making the humans not like him again worked? How did Limpy achieve his goal to help the cane toads?
  11. Compare Limpy at the beginning and the end of the story. How has he changed? How have the other characters in the book changed?
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