

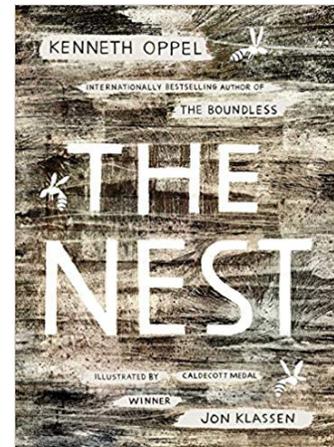


Kids Book Club Kit | Darien Library

The Nest by Kenneth Oppel

Recommended for grades 4 to 6

Summary: Steve loves his baby brother, Theo, but Theo is not well. Steve's parents take Theo to the hospital almost every day, but they don't talk to Steve about what is wrong with him. As Steve becomes more worried about Theo, he begins to dream about a wasp queen who says she can fix the baby. Every night the queen comes to Steve in a dream and tells him about events that are going to happen; she reassures him that the baby will be okay. In the beginning, the queen makes Steve feel better, but, eventually, Steve begins to confuse reality with his dreams. As the situation with Theo's health intensifies, Steve's dream world comes crashing down—just as his reality comes into focus.



Discussion Questions:

1. Why does Steve think that the flying insects who come to him in his dreams are angels?
2. Why do the wasps swarm Steve when he is on the ladder? Why do they leave him alone once he begins climbing down?
3. Why does Nicole name the mysterious caller Mr. Nobody? How does Mr. Nobody help Steve? What kinds of things does he say to Nicole? Who is Mr. Nobody?
4. What part of Steve's dream is reality and what part is a dream? How does Steve finally determine what is real?
5. A major theme in the novel is people's unhealthy obsession with perfection. How does *The Nest* comment on how we decide, as people, who is worthy of love, and even life?

Further Resources:

Reading study guide: <https://dar.to/2Oa9Orm>

Fun facts about wasps: <https://dar.to/2KJgCtY>

Activities

1. It was hard for Steve to figure out what was the truth and what wasn't. Play 2 truths and a lie. Have everyone write down 2 truths and a lie, in any order, about themselves on a piece of paper, but kept hidden from everyone else. Then have them read all three out loud and have everyone guess which the truths are and which the lie is.
2. Illustrate the wildest dream you ever had. Paint a scene, draw a cartoon, create a diorama, make a movie, or act it out with your friends.