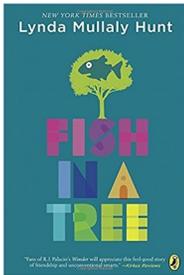


Books by the Stack



Fish in a Tree by Lynda Mullaly Hunt

Every time Ally lands in a new school, she is able to hide her inability to read by creating clever yet disruptive distractions. However, her teacher Mr. Daniels sees the bright, creative kid underneath the trouble maker. With his help, Ally learns not to be so hard on herself and that dyslexia is nothing to be ashamed of. Ally discovers that there's a lot more to her-and to everyone-than a label, and that great minds don't always think alike.

Why you'll like it: Uplifting. Relatable. Emotional. Dyslexia.

About the Author: Lynda Mullaly Hunt (www.lyndamullalyhunt.com) has received many honors for her debut novel, *One for the Murphys*, which is on over twenty state award lists, including Bank Street's 2013 Best Books of the Year. She's a former teacher, and holds writers retreats for the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators. She lives in Connecticut with her husband, two children, impetuous beagle, and beagle-loathing cat.

Questions for Discussion

1. The Ally readers meet at the beginning of the novel is very different from the Ally at the book's conclusion. In what way is she the same, and in what ways has she changed?
2. Who are Ally's heroes? What have they done or said that stays with her?
3. Throughout *Fish in a Tree*, Ally discovers that other students are also struggling. Whom does she encounter that have problems of their own, and how do they deal with their struggles?
4. Ally and Keisha become friends after meeting each other, and it's a strong friendship that thrives throughout the novel? Why do they get along so well? What does ally appreciate in Keisha?
5. What kind of activities or discussions does Mr. Daniels bring to the classroom for his Fantasticos? What do these activities tell us about his approach to teaching?
6. Ally likes to use the phrase "mind movies" when explaining how she envisions situations playing out. What is the significance of her mind movies? How do they relate to some of her talents?
7. What qualities might Ally's classmates have seen or believed in when they elected her class president?
8. What does Albert mean when he explains "If the killer whale were called the friendly whale, no one would be scared" (p. 184)? How is this idea connected to larger themes in the book?
9. How does Ally learn to respond to the constant onslaught of meanness from Shay? What is their relationship like at the end of the book? Why do you think the author made that choice?
10. How do Oliver's reactions to Shay at the beginning of the book and the end of the book differ? What are your thoughts about that difference?
11. What methods does Mr. Daniels use to help Ally tackle dyslexia? Beyond dyslexia, what does he want her to understand about herself?
12. If you could have dinner with any character from the book, whom would you choose? Please give specific reasons why you chose whom you did.

13. How would you characterize Ally's relationship with her older brother Travis? What does the final scene among Ally, Travis, and Mr. Daniels say about their future? What is the significance of the small piece of paper with the word "possible"?

14. Why is the quotation in Principal Silver's office important? Why is this important for Ally to see?

15. The title of the book, *Fish in a Tree*, is mentioned at one point in the text. Mr. Daniels references a well-known saying, "If you judge a fish on its ability to climb a tree, it will spend its whole life thinking that it's stupid" (p. 159). Why does Mr. Daniels mean by this? Why might this phrase have been chosen as the title for the book?

(Questions provided by publisher)



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