THE ONE AND ONLY IVAN: NOVEL DISCUSSION GUIDE #2

NOVEL STUDY

Encourage critical thinking and support your students' literacy development by asking questions during reading. Here are some questions you can ask your readers to engage them in a discussion.

Chapters: arrival – home of the one and only ivan

Comprehension

- What is the baby elephant's name, and where is she from?
- How does Mack get Ruby to come out of the truck?
- When Julia realizes Ivan feels ignored, what does she give him to make him feel better?
- What does Stella say is the reason that the circus trainers chained Ruby to the floor?
- Describe the relationship between Stella and Ruby.
- How does the billboard change after Ruby arrives?

Analysis

- When Ruby arrives, Stella paces around her cage, grumbles, and shows that she is angry. Why does she feel this way?
- What type of mood does Mack create when he tries to get Ruby out of the truck? How might the animals feel?
- Based on the way Stella describes Ruby as "too thin," what can you tell about Ruby's life before she got to the Big Top Mall?

Personal Connection

- When Ruby arrives at Big Top Mall, she asks a lot of questions. Think about a time when you were new somewhere. What questions did you have?

Chapters: art lesson – ruby's story

Comprehension

- Why does Ivan love to draw?
- What treat does George bring Stella?
- How does Mack react when George tells him about Stella's infected foot?
- What does Ruby's laugh remind Ivan of?
- Why are more people coming to the mall?
- What did the humans do after Ruby fell in the hole?

Analysis

- Why does Ivan continue to draw pictures for Ruby?
- According to Ivan, Stella would make a great mother. What qualities does Stella have that would make her a great mother?
- Why is Bob so surprised by Ruby's rescue story?

Personal Connection

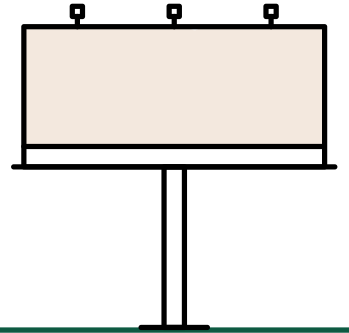- Bob sleeps when he is bored. What do you do when you are bored?

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Chapters: a hit – once upon a time

Comprehension

✦ Why does Ruby perform without Stella?
✦ How does the audience react to Ruby?
✦ Why does Julia sit by Stella's domain until it's time to go home?
✦ What promise does Ivan make?
✦ Who is the first to know what happened to Stella?
✦ How does Ivan react when he learns that Bob told Ruby about Ivan's promise?

Analysis

✦ Stella says that "gorilla hearts are made of ice." What does that mean?
✦ Why does Ivan think saving Ruby would be harder than not being a gorilla anymore? Why does he make the promise to Stella anyway?
✦ Based on what you know about Mack and his behavior in the *crying* chapter, how does he probably feel about what happened to Stella?

Personal Connection

✦ Bob encourages Ivan to be confident in himself. Think about a time someone encouraged you. What did they say, and how did it make you feel? Explain.

Chapters: the grunt – my place

Comprehension

✦ Where was Ivan born?
✦ What were Ivan and his sister's names when they were little, and why were they given those names?
✦ What happened to Ivan and Tag when the humans came?
✦ In what ways did Mack and Helen treat Ivan like he was their own child? List at least three ways.
✦ What did Ivan miss about his old life?
✦ How did Ivan feel when he saw his new domain?

Analysis

✦ How does the life of a baby gorilla in the wild compare to a human baby's life?
✦ When Ivan was raised by Mack and Helen, he dealt with conflicting, or mixed-up, feelings. Why did Ivan say that he needed to let his old life die?
✦ How did life change for Mack and Ivan when Helen left?

Personal Connection

✦ If human babies were named in the same way gorilla babies were named, what would your name be? What would your family members' names be?