

Ugly

By Robert Hoge

Enjoy the Book Together

- Robert's parents argued about whether Robert should have his first major surgery when he was a baby. Have your child summarize their different opinions, and explain how they came to a resolution. Also discuss how Robert's mother's feelings changed dramatically after the first few weeks of his life.
- On page 69, Robert talks about the moment in his life when he decided to protect his mom from the truth about how he was being treated. Why did he do it? Was it for her or for himself, or both? Do you think he made the right choice? Why or why not?
- Why was discovering lawn bowling such a big deal for Robert? What did it mean to him? What did it give him that he'd been looking for for so long?

Make Personal Connections

- In the introduction, Robert writes, "Be unafraid of living. The puzzle pieces will take care of themselves." How do you interpret this? What does it mean to you?
- Robert remembers the moment that curiosity turned to teasing. Do you remember the first time someone said something that made you feel embarrassed or ashamed? What did the person say to you? What did you do or say back? Share your stories with each other.

Literacy Tip

There are illustrations throughout the book of important moments in Robert's life, and then there are photos at the end. Why do you think the author saved the photos for the end?

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Robert's parents leave the decision about whether or not to have the big surgery up to Robert. Use the organizer below to gather details about the surgery, and then write a paragraph explaining whether or not you agree with Robert's decision, and why.

1. Why do the doctors want Robert to have the surgery?

2. What are the risks of the surgery? What are the benefits of it?

3. What does Michael say, and how does it change Robert's perspective?

4. On another piece of paper, write a paragraph summarizing the pros and cons of having the big surgery, and explain whether or not you agree with Robert's decision.