



The Summer of Broken Things

By Margaret Peterson Haddix

Tome Society It List Discussion Guide



Pre-reading questions:

1. Imagine that a rich girl and a poor girl get the opportunity to spend the summer in Spain. Even if their experience and opportunities in Spain are the same, how do you imagine their perspectives about the experience would be different?
2. In your childhood, did you have a close friendship with someone? Are you still friends with that person now that you are in high school? Why or why not?

Post-reading questions:

1. At the Holocaust museum, Avery is amazed that a young lady in a wheelchair wants to get her picture taken at a display on disabilities. When she questions why, Kayla responds, "Because she can," she says. "Because the Nazis lost. Because she's here, and the Nazis aren't." (Page 63) Discuss the difference in these two viewpoints.
2. Kayla mentions that she doesn't think that Mr. Armisted nor Avery are happy people. What gives her this impression? Do you agree with her observation? Explain your feelings.
3. Kayla has a hard time navigating between Mr. Armisted and Avery. For instance, Mr. Armisted asked Kayla which museum she wanted to go to in DC. Before deciding, she asks him what *his* favorite museum is and then decided on going to that one. She then realizes she probably should have asked Avery what her favorite museum was as well. How would you have navigated this situation? How do you think Kayla should have made her decision?
4. Kayla is amazed that the Armisteds spend so much money on new clothes when their luggage is lost. It is also mentioned several times in the book that Mrs. Armisted enjoys "retail therapy." Even though they are well-off financially, how do you feel about this outlook on life?
5. On page 296, Avery actually begins to think about her outlook on life. She compares herself to the rich Howells on Gilligan's Island. Avery has a large character arc or character growth throughout the novel. Do you think her growth is enough? Explain why or why not.
6. Do you agree with the fact that Avery and Kayla's parents kept such an important secret from them? If you were the parents, how would you have handled the situation?
7. There was some foreshadowing leading up to Mr. Armisted's medical emergency. Did you pick up on it or did it take you completely by surprise?
8. Put yourself in Avery and Kayla's shoes, how would you have handled the medical emergency? Would you have been more like Kayla or more like Avery?

Post-reading Activities

1. Write a fan-fiction piece that acts as a prologue or epilogue to the story. Consider writing the story of the parents going through the surrogate experience, or of Kayla or Avery's experience after getting back from Spain. Follow the guidelines at tomesociety.org/competitions.html to submit your completed work to the Tome Fan Fiction Competition.
2. Create a promotional book flyer to promote the novel *The Summer of Broken Things* to others in your school and community. Follow the guidelines to submit your completed work to the Tome Promotional Book Flyer Competition.

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