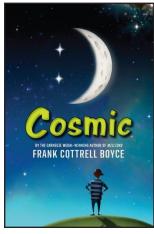




COSMIC READING GROUP GUIDE



Cosmic by Frank Cottrell Boyce Hardcover • ISBN: 978-0-06-183683-1

Dear Reader,



In partnering with the National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI), we feel it is important to highlight the themes in *Cosmic* that are important to fathers. The NFI makes it their mission to improve the well-being of children by increasing the proportion of children growing up with involved, responsible, and committed fathers. Therefore, questions with a may be of particular interest for discussion between fathers and their kids.



Sincerely,
Walden Pond Press Education Team



Each chapter of *Cosmic* is titled after some important event or passage within that chapter. Readers may enjoy finding the significance of these titles as well as exploring the discussion questions for many of the chapters below.



OPENING ARTICLE

• What has disappeared? Which two countries have denied that it was theirs? Why do you think this article opens the book?

I AM NOT EXACTLY IN THE LAKE DISTRICT

Who is the narrator of this chapter? What important things does the narrator tell us about himself?

MY FAUORITE GRAUITY

- How old is the narrator? Why is his age important to this story? Why don't people believe that he's actually this age?
- What is Premature Facial Hair? Why is it written with capital letters? What do these capitalizations tell you about Liam?







I NEARLY SHAUED MYSELF TO DEATH



- Why do you think the specialist at the hospital tells Mrs. Digby that Liam "is still a child. Even though he looks like a grown-up. Just because he can't shop in the children's clothes section anymore, that doesn't mean his childhood is over" (page 17)?
- But Mr. Digby says, "Seven inches is not a spurt. Seven inches is a mutation" (page 18). What does Mr. Digby mean by this? What does this tell you about how Mr. Digby sees Liam?
 - Liam thinks, "Truly, grown-upness is wasted on grown-ups" (page 20). Another old saying goes, "Youth is wasted on the young." Who in the story might make this statement? How are these two statements alike?
 - What does "Mr. Middleton" talk about in his speech to the students? What happens when he is finished giving the speech?

MY VISIBLE FRIEND

- Who is the important character we meet in this chapter? What do she and Liam discover when they are together in public?
- What happens at the Porsche showroom? Who arrives just in time?
- What do you think Mr. Digby means when he says, "I'm your dad. It's what dads do" (page 38)?

MY PLANET PANDA POP



- Why is Liam so interested in "all the Waterloos in the world" (page 46)?
- The "friendly voice" from Drax Communications asks Liam, "As a dad, how would you summarize your philosophy of child rearing?" Liam replies, "I want my children to think of the whole world as their thrill ride" (pages 46–7). What does Liam mean?
- What happens when Mr. Digby asks Liam to play Monopoly? What happens when Liam tries to explain Warcraft to his dad?
- What is a "quest," and what does it mean to "Engage" (page 52)?
- What does Liam say is the difference between "in-game" and "in-life" (page 53)?

FATHERS HAUE CHILDREN



- According to Liam, what is Talk to Your Teen about? Why does Liam think this book is important?
- Liam discovers that conversations with his dad could be broken down into five headings. What are these headings? Why is this an important discovery for Liam?

COMPETITIVE DADLINESS

- Why is the moment when Liam says, "I'm Florida's father," significant for both Florida and Liam (page 90)? What then happens when Liam asks "the most convincingly dadly thing" he could think of to the other dads (page 90)?
- What do you think the book *Talk to Your Teen* means when it says, "The more you listen, the more you'll understand" (page 93)? Why is this of interest to Liam?







THRILL RIDE OF THE CENTURY



- What does the word "possibility" mean in this chapter?
- Why does Dr. Drax say she needs "a young crew" (pages 111–12)?
- What does Liam mean when he says, "What's the *point* in forfeiting your childhood if all you get for it is filling in forms" (page 114)?

THE ICE-CREAM MAN OF THE GOBI DESERT

• How do Liam's "in-game" skills help him in this chapter that is "in-life"?

I CAN'T WORK MY TROUSERS

• What important discovery does Liam make about Florida when she tells him, "Space suits aren't clothes, idiot. Space suits are equipment" (page 156)?

THE UOMIT COMET



• Who does Dr. Drax introduce all the dads and kids to? How old is this character? What skill does this character possess?

GRAUITY IS NOT A TRIVIAL MONSTER

- Dr. Drax says, "You are going to experience 10 g. That's ten times your normal gravity" (page 178). Can you explain, in your own words, what "g-force" means? Why is it important in *Cosmic*? What does Liam think of it?
- How does Liam finally get six votes by the end of this chapter?



IF ANTHING GOES WRONG ...



Why does Liam think Eddie Xanadu is the wrong dad to go with the children into space? Is he right? What reasons does Liam give for his judgment of Mr. Xanadu?

YOU DON'T GET EXTRA LIVES IN SPACE

• What do the huge black Chinese letters up the side of the Possibility Building spell out? Where does this slogan come from? What does it tell us about Dr. Drax's decision regarding which dad should go into space with the children?

THE REAL THING



- Why does Florida want to be famous? Why does she want to go on the rocket?
 - What does Liam realize is "the dadly thing" to do concerning Florida's birthday party (page 223)?









LAUNCH MINUS 48



What "test of Dadness" does Liam encounter (page 232)? Why does Liam put *Talk to Your Teen* in his PiP?

I WANT MY DADDY





Look up the legend of St. Christopher. How does knowing this legend help you understand why Liam wedges the statue of St. Christopher into the instrument panel? What does this tell us about Liam? What does this tell us about Liam's relationship with his father?

THEMOONYOUIDIOT

• What is the significance of Liam's declaration, "I am Engaged" (page 250)? What does he mean?

AN UNSCHEDULED DIVERSION



Describe the two scenes in this chapter where Liam turns to the book *Talk to Your Teen*. What are the problems at hand? How does the book help Liam figure out what to do?

LOGIC SAYS ...





Why does Liam's father ask Liam if he found the St. Christopher statue? Why is this important to Mr. Digby?



Why does Mr. Digby ask Liam if he knows the story of St. Christopher? What does Liam mean when he thinks that the story of St. Christopher is "a story about gravity really" (page 295)?

THIS IS NOT A SIMULATION



• How does Liam explain what the kids did "down there" (page 299)? Why does he explain it in this manner? What does this explanation tell us about Liam at this point in the story?

SPECIAL GRAUITY

• What does Liam mean when he says, "Maybe everyone's got their own special gravity that lets you go far away, really far away sometimes, but which always brings you back in the end" (page 308)?



What is the surprise spelled out across the lunar surface? Why is this an important moment for Florida? For Liam? For Liam's dad?









