



The Boy In The Striped Pyjamas Readers' Groups Discussion Points

About the Author

John Boyne is an Irish novelist, born in 1971, who has written six novels. The Boy In The Striped Pyjamas is his first novel for children.

About the Book

This novel is the story of Bruno, a young German boy whose life is turned upside down when his father is given a new position far from his home in Berlin.

Bruno is unhappy with his new life in a place called "Outwith" where he has no friends. By chance he meets a young boy called Shmuel who lives behind a barbed wire fence with lots of people who all wear striped pyjamas. Bruno and Shmuel become friends with ultimately horrific consequences.

Discussion Questions

Please note that some of these questions will act as spoilers for the book.

1. The author John Boyne describes "The Boy In The Striped Pyjamas" as a "fable". A fable can be defined as a short story which teaches moral lessons. How well does this book fit this description?
2. "The Boy In The Striped Pyjamas" is primarily a book for children. Do you agree with this or is it relevant for adults too?
3. Bruno is completely unaware of the true nature of "Outwith" (Auschwitz). Is this a sign of childhood naiveté or a representation of the lack of awareness of the Holocaust as it was occurring?

4. Is there significance in "Auschwitz" being mis-described as "Outwith" and "Furher" as "Fury"?