

DISCUSSION Guide

TRUE (...sort of)



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Katherine Hannigan

Author of the national bestseller *Ida B*

ABOUT THE BOOK

Delly is a precocious, rowdy, and misunderstood fifth grader. Her new friend, Ferris Boyd, is a quiet, secretive girl—the exact opposite of Delly—and she has a special affinity with animals. Despite their differences, or maybe because of them, Delly and Ferris form a unique bond and discover that true friendship will help them deal with any challenges life throws at them.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Where does “the fight” come from? What do you think the author means when she writes that Delly “said something mad, to stop the sad”? Have you ever felt like doing something similar? What did you do about it?
2. Do you think Delly’s physical description matches her personality? How?
3. Think of some of Delly’s unique word combinations. What does she mean when she calls her Ma a “mysturiosity”? Why does she call Ferris Boyd’s treehouse a “hideawaysis”? Make up a word of your own by combining words that already exist.
4. What lets Delly know when a “surpresent” is on its way? Have you ever felt a surpresent coming? What was the best surpresent you’ve ever received?
5. What does Delly like about her teacher, Lionel Terwilliger? Would you like to have Lionel Terwilliger as a teacher? Why or why not?
6. Why is Danny Novello mean to Delly? What are some reasons why a person might say something cruel or hurtful to another person? Have you ever been mean to someone without intending to?
7. Toward the beginning of the story, why can’t Delly avoid trouble? What are the two ways Delly ends up in “Trouble Town”? What makes her think everyone has given up on her? Do you think that all of the adults in her life really gave up on her, or were they just frustrated? How do people’s reactions to Delly’s trouble make her feel?

8. What does RB suggest to help Delly stay out of trouble? Do you have a special trick of your own that keeps you out of trouble and calms you down when you're upset or angry?
9. Why doesn't Ferris Boyd take the ball and shoot during gym class? When Delly discovers the reason, what does it make her realize?
10. Why do you think Ferris Boyd communicates so well with animals? What special quality of hers do they respond to?
11. How do Ferris Boyd and Brud Kinney become friends? Why do they make such a good pair? How does Ferris Boyd's friendship with Brud differ from her friendship with Delly and RB?
12. How does RB surprise Delly throughout the story? Have you ever thought something about someone and realized later that you were wrong?
13. Why does Delly have a bad feeling when she first sees Ferris Boyd and Brud Kinney playing basketball together? Is she right to feel the way she does? How does the situation get worse before it gets better?
14. Why is Brud upset when he finds out that Ferris Boyd is a girl? What does it take for him to change his mind about being friends with her? Why is it so difficult for him to go back to playing basketball with her after he decides he wants to?
15. What does Delly mean when she says she "loved Galveston like liver and onions on Tuesdays"? Do you have any brothers or sisters? How would you describe your relationship with your brother(s) or sister(s)?
16. How truthful is Delly when she tells Clarice she will be doing a project "about wild creatures, and habitats"? How does the title of the book come into play throughout the story? Can you think of three parts of the story that tie in to the title?
17. What does Delly do throughout the story to protect Ferris Boyd? Why doesn't she tell anyone about seeing the marks on Ferris Boyd's back at first? What makes her realize that she needs to tell someone and get help?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Photo by Blaker Photography

Katherine Hannigan was raised in western New York State and earned degrees in education, mathematics, and art. She has worked as the education coordinator for a Head Start program and is a former professor of art and design. She is the author of *Emmaline and the*

Bunny and *Ida B*, which was a #1 Book Sense Children's Pick; a *Booklist* Top of the List Editors' Choice; a *Publishers Weekly* Best Book; a *School Library Journal* Best Book; one of New York Public Library's "100 Titles for Reading and Sharing"; a winner of the Josette Frank Award for Fiction, Bank Street College; and a Parents' Choice Gold Award winner. Ms. Hannigan lives in northeastern Iowa.

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