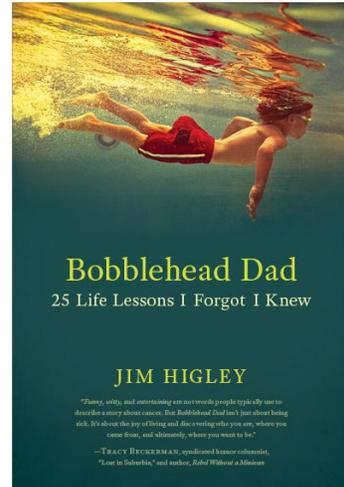


Bobblehead Dad Discussion Guide



How did you... **Who....** Did the author...
why do you think... **Were you ever...**
Was there ever a point... **WHEN...**
Who would you... **If there was one word...**

Let's start the discussion...

Did you enjoy this book? How did it make you feel?

Did *Bobblehead Dad* transport you to your own childhood? Did it cause you to reflect more on the life and people you touch today?

What did you think of the author's voice?

The publisher debated a great deal whether this book was a memoir, a self-help or an inspirational story. How do you perceive it?

What imagery did you see in the cover photo of the little boy swimming?

While the overall message of the book is not unique, did the story deliver that message in a fresh, enjoyable manner?

Was the story what you thought it would be?

This book covers a broad range of themes including parenting, motherhood, fatherhood, death, cancer, adversity, careers, mid-life crisis, and self-identity. Were any of these areas more meaningful to you?

Jim shares 25 life lessons he forgot he knew. Do you feel he is suggesting that these are his most important 25 life lessons?

Did this book make you want to do anything?

Did you have a favorite chapter? If so why? (Jim's favorite was his "running" story. Why do you think that is?)

Does this book work well as a book club selection?

Let's talk book structure...

What did you think of the chapter titles?

What was your reaction to the format of each chapter—leading with a “memory” story which lead into the chronologically accurate story of Jim’s summer?

Did you use any of the reflective questions at the end of the book?

Did you feel photographs were used effectively to introduce each chapter?

Memoirs/Personal stories provide glimpses into characters, but only those glimpses that the author is willing to reveal. After finishing the book, do you feel as though you understand the journey Jim went through?

The structure and format of the book (the use of flashback stories to introduce the present-day events) largely reveals the overall message of the book: *Our life lessons are truly hidden in the vanilla moments of our life.* Was that apparent to you?

Let's talk about the characters...

Jim’s mom, Betty, is largely canonized in this story. What were your reactions to her?

Jim shares his very deep belief that his brother Kevin remains part his life, even after his death. How did you react to the story of Kevin “speaking” to Drew while Jim was painting?

Jim shares his feelings toward his own father, Bob, in the Prologue when he shares their conversation in Long John Silver’s. Did you receive a consistent message throughout the book as to why Bob’s commitment to his children played such a strong influence on Jim throughout his life?

Were you drawn to other characters in the book?

Jim intentionally never shares the gift that Karen received during her cancer journey. Did you pick up on that? If so, were you curious about her gift?

Let's talk about cancer and adversity...

Jim makes a statement that this book is “more than a cancer story.” Do you agree?

Were you ever burdened by the storyline of cancer throughout the book?

Let's talk about similar books...

Did *Bobblehead Dad* remind you of other books?

How would you compare *Bobblehead Dad* to *The Last Lecture*, *Tuesdays with Morrie*, *The Middle Place*, or *Three Weeks with my Brother* (Nick Sparks).

Let's talk about audience...

Who do you think Jim wrote this book for?

Who do you think would enjoy this book?

Who do you think would NOT enjoy this book?

Jim has a strong readership of college students. Why do you think that is the case?

Let's talk about what you'll remember...

If you were to make a bumper sticker from one of the lessons, which one would it be?

Was there a “memory” that you most related to?

Jim shares vivid details about his memories of things like going to his dad's office, planting flowers with his mom, or spending carefree summers in Nebraska. Did any of his stories transport you back to some of your own memories?

Was there one primary message you took away from this?

Did Jim's use of the “strike-through” key when talking about his mother and her typed letters have any impact on you?

Did you happen to read the Acknowledgments—particularly Jim's closing note to his own mother?

What was your reaction to the Heartsill Wilson poem which Jim discovered in his mother's purse and the recent connection Jim had with Heartsill's family?

On page 179, Jim talks about Karen's promise coming true as well as his discovering the gift his mom had left him when he was fourteen years old. Were the gifts one in the same?

One word review?

Chapter	Title	Lesson
1	Some Things You Don't Want to Inherit	<i>The scariest bogeyman is the one in your head.</i>
2	Why Painters Use Drop Cloths	<i>Loved ones die, but they never leave.</i>
3	Playing Post Office	<i>Clean your desk. Clear the clutter. Then focus.</i>
4	I'm Sorry, What Did You Say?	<i>Welcome good advice with action.</i>
5	Give and Take	<i>The best caregivers have received the best care.</i>
6	I Can't Believe You Said That	<i>When you can't be brilliant with words, be brilliant with your arms.</i>
7	Mom and Dad Were Doing It	<i>Meaningful tears fall from eyes that know how to laugh.</i>
8	Growing into My Running Shoes	<i>There's only one person stopping you from being who you were meant to be.</i>
9	Mum's the Word	<i>Unless you have a gardener, you're in charge of splitting your own mums.</i>
10	The Real Dirt	<i>Plant yourself in good soil.</i>
11	That's Why They Call It Work	<i>Work isn't everything.</i>
12	Summertime, and the Livin' Is Easy	<i>Rest.</i>
13	Here Comes Santa Claus	<i>The first step to achieving is believing.</i>
14	Lifeguard on Duty	<i>Lifeguards are always on duty.</i>
15	Will You Sign My Yearbook?	<i>Say it. Write it. Today.</i>
16	Ob-la-di, Ob-la-da, Life Goes On	<i>Life flies. Watch your time.</i>
17	I Wish They All Could Be California Girls	<i>Ask. And you might just receive.</i>
18	Camp Songs	<i>There's a camper—and a counselor—inside us all.</i>
19	Whipped Cream Wonders	<i>Celebrate something every day.</i>
20	I'd Rather Be the Jackson Five	<i>Embrace who you are.</i>
21	But I Want a Puppy	<i>The best gifts find you. Let it happen.</i>
22	I Hate You, Donny Osmond	<i>Life is a series of transitions. Eventually, you need to move on.</i>
23	Dear Gladys...	<i>Don't strive for perfection.</i> <i>Be authentic. Be content.</i>
24	Snoopin' in Mom's Purse	<i>Expect the unexpected.</i>
25	Wait, There's More!	<i>Lessons happen every day.</i>