

The Elephant in the Room

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Discussion Notes for KS2



1. Elephants are the author's favourite animal. Do you have a favourite animal?
2. In the book there is lots of information about caring for animals. Can you list some examples of how to care for an elephant?
3. Have you ever cared for an animal? What did that feel like?
4. Mr. Pickles, the bear, is a handful for Gio when he brings him home. Can you create your own funny animal character? What might they do in your house?
5. We are told the story from many different perspectives. How does this make the book more interesting? Did you enjoy reading any of the characters more than others?
6. The characters in this book have good luck and bad luck. What is an example of something lucky that happened in the story? And something unlucky?
7. This book is also about families. Sometimes we make friends who are so close, they can feel like family. Has that ever happened to you?
8. Gio and Sila have a lot in common. How has the author shown this in the book? Can you list some examples?
9. When Gio meets Sila he thinks she seems sad. Why do you think he might have noticed this?
10. Can you think of some examples of how we can notice if someone we know is sad? How might we help them if they are?
11. When Sila first meets Mateo, they sit together in silence. What are the big things which happen to change this relationship and help them to become friends?



12. What do we learn about Mateo and his personality?
13. How does Mateo help Sila and Veda?
14. One of the things that this book is about is separation. Can you think of a time when you were separated from someone? How did that feel?
15. At the start of the book, Sila's mother Oya is in Turkey and can't return because of her immigration papers. How do you think this might be making Sila feel?
16. There are lots of examples in the book of things that are different now that Sila's mother is away. Can you find some of them?
17. How does Sila's relationship with her father Alp change when her mother is away?
18. How would you feel if you weren't able to see someone you love for a very very long time? What would be different?
19. Veda and her mother Madhi are separated for many years. How do you think they would feel being separated for so long and how would they feel being reunited?
20. At the end of the book Veda and Sila are both reunited with their mothers. How did this make you feel?

