



The Seventh Most Important Thing

by Shelley Pearsall

TIPS FOR FAMILY BOOK CLUB:

Set up the book club meeting for success. Encourage all opinions and a judgment-free discussion. Remind family members to take turns speaking, and that when others are speaking, listening is respectful.

As you begin answering questions, it's helpful to show your children that your answers are informed by information in the book. You might say, "I think XYZ because of the time that ABC happened." Perhaps reference a specific page or passage.

Finally, to get all participants involved, print out these questions and take turns reading the questions to the group.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Why does the Junk Man believe getting hit by the brick was an act of God?
2. What is the difference between retribution and rehabilitation? Which do you think is a better punishment?
3. What other characters besides Mr. Hampton make a difference in Arthur's life? How?
4. Mr. Hampton took broken things in Guam after his first vision to create something beautiful from them. How is this a bigger life lesson?
5. What are the Seven Most Important Things? Do you remember when each one appears in Arthur's life? See if you can make a list of the items and when they show up for Arthur. What else is happening in his life at those moments that might make the objects important for him?
6. "*Where there is no vision, the people perish*" is Mr. Hampton's favorite Bible verse (Proverbs 29:18) and he shares it with everyone. What do *you* think it means?
7. Why does Mr. Hampton call his cart a chariot and people saints?
8. Arthur thinks Mr. Hampton is the reason he helps Squeak, something the "old" Arthur wouldn't have done. Do you agree that Arthur changes throughout the story because of Mr. Hampton? How so?
9. Mr. Hampton says that hell is easy to create but creating heaven takes a lifetime. What does he mean? Do you agree with the museum people that the throne — and heaven — reflect us?
10. Do you believe in a heaven or paradise? If so, what do *you* think heaven is like? Why?