



Book Club Questions
Peck & Peck by Bonnie Garmus

Ice Breaker Question:

Peck & Peck has some famously quirky submission rules, like no poems about rainbows, beaches, or cancer. If you ran your own magazine, what's one topic you'd ban, and why?

Debate Starter Question:

Did Garmus's unusual combination of humor, satire, and grief make Peck & Peck more memorable, or did it sometimes get in the way of its emotional impact?

These book club questions are by Princeton Book Review

1. Why do you think Garmus gave Batter an identical twin brother who died at birth? How does Batter's grief deepen the story's meaning?
2. Batter's family and his friend Paul dismiss his passion for poetry as impractical. How does their lack of support influence his relationship with writing and his willingness to share it?
3. How does being named after his mother's heroic dog make Batter feel? Does it pressure him always to be the "brave protector" and hide his own pain?
4. Rainey Gray believes typography and design are powerful forms of expression. What does her perspective reveal about creativity? How does her relationship with Batter influence his ability to express himself?
5. The bonfire of rejected poems at the Peck & Peck is very emotional. How did seeing these vulnerable, unrecognized artists affect you? Did the book make you feel sympathetic toward these "failed" creators, or did it show you the sad need for artists to have thick skin?
6. How does the rivalry between the twin editors, Salton and Declonius, connect to Batter's experience of losing his own twin? What do these relationships reveal about sibling bonds and identity?
7. We learn on the first page that Batter is a prisoner, but we only find out why at the very end. This raises the question: Was keeping the crime a secret a clever way to build suspense, or was it just a trick to keep us reading?



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8. The book balances a tragic emotional core (maternal trauma, a dead twin, prison) with broad, cartoonish satire (burning thousands of poems a week, eccentric twin bosses). Did this tonal whiplash actually work, or did the goofy workplace comedy cheapen the genuine grief Batter was experiencing?
9. Peck & Peck explores poetry, typography, tech, and prisons in a wild way. Did Garmus try to combine too many ideas to avoid a sophomore slump, or does this chaos make the book great?
10. Although the novel takes place in the 1980s, its concerns about automation, technology, and corporate efficiency feel surprisingly current. Did these ideas develop naturally through the story, or did you sometimes feel Garmus was making a point at the expense of the characters?
11. Throughout the novel, characters face pressure to conform to other people's expectations. Which characters resist that pressure, and which give in? What do you think Garmus is saying about the cost of being different?
12. By the end of the novel, do you think Batter has come to understand himself better? What, if anything, has he learned about love, loss, and the importance of being heard?
13. How did you feel about the novel's ending? Did it change your understanding of Batter or the story Garmus was telling?