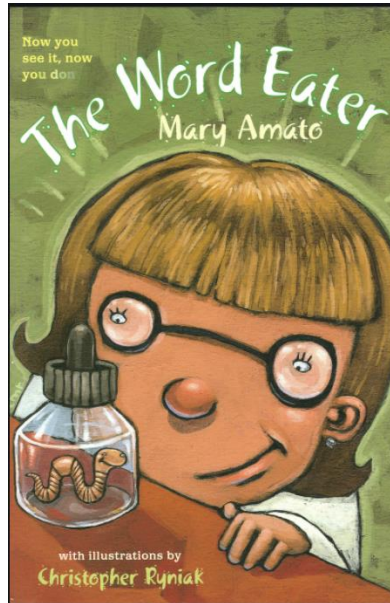


Book Discussion Guide



The Word Eater

By Mary Amato

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Introduction

Mary Amato is a young adult and children's book author living in Maryland. She has several popular series including *Riot Brothers*, *Good Crooks*, and *Lucy McGee*. She also has work in poetry, plays, and songwriting. She has received the children's choice awards in four states and teaches creative writing in the U.S. *The Word Eater* is a popular chapter book written for young adults, published in 2000.

About the Book

A young girl in sixth grade, Lerner Chanse, had started at a new school and leaving her quite unhappy. On top of moving from Wisconsin to Washington D.C., she was thrown into working

through the cliques in the middle school. There were two choices, the MPOOE (Most Powerful Ones On Earth) or the SLUGS (Sorry Losers Under Ground). The MPOOEs were the snobby elite group that completely ruled over the SLUGS. Lerner was faced with dealing with the “queen,” Reba, of MPOOE on one side and her annoying neighbor, Bobby Nitz, who was a SLUG, on the other. Neither option was looking good, but then Lerner met Fip. Fip is a worm who was outcasted for not eating dirt. Instead of dirt, Fip would eat the words right off the paper. Soon, Lerner learned that Fip was a very powerful worm that could do the unimaginable. Whenever he would eat a word, the object that is defined by that word would disappear forever. Lerner discovers how great of a responsibility she has, as she gets to decide what words Fip eats. This is the great challenge she must work through on understanding how powerful words can be to the world. She must ask herself, what all can be changed and how greatly is everything connected?

Discussion Guide

1. How would you describe Lerner and Fip’s feelings towards others at the beginning of the book? How are they similar? How are they different?
2. Have you ever felt like Lerner when it comes to groups in school? If so, what are some ways you have dealt with those?
3. What is one word you would have Fip eat? How would it benefit you and affect others?
4. What is one word you would make sure Fip never ate? Why?
5. Did you find the book interesting from the very beginning, or did it take several chapters for you to get invested?
6. What are the dynamics between Reba, Lerner, and Bobby?

7. What was your favorite part of the book? What was the best thing Lerner used Fip for in your eyes?
8. If you could ask the author one thing, what would it be?
9. Did this book change the way you think? Did it give you new perspective on anything specifically?
10. Overall, what do you think is the meaning and main message this book is trying to get across? How can you apply that to your life?