

Guide to *One Fat Summer*, by Robert Lipsyte

Chapter 1

1. Why did Bobby and Joanie pretend that they did not hear the taunts from the other kids?
2. Bobby says that Joanie is terrific at pretending. What did he mean?
3. How old is Bobby?
4. How old is Joanie?
5. Why does Bobby call Dr. Kahn?
6. Why do you think Bobby feels thin when he is with Joanie?
7. Do you act and feel differently depending on whom you are with?
 - vocabulary: twitched (15), conceited (5), pendulum (11), anxious (17), counselor (11).

Chapter 2

1. What jobs did Dr. Kahn want Bobby to do?
2. How old did Bobby tell Dr. Kahn that he is?
3. Why did Bobby lie about his age?
4. Why did Bobby get seasick?
5. What did Bobby mean when he compared Dr. Kahn's house to a ship?
 - vocabulary: insignia (25), quivering (21), columns (21), enterprise (22), rhythm (24)

Chapter 3

1. What does Bobby's dad want him to decide?
2. How many pounds does Bobby's father think that Bobby could put on in ten years?
3. What is Bobby's sister's name?

(from Zalesky, Barbara. *Teacher's Guide*. Jacksonville, IL: Perma-Bound, 1993)

4. Do you think that Bobby had good reason not to tell his dad about the job with Dr. Kahn?

Vocabulary: schedule (28), scatter (27), cross-examination (26), confidence (29)

Chapter 4

1. Why will Dr. Kahn subtract money from Bobby's wages?
2. How much did Bobby expect to earn for his week of work?
3. How much will he actually earn if Dr. Kahn subtracts the money?
4. Why couldn't Bobby start the lawnmower?
5. Who is Captain Marks and why does Bobby think about him in this chapter?

Vocabulary: polio (33), metabolism (36), renegade (41), bobbing (to bob) (32), recovery (33)

Chapter 5

1. How does Bobby explain his condition to Peter (by the way, what is that condition?)?
2. What really caused Bobby's condition?
3. Why doesn't Bobby eat lunch?
4. Why did he feel so bad after working?
5. What could Bobby have done to be better prepared for the job and the heat?

Vocabulary: residence (54), fainted (55), shimmered (50), staggered (50)

Chapter 6

1. What does Bobby mean when he says that he feels like the lawn looks?
2. What book was on Michelle's lap?
3. Why does Bobby think that no one would recognize him if he were slim?
4. Why does Bobby think that if he were slim he would be a different person?

Vocabulary: unlamented (look up *to lament*) (57), snarled (58), bulletin (57), sinewy (57)

Chapter 7

1. Why does Dr. Kahn lower Bobby's wages?
2. Why does Willie get mad at Bobby?
3. Why doesn't Dr. Kahn hire Willie?

(from Zalesky, Barbara. *Teacher's Guide*. Jacksonville, IL: Perma-Bound, 1993)

4. Compare Bobby's daydream of Captain Marks in this chapter to the one in chapter 4. Why do you think that the daydream in this chapter is less optimistic?

Vocabulary: intimidate (62), decent (67), threatening (63), absorb (64)

Chapter 8

1. Why does Bobby pretend to be a bearskin rug?
 2. Have you ever pretended for a similar reason?
- Why doesn't Bobby want his mom to get involved with his job?

Vocabulary: glimpses (69), professional (76)

Guide to ***One Fat Summer***: chapters 9–14

Chapter 9

1. Why doesn't Dr. Kahn make Bobby pay for the gutter and flowers that were ruined?
2. What does Bobby do to convince others that he likes baseball?
3. What does Bobby mean when he says that grass is the enemy or that he is prospecting for gold?
4. Do you ever make up games to make ordinary activities more interesting? Explain.

Vocabulary: nauseous (87), continuous (88), demolition (97), sneering (to sneer) (79)

Chapter 10

1. What could cause an ice cream headache?
2. Why does the student say that one must use the plural when talking about Bobby?
3. Why do people make fun of others?

(from Zalesky, Barbara. ***Teacher's Guide***. Jacksonville, IL: Perma-Bound, 1993)

4. Was it proper for Bobby's teacher to laugh at the joke made about Bobby's weight?

5. Would the joke have been worse or lesser if the teacher had made it? Why or why not?

Vocabulary: auction (106), bachelor (106), twitched (to twitch) (108), cooperation (109)

Chapter 11

1. What kind of remarks will Bobby's father not let slip by?

2. Do you sometimes let people say nasty and untrue things about yourself without challenging them? About others? Why or why not?

3. Why does Bobby try to pay attention to the ride while he is blindfolded?

4. What could Bobby have done so the kidnapping did not happen?

5. Why do you think Willie's friends go along with his plans?

6. What do you think Willie's friends think of him? Why do you say so?

Vocabulary: retreating (to retreat) (117), cackling (to cackle) (122)

Chapter 12

1. Why does Jim help Bobby off the island?

2. Did you think that Bobby might really die?

3. What in the writing help you to imagine how scared Bobby was on the island?

4. Have you ever experienced anything as scary as what Bobby encountered?

Vocabulary: cramp (134), hammock (129), bloated (129), blurred (133)

(from Zalesky, Barbara. *Teacher's Guide*. Jacksonville, IL: Perma-Bound, 1993)

Chapter 13

1. Bobby thinks that Dr. Kahn underpaid him. Check Dr. Kahn's math. Who is right?
2. How much should Dr. Kahn have paid Bobby?
3. Why did Joanie leave Rumson Lake?
4. What is the difference between Bobby's earlier nervousness and his current concern about Willie?

Vocabulary: ascending (138), concrete (138)

Chapter 14:

1. Bobby's dad may have to take a 20% reduction in pay. If he were earning \$1500 per month before the pay cut, how much would he get per month after the cut?
2. How much would he get per year after the cut?
3. Why did Joanie have an operation?
4. Why didn't Mr. Marks want Mrs. Marks to take a paying job?
5. What was Bobby's reaction to Joanie after her return?
6. Why did he react this way?

Vocabulary: soggy (150), charity (153), jealous (153), bigot (155), prejudiced (155)

Chapter 15

(from Zalesky, Barbara. *Teacher's Guide*. Jacksonville, IL: Perma-Bound, 1993)

1. How much weight has Bobby lost since he took the job?
2. Why is Bobby losing weight? What other changes do you see in him?
3. How does he react to Willie and his threats now?
4. To whom else is Bobby starting to stand up?

Vocabulary: calluses (163), dramatically (drama, dramatic) (165), sarcastic (167), ponytail (166), medallion (169)

Chapter 16

1. Why do you think Bobby is nervous about Willie being after him?
2. Yet, he is excited by the danger that Willie poses. Why?
3. Why does Captain Marks tell Willie not to eat?
4. Should Bobby listen to Captain Marks? Why or why not? After all, Captain Marks is imaginary, isn't he?

Vocabulary: jittery (182), spine (183); diseases (183), figments of my imagination (186)

Chapter 17

1. How many times does Mrs. Marks offer Bobby food in this chapter?
2. What kind of food does she offer?
3. Why did Mrs. Marks want to return to Rumson Lake rather than spend the night in New York City?
4. Do you think that Bobby will be able to keep the weight off that he has lost? Explain.

(from Zalesky, Barbara. *Teacher's Guide*. Jacksonville, IL: Perma-Bound, 1993)

Vocabulary: cross-examined (192), tramp (200), protective (203), obstacle(s) (196), appetite (189)

Chapter 18

1. Should Bobby have quit his job in order to avoid trouble with Willie?
2. Why do you think that Pete is cool towards Bobby?
3. Are you surprised that Willie has a gun? Why or why not?
4. Could Bobby have avoided being nearly alone on the beach? Should he have done so?

Vocabulary: shingles (208), carpentry (208), economics (211), framed (212), accelerator (213)

Chapter 19

1. Why does Pete attack Willie and Jim?
2. Was he right to do that?
3. How do Bobby, Joanie, and Jim react to Pete's actions?
4. Why did Bobby nearly get carried away into doing something he would have regretted when he and Willie were underwater?

Vocabulary: binoculars (219), stalk(ing) (220), amble(d) (221), snatched (223), shrieked (223)

Chapter 20:

1. Do you think Bobby could have stood up to Dr. Kahn in demanding a raise at the beginning of the summer?

(from Zalesky, Barbara. *Teacher's Guide*. Jacksonville, IL: Perma-Bound, 1993)

2. Why is he able to do so now?

3. Compare the other instances of Bobby demanding more money from Dr. Kahn in chapter 15. How are the two occasions alike? How are they different?

Vocabulary: retching (232), surveying (231), presentable (230), erecting (229), renege(s) (230)