

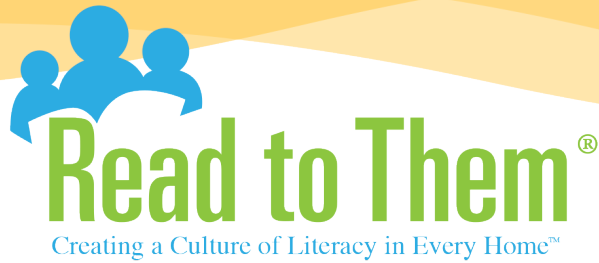
Discussion Questions for
Life According to Og the Frog (2018)
by Betty G. Birney

Chapter 1 – My Leap into Room 26 (pp. 1-12)

1. Og is moved from Room 27 to Room 26. Do you have any suggestions for Og on how to cope with this change? Have you or someone you know ever moved to a different place? What was the hardest part about this change?
2. George is unkind to Og - he doesn't like Og's songs and he frequently insults Og. Why do you think George behaves the way he does? Do you believe, if he and Og meet again, that George is capable of changing his behavior?
3. At this point in the book, Og and Humphrey do not understand each other as, for Og, "frogs and furry creatures are *never* friends in the swamp." (p. 11). Have you ever met someone where you must overcome some sort of obstacle, such as a language barrier? How did you go about beating this obstacle? What steps do you think Og can take to understand Humphrey?

Chapter 2 – My Learning Curve (pp. 13-22)

4. Aldo brings Humphrey a tomato and is apologetic for not having a snack for Og, too. Do you know someone who is thoughtful like Aldo? Describe that person, and think of something you might do for them the next time you see one another.
5. Og is impressed by Humphrey's ability to write. Do you have a skill that you think is impressive? Is there a skill you'd like to learn and, if so, what is it?
6. One of Og's favorite pastimes is to "Float. Doze. *Be.*" What is a hobby of yours that you love to take part in? Do you think you would enjoy Og's hobby?
7. While listening to Mrs. Brisbane's math class, Og claims he doesn't "understand a lot of what she says." (p. 20) Is there a school subject you struggle with? If you can't think of a subject, place yourself in Og's position and brainstorm a solution for him to better understand math.



Chapter 3 – The Long, Long Weekend (pp. 23-32)

8. When Humphrey goes home with Garth for the weekend, Og is “more alone than [he’s] ever been.” (p. 25). How do you feel about being alone? When you’re alone, what do you like to do?
9. To fill the quiet of the classroom, Og sings to himself. What’s a song you turn to when you’re looking for comfort? How else do you comfort yourself or others?
10. Many of the students in Mrs. Brisbane’s class write their poems about Og. If you were given the poetry assignment, what would you write about? If you chose Og, what attributes about him would you want to highlight?
11. Someone calls Tabitha a baby after she reads her poem about her stuffed bear, Smiley. How would you have reacted if you’d heard this? Are you surprised no student in Mrs. Brisbane’s class came to Tabitha’s defense?

Chapter 4 – My Secret Past (pp. 33-43)

12. When Sayeh stays behind to walk with Tabitha, Tabitha completely ignores her. With Sayeh clearly making an effort to be friends with Tabitha, why do you think Tabitha gives her the cold shoulder?
13. From page 36:
But there’s plenty of buzzing, chirping, flapping, and even the occasional bloodcurdling howl. The chorus of bullfrogs is deafening, and of course, my green frog friends and I let out some heart BOINGS so everyone will know we’re around, too!
Og names these sounds from the swamp. When you think of home, what are the sounds that come to mind? Which is your favorite?
14. The students of Room 26 learn that Og was taken from his swamp. They believe Og should be returned to his friends and family, but Og is hurt as he was just starting to feel like he belonged in the classroom. Whose side are you on? Is there a straight-forward solution? Why or why not?

Chapter 5 – At Home with the Brisbanes (pp. 44-54)

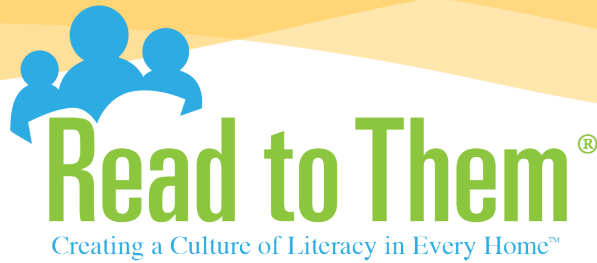
15. Og believes the other students don't understand Tabitha, and that's why there's a disconnect between them. What are a few ways you could go about trying to understand someone?
16. Og learns that Tabitha is in a new foster home with a new mother, and is struggling with the idea she doesn't belong there or in the school. Have you ever felt like Tabitha? What did you do to feel better? Share your answer as if you were giving advice directly to Tabitha.
17. Everything that Og knows about Humphrey is learned secondhand, like how Humphrey helped Mr. Brisbane after his accident and how it's Humphrey's job to be a class pet. How do you think these tidbits of information will shape Og's view of Humphrey? Will it aid them in learning to communicate with one another?

Chapter 6 – The Problem with Me (pp. 55-64)

18. Og remembers a lesson that his Granny Greenleaf taught him: "Listen, always listen." (p. 55). What is a piece of advice someone has given you? What kind of impact did the advice have on you?
19. After seeing how much Mrs. Brisbane dislikes the live crickets, Og's diet is broadened to a number of different snacks he finds tasty. Essentially, Og and the Brisbanes come to a compromise. Have you ever had to compromise before? Describe the situation and the outcome of the compromise. Were you happy with the outcome?

Chapter 7 – Conflict and Confusion (pp. 65-73)

20. AJ spends his weekend making cookies at his Grandma's house. What's your favorite weekend activity? What would your ideal weekend itinerary look like?
21. A game between Gail and Heidi goes terribly wrong, leaving Gail calling Heidi a cheater and Heidi labeling Gail a liar. The argument ends with both girls in tears. Do you believe Gail and Heidi will be able to mend their friendship? Have you and your best friend ever had a fight like this? How was a resolution achieved?
22. Og continues to learn the ins and outs of being a classroom pet, including the importance of being helpful. What other attributes do you think a classroom pet should have? Which of these characteristics do you think Og has already?



Chapter 8 – Stay, Go, I Don’t Know (pp. 74-84)

23. Though they can’t understand each other, Og and Humphrey “SQUEAK!” and “BOING!” to bring Mrs. Brisbane’s attention to the important paper Aldo left behind. Can you think of a time that teamwork has played a positive role in your life?
24. Some students want to take Humphrey and Og back where they came from while the rest of the class insists both belong in the classroom. Which side of the argument do you stand on? In which direction do you think the students’ research on frogs and hamsters will sway the class?
25. Mrs. Brisbane advises Mandy to look at Og if Mandy feels herself getting angry. Do you believe this is an effective way to curb Mandy’s anger? What do you do when you get angry? Do you have a way of deflating that anger like Mandy does?

Chapter 9 – Humphrey Goes Haywire (pp. 85-94)

26. Tabitha is trying very hard to be open to friendship with her classmates. Have you ever struggled with making friends? Looking back, what do you wish you’d known to ease you through the process?
27. Humphrey launches into action, swinging and skidding across the classroom to put Seth’s study guide by Tabitha’s desk. As a hamster prone to making plans, what do you think Humphrey is trying to achieve? Why would he take Seth’s study guide if Tabitha already has one?

Chapter 10 – Magic in the Air (pp. 95-102)

28. To Og, “Hibernation is really just a nice, cozy nap, but [he’d] hate to miss out on all the activity in Room 26.” (p. 97) If you were a frog like Og, would you want to hibernate? What do you think the pros and cons of hibernation are?
29. Humphrey, by slipping Seth’s study guide to Tabitha, aided in the two students hanging out and becoming friendly with each other. If Og had been in on the plan, how do you think he would’ve helped Humphrey? How would you have arranged for Seth and Tabitha to interact?
30. Aldo comes to Room 26 to teach a lesson and Mrs. Brisbane tells him that, “You are a born teacher.” Describe how you think Aldo feels at this moment. Have you or a friend ever achieved a major goal? What was the goal, and how did you feel about it? Do you think people are born to do a certain job, like being a teacher?

Chapter 11 – Call the Doctor (pp. 103-111)

31. Dr. Okeke is a Herpetologist, meaning she studies reptiles and amphibians, such as Og. What do you think is the most interesting aspect of being a Herpetologist? Do you think you would consider pursuing a career in this field and, if not, what would you like to do when you're grown up?
32. Dr. Okeke raises a number of points to the class. One such point is that Og should be returned to the wild, but he risks bringing diseases into his ecosystem. Has your opinion on whether or not Og should be returned to the wild changed at all? What swayed you?

Chapter 12 – Tanks A Lot! (pp. 112-119)

33. Mr. and Mrs. Brisbane buy a swimming pool for Og's tank. If they're making improvements to his environment, do you think they'll end up releasing Og back into the wild? If you could decorate your room or living space, how would you do it? Describe your ideal renovations.
34. Og has never seen snow before because, in the past, he's slept through it. Can you remember the first time you saw snow? Do you know anyone who hasn't seen snow? How would you describe it to that person?
35. While Humphrey and Og remain at the school, the students and staff stay home due to the heavy snowfall. If you were off on a snow day, what would you like to do? How would you change your schedule in comparison to a typical school day?

Chapter 13 – From Hero to Zero (pp. 120-131)

36. Mandy writes a very nice valentine for Og, who is extremely touched. Picture someone you love and/or admire in your head. Who is it? What is something kind you would say to them?
37. At the end of the chapter, we find out that the students will debate whether or not Og will stay in Room 26. Do you think Og's reaction to this news is warranted? Is he reacting too soon?

Chapter 14 – The Great Frog Debate (pp. 132-142)

38. Before making the big decision, Mrs. Brisbane has her students take part in a debate. Why do you think it's important to think through a choice before you make a decision? Have you ever debated with yourself or someone else before? What about?
39. All the students cast their vote for Og either staying or going away to Piney Woods. Even Humphrey takes an opportunity to vote by submitting a ballot. What's the importance of everyone having their voice heard? What value can be found in this voting process?
40. Do you believe Humphrey's vote will be enough for Og to stay in Room 26?

Chapter 15 – Decision Time (pp. 143-150)

41. Principal Morales announces that the majority of the class voted to keep Og in Room 26. Were you surprised about the outcome of the votes? If you knew Og would end up staying, what in the text gave it away?
42. While at the Wildlife Fair at Piney Woods, the students make a number of signs: KEEP OUR RIVERS AND STREAMS CLEAN, KEEP CHEMICALS OUT OF OUR WATER, and DON'T POLLUTE, among others. Can you think of any other environment-related issues you would want to spotlight? How would you translate them onto a sign?
43. Og is part of an endangered species of frogs. The students encourage those who stop by their stall to become aware and take action. Can you think of any other endangered animals you would like to raise awareness about? What would your central message be?

End of Book:

44. At the start of each chapter, there is a paragraph in italics. All of these inserts are pulled from Og's memory of his swamp home. What purpose do they serve in the book as a whole? Did they contribute to your enjoyment of the book? How would the text be different if they weren't present?
45. Og learns a number of important lessons from being the new class pet in Room 26. Which of these lessons do you think is the most important? Which lesson do you think you'll carry with you long after you've finished reading *Life According to Og the Frog*?



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46. By the end of the novel, Og and Humphrey still can't speak one another's language, but they still forge a close friendship. Why do you think the author chose to keep this barrier in place? Do you think their friendship is strengthened by it? How do you think Og and Humphrey will continue to grow in future adventures?
47. One of the major themes of *Life According to Og the Frog* is the idea of understanding those who are different from us. What are some specific ways this theme is expressed in the novel? Why do you think empathy is an important skill to develop?
48. Much of *Life According to Og the Frog* centers around Og torn between missing his old home in the swamp and growing to love the class of Room 26. How do you think Og learning to value his new home shapes his character in the book? What is home to you?

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