

Study Guide for *Esther's Gragger: A Toyshop Tale of Purim*

Read the story and look at the illustrations to answer these questions.

Comprehension Questions:

1. Look at the pictures before the story. What is Esther doing?
2. What is a gragger? What holiday are graggers associated with?
3. What doesn't the shopkeeper like about graggers? Why?
4. What does the peddler say about the noise of the graggers?
5. What is the name of the boy who wants to buy the gragger for his sister? Why does he want to give it to her? Why did he choose the Esther gragger?
6. When must the boy return with the money to buy the gragger? What happens before he returns?
7. What is Ben's reaction when the tall boy tries to grab the gragger from Esther? What is Esther's reaction?
8. What does the shopkeeper do when he sees the commotion outside?
9. Why does the tall boy leave?
10. Why does the shopkeeper thank Esther?

Discussion Questions:

1. The tall boy asks for "noisemakers" instead of "graggers." Why do you think he uses that term? Why do you think he wanted the Esther gragger?
2. Why does the shopkeeper refuse to sell the Esther gragger to the tall boy? Do you think he made the right decision?
3. How would you describe Ben?
4. How would you describe Esther? How is Esther like her namesake, Queen Esther?
5. How would you describe the tall boy in the story? What do his actions and words tell you about his personality?
6. The word "bully" is never used in the story to describe the tall boy. Why do you think it was written that way?
7. Four graggers depict people from the biblical story of Esther. Who are they? In this book, who best represents each of the biblical characters?
8. What does the shopkeeper learn from this experience?
9. The tall boy is pictured again after the story. What does that picture tell you?
10. How does this book reflect the spirit of the biblical story of Esther?

Read the Author's Note at the back of the book to help answer these questions:

1. When is Purim? Why do Jewish people celebrate it?
2. What do these terms mean: *Megillah*, *Purimshpiel*, *shalach manos*, *mishloach manot*, *tzedakah*, *hamentaschen*, *chag Purim sameach*, *raasch*
3. What are some types of noisemakers people use during Purim celebrations?