The Boy in the Striped Pajamas

As you answer the questions for this novel, cite textual evidence to support your responses.

Chapters 1-2

1. Why doesn’t Bruno understand the nature of his father’s job? Nobody ever explains his father’s job; they just say it is important and that the “Fury” has big things in mind for him (5).

2. How does Bruno’s mother feel about leaving the house in Berlin? Bruno’s mother is upset and sad about leaving the house in Berlin. Bruno realizes that she has a “strange laugh” and doesn’t “look happy” when talking about the move. While explaining to Bruno that they have no choice but leave, “Mother sighed and looked around the room as if she might never see it again” (5). Additionally, she tells Bruno, “We don’t have as much time to prepare as I would have liked, thanks to some people” (8), which Bruno recognizes as a reference to his father.

3. How does Bruno feel about his sister? Bruno thinks Gretel is a “hopeless Case” and would not care if she stayed behind in Berlin (10).

4. Why is Bruno reluctant to leave Berlin? Bruno does not want to leave Berlin because he loves his large, comfortable house, which is close to his grandparents and accessible to his three good friends.

5. How does Bruno react to his new house? Bruno does not like his new house. He thinks it is desolate and small and set in a place where there are no other houses. He also is sad there are no friends nearby (11). Bruno tells Maria, “I think this was a bad idea” (13) in reference to the move.

6. How do Bruno and Maria react to the young soldier in the hall? Bruno takes an instant dislike to the young soldier, finding the man too serious. Maria seems awed by his presence, as she stands very straight and holds her hands in front of her without looking into his face and only relaxes when he is gone.

7. Why do you think Bruno’s mother fails to tell her son the exact nature of his father’s job? She is possibly protecting Bruno by not telling him the true nature of his father’s job. She may think he is too young to understand anything more than it is an “important” job, or she may not want him to know the horrors that his job involves.

8. Why do you think that looking out the window makes Bruno feel “very cold and unsafe”? He obviously sees something that disturbs him because he makes the same face he made previously with wide eyes and his mouth in the shape of an O (20).

9. In literature the point of view refers to the person telling the story. It can be narrated by a character in the book or by the author. Sometimes even though the book is narrated by the author, it focuses on the thoughts and feelings of only one character. From this point of view, we observe the actions through the eyes of only one of the characters in the story. Who is telling the story? On whose thoughts and feelings does the narration focus? Why do you think the author chose this point of view? The author is narrating the book using third person narration. However, the narrator focuses on Bruno’s thoughts and feelings. The third person narrator makes it seem more objective and factual, but we also have the perspective of a child as he sees and experiences the events of the novel.

10. In literature, the setting is the time and place in which a story occurs. Setting is especially important in a historical novel such as this one. What is the setting of this novel? This novel takes place in Germany in 1942, which is during World War II. The family moves from a comfortable home in Berlin, to a “cold, nasty house” (15).

11. What details about the setting help make the characters’ times and lifestyles seem real? Details that help make the character’s times and lifestyles seem real include the references to men in uniform, the details comparing and contrasting the house in Berlin to the new house, descriptions of fruit and vegetable stalls in Berlin, and
descriptions of men and women sitting at outside tables drinking from frothy mugs in Berlin versus the solitude of the new house
1. How does Gretel feel about the new house? Gretel doesn’t like the new house, but out of respect for her father, she plans to make the best of it.

2. Why does Gretel hesitate before looking out of Bruno’s window? Gretel hesitates because there is something in Bruno’s manner as he looks out the window that upsets her.

3. Why is Gretel surprised when she looks out the window? Gretel is surprised because she cannot make sense of the huge fence and what lay beyond it: a grassless area with low huts and large square buildings; smoke stacks in the distance; groups of boys and men.

4. How are the children on the other side of the fence treated by the soldiers? The soldiers shout at the children, causing some of them to cry.

5. How does Gretel react to the children on the other side of the fence? Gretel thinks the children on the other side of the fence are dirty and wants to avoid them.

6. How were the two trains headed eastward from the station in Berlin different? Bruno’s train was comfortable with few people, while the train on the other track was crowded and uncomfortable.

7. How does Bruno’s father react to his son’s desire to go home? Bruno’s father tells his son that “Out-With” is their new home now and insists that he becomes accustomed to the idea.

8. Why is it so difficult for Bruno and Gretel to understand the true nature of Auschwitz? They have been sheltered from hearing about places like Auschwitz. They don’t even know that their father’s job is connected to it. They have never experienced anything like it. For example, Gretel is disgusted by the filth of the people she sees through the window and can’t imagine what type of people don’t take baths.

9. How would you describe Bruno’s relationship with his father? Do you think the Commandant is a good father? Bruno loves and respects his father, but he is somewhat afraid of him. He walks slowly toward his office and hesitates before going in. The Commandant may be a good father, but he obviously puts his job first as Bruno is a little sad that his father was in the house and had not come to see him yet. Additionally, he is not an affectionate father as he shakes Bruno’s hand rather than hugging him.

10. What does Bruno’s father mean when he says that the people on the other side of the fence are not people at all? When Bruno’s father says the people on the other side of the fence are not people at all, he means that they don’t matter. He tells Bruno, “You have nothing whatsoever in common with them” (53). He does not care about any of them.

11. A simile is a figure of speech in which two unlike objects are compared using the words “like” or “as.” For example: “As they [the Nazi soldiers] left they stood in a row like toy soldiers.” What is being compared? What does the comparison suggest about Nazi soldiers? The Nazi soldiers are compared to toy soldiers. This comparison suggests that they are just following orders and have no originality in thought or deed.

12. A flashback is a scene or series of scenes showing events that happened at an earlier time. Indicate where the flashback begins and ends in Chapter 5. What purpose does this flashback serve? The flashback in Chapter 5 begins in the 3rd paragraph on p. 39. At this point, the story goes back to the morning that the family left the house in Berlin and recounts that Mother indicated it was a mistake to let the Fury come to dinner. She is regretting leaving the home in Berlin. It also provides for a contrast in the two trains that are described, one very crowded and the other that the family rode on, much less crowded and more comfortable. This contrast will be significant later in the story.
Chapters 6-7

1. How does Maria react when Bruno calls his father stupid? After Bruno calls his father stupid, Maria is horrified, insisting that his father is a good man.

2. Why is Maria grateful to the Commandant? Maria feels grateful because the Commandant gave her a job and paid for her mother’s hospital care and funeral expenses.

3. What causes both Bruno and Gretel to feel uncomfortable with Lieutenant Kotler? Both Bruno and Gretel feel uncomfortable when Kotler treats Pavel in a disrespectful way.

4. How does Pavel help Bruno after his accident? Pavel carries Bruno back to the house and kindly and gently administers to his wounds.

5. Why is Bruno surprised to discover that Pavel is a doctor? Bruno is surprised that a doctor would be waiting on tables.

6. Maria says, “He has a lot kindness in his soul, truly he does, which makes me wonder…” If she were to finish the sentence, what might she say? She would probably wonder how he could do the job he does as Commandant in the Nazi army as his job involves ruthless killing.

7. Do you think that Bruno’s father could be as kind a man as Maria describes and still be a Nazi officer? Bruno’s father may be kind to some (such as he was to Maria), but he is still a Nazi officer. People aren’t completely good or evil, so it is possible for him to be both.

8. Why is Maria so upset when Bruno keeps complaining that his father made a terrible mistake in coming to Out-With? Maria is upset when Bruno complains about his father’s mistake in coming to Out-With because she knows he has been kind to her and her family and she feels she owes him gratitude.

9. Do you agree with Maria that Bruno should keep his criticism to himself? Why or why not? Bruno should be open with his beliefs. Even though Bruno is unaware of what is going on, there are many evil things happening that involve his father. It is better to speak up than to just stay quiet as staying quiet can indicate agreement with what is going on.

10. To what is Maria referring when she says that it is not up to her and Bruno to change things? Why do Bruno and Maria both feel like crying after she makes this statement? Maria says it is not up to her and Bruno to change things in reference to them living at Out-With and probably also about the treatment of the Jews. She feels that she is just a maid and Bruno is just a child so they can’t speak up and make a difference. They feel like crying because they both feel powerless.

11. What does Pavel mean when he tells Bruno that he thinks he has always been at Out-With? When Pavel says he thinks he has always been at Out-With, he means that he is so used to his life there that he feels unconnected with his previous life.

12. Why does Bruno’s mother take credit for cleaning Bruno up after his fall? What does this suggest about her? Bruno’s mother does thank Pavel for cleaning the wound, but she is rather uncomfortable. She says if the Commandant asks, she will take credit for cleaning the wound. Although Bruno thinks she is being selfish and trying to take credit, she is actually appreciative and doesn’t want the situation to bring harm to Pavel.

13. A metaphor is a figure of speech in which a comparison between two unlike objects is suggested or implied. For example: “If you ask me [Bruno], we’re all in the same boat. And it’s leaking.” What two things are being compared? What does Bruno mean when he makes this comparison? The two things being compared are the family being at Out-With and a being in a leaking boat. Bruno means that being at Out-With is a very bad situation for the family to be in. If the boat is leaking, things will only get worse.
Chapters 8-10

1. Why did the last play Bruno and Gretel performed with Grandmother end in disaster? After the last play, Grandmother had a fight with Bruno’s father and stormed out of the house.

2. Why was Grandmother unimpressed with her son’s new uniform? Grandmother thought that her son should care less about the uniform and more about what it represented.

3. Why does Herr Liszt dislike storybooks? Herr Liszt believes that the only books that are important are those about things that matter in his contemporary world and not about fiction.

4. Why does Bruno decide to explore to find out more about the people in the striped pajamas? Bruno decides to explore because he wonders what the difference is between the people in the striped pajamas and people wearing the uniforms.

5. Why does Bruno think that Shmuel’s face is strange? Bruno thinks that Shmuel’s face is strange because it appears to be very thin and grey, and his eyes seem very sad.

6. When Bruno states that he and Shmuel are like twins, why does Shmuel reply, “A little bit”? While Bruno can only see how he and Shmuel are alike, Shmuel can see the big difference.

7. What was the most likely cause of the argument between Bruno’s father and Grandmother? Bruno’s father and grandmother most likely fought about his job as Grandmother didn’t support what he was doing.

8. How do you think Bruno’s father would define the word patriot? How might Grandmother’s definition of the word be different? Bruno’s father would define the word patriot as being loyal to Hitler and the Nazi party. Grandmother’s definition would be doing what is right. She indicates that those in uniform only caring about dressing up in uniforms and doing “terrible, terrible things” (92).

9. Is Shmuel as naïve as Bruno? Explain by citing evidence. Shmuel is not as naïve as Bruno. Bruno demonstrates that he doesn’t understand Shmuel’s situation when he says, “It’s so unfair…I don’t see why I have to be stuck over here on this side of the fence where there’s no one to talk to and no one to play with and you get to have dozens of friends and are probably playing for hours every day” (111). He also refers to Germany being superior (112). The conversation between Bruno and Shmuel demonstrates that Bruno is unaware of what is going on.

10. What is the purpose of the flashback in Chapter 8? In Chapter 8, Bruno is thinking of the ones he misses from Berlin, and he thinks of his grandparents. The flashback in this chapter goes back to an argument that involved Bruno’s Grandmother and father on Christmas Day. Bruno doesn’t understand the significance of the argument or what caused it, but he was affected by it. After remembering the argument, Bruno writes his grandmother a letter to say how unhappy he is at Out-With and how much he misses her. The flashback helps to develop Bruno’s point of view as a naïve young boy who doesn’t understand all that is going on around him.

11. What is being compared in the following metaphor? “I [Grandmother] was merely the blank wall to whom you [Grandfather] addressed your words? What does this reveal about the relationship between Bruno’s grandparents? In this metaphor on page 91, Grandmother compares herself listening to grandfather to a blank wall. This metaphor reveals that they don’t communicate well. Although Grandfather told her not to discuss her displeasure about the uniform, she says he was talking at her as usual.

12. Bruno thinks it is unfair that Shmuel has many friends while he has none. What does this observation reflect about Bruno? How is this statement in conflict with the actual situation that Shmuel is in? This observation reflects that Bruno has no understanding of what is happening to Shmuel and the people on that side of the fence. He views them as fortunate for having friends, and sees himself as alone. He does not understand that they are really prisoners with no choices in life.
1. Why did Bruno think the Fury was the rudest guest he had ever witnessed? Bruno considered the Fury a rude guest after he expressed displeasure that Gretel was learning French, and abruptly left a conversation with the children to sit down in Father’s seat at the head of the table.

2. How did the blonde woman show consideration for the children? The blond woman showed consideration for the children because she continued to talk kindly to them after the Fury left them. She praised Gretel for learning French and showed concern for Bruno’s tight shoes.

3. Reread pages 119-120. What extra ground rules does Bruno’s father establish before the Fury’s visit? Why do you think Bruno’s father established extra ground rules for the children before the Fury’s visit?

4. What do the fragments of conversation between Bruno’s parents the night of the Fury’s visit reveal about the move to Out-With?

5. How does Bruno reveal that he has no understanding of Shmuel’s situation? Bruno reveals his lack of understanding for Bruno’s situation in several instances. Bruno compares Shmuel’s move to Out-With with his own. Additionally, Bruno does not believe that so many people could live in one room in the ghetto. He also does not believe that there were no doors on Shmuel’s train. Furthermore, he can’t understand why the hundreds of boys in the camp don’t play together.

6. Why doesn’t Bruno tell his parents about Shmuel? Bruno does not tell his parents about Shmuel because he believes that they might not approve of him, and he does not want to give up his friendship with the boy. On page 133, the book says, “After all, he reasoned, they might not want me to be friends with him anymore and if that happens they might stop me from coming out here at all.”

7. How do Bruno and Shmuel disagree about soldiers? Bruno and Shmuel disagree about the soldiers because Bruno believes that there are good soldiers like his father, while Shmuel says “There aren’t any good soldiers” (140) because he has only experienced the cruelty of soldiers.

8. Why it is impossible for Bruno to understand what is going on around him, even when Shmuel tries to explain it to him? Do you think this is believable? Bruno is unable to understand what is going on around him because he has not experienced it. He tries to talk about situations he has been in as a way to make comparisons. For example, he was on a train with a door, and he can’t identify with being in a crowded train without a door. When he hears Shmuel talk about being forced to leave his home and come to Out-With, he makes a comparison of his own about being forced to leave his home. When Shmuel tells him about being forced to wear an armband, Bruno says he has never been given one and would like him. (Students can justify that it is believable because Bruno is only 9 or they may say that he should be more aware of his surroundings.)

9. On page 137, Bruno and Maria talk about Pavel. Maria tells him some information that she has heard from Pavel about his life. Based on the text, what do you think that Maria told Bruno about Pavel? It is likely that Maria told Bruno that Pavel used to be a doctor but he was captured by the Nazi soldiers and taken from his home. Most likely, his story is very close to Shmuel’s story.

10. Why does Bruno foresee that catastrophe is going to strike on the night Lieutenant Kotler comes to dinner? Bruno foresees that catastrophe is going to strike because Pavel looks smaller and paler than usual, and his service is impeded because he is unsteady on his feel and slow to respond.

11. Why is Lieutenant Kotler reluctant to talk about his father? How does this arouse the Commandant’s suspicions? Lieutenant Kotler is reluctant to talk about his father because the man left Germany for Switzerland. The Commandant suspects that Kotler’s father left because he disagreed with Hitler’s policies.
12. Why do you think that Bruno’s father is concerned about Lieutenant Kotler’s family history? The Commandant suspects that Kotler’s father left because he disagreed with Hitler’s policies. Since he works closely under Hitler, he would be concerned about anyone who disagrees.

13. The author leaves Pavel’s punishment up to the reader’s imagination rather than describing in detail what Lieutenant Kotler does to him. What is the effect of this? By not describing in detail what Lieutenant Kotler does to him, the reader is left to imagine what actually happened. It is referred to as “both unexpected and extremely unpleasant” (148). Additionally, it makes “Bruno cry and Greta grow pale” (149). The effect is that the punishment seems even more severe and sinister.

14. How does Bruno come out with the realization that he had better not disagree with anyone about anything at Out-With? After Kotler punishes Pavel, Bruno comes to the realization that “it hardly seemed fair or right that no one had stopped Lieutenant Kotler getting so angry at Pavel, and if that was the kind of thing that went on at Out-With then he’d better not disagree with anyone any more about anything” (149). Bruno is afraid of what could happen to him if he disagreed with anything else.

15. Why does the author use flashback in Chapter 11 to show what occurred when the Fury came to dinner? How would the effect have been different if this incident came at the very beginning of the book? The author uses flashback in Chapter 11 to relay the incidents of the dinner with the Fury. Prior to this chapter, this dinner has been referred to or foreshadowed several times. For example, on page 3, Bruno’s mother sits down in a “chair where the beautiful blonde woman who had come to dinner with the Fury had sat.” Later, as they are preparing to leave the house in Berlin, mother is overheard saying “We should never have let the Fury come to dinner” (40), which indicates she is not happy about having to move. In chapter 8, the text says, “There had been nothing but excitement for weeks. First the Fury and the beautiful blonde woman had come to differ, which had brought the whole house to a standstill, and then it was this new business of calling Father ‘Commandant’” (89). When the details of the dinner are explained in Chapter 11, Bruno presents the Fury as a very rude guest. This dinner incident was the one that set the other events in the story in motion as the move from Berlin to Out-With stemmed from orders given at the dinner. If this had been included at the beginning of the book, it would have been more direct and the reader would expect Bruno to have a deeper level of understanding about what is happening. By revealing details about the dinner and the Fury’s behavior later, it helps the reader to have the same level of understanding as Bruno.

16. Although Bruno feels that Shmuel is like his twin, the boys are different in many ways. Use a Venn diagram to compare and contrast the two characters.
1. Why does Bruno pretend that he has an imaginary friend? After accidentally mentioning Shmuel in front of Gretel, Bruno tries to cover his slip by pretending that his friend is an imaginary one. He fears that Gretel will somehow ruin the friendship.

2. How does talking about Shmuel to Gretel help Bruno understand his friend? When Bruno tells Gretel about the tragic disappearance of Shmuel’s grandfather, he realizes how sad his friend must have been feeling. At that point, he feels regret that he did not offer his friend comforting words.

3. What signs reveal that Lieutenant Kotler is getting very close to Bruno’s mother? It is clear that Lieutenant Kotler is getting close to Bruno’s mother because he is always in the living room making jokes with her. Whenever the Commandant is away, he hangs around the house and is typically at the house when Bruno goes to bed and before he wakes up in the morning. She also calls him “Kurt” and “precious.”

4. Why is Shmuel at Bruno’s house? Lieutenant Kotler brings Shmuel to Bruno’s house to polish the glasses as his fingers are small enough to do the job.

5. How does Bruno inadvertently get Shmuel into trouble? Bruno gives Shmuel chicken to eat and then denies that he did so when Lieutenant Kotler questions him. Bruno’s denial leads Kotler to believe that Shmuel stole the food.

6. Why does Bruno fail to tell Lieutenant Kotler that he gave Shmuel the chicken? Bruno does not tell Lieutenant Kotler that he gave Shmuel the chicken because he is afraid of Kotler and does not have the courage to stand up for his friend by telling the truth.

7. Bruno says many things that demonstrate he does not understand at all how bad the conditions are at the concentration camp. Why do you think that Shmuel does not try harder to correct Bruno? Even though Bruno does not understand Shmuel’s situation, Shmuel is pleased to have a friend to listen to him. The time he spends with Bruno provides an escape from the terrible life he has been forced into.

8. Is there any justification in Bruno denying his friendship with Shmuel? Answers may vary: Students may respond either way, but should back up their position. Some students will say Bruno remembers what happened to Pavel and realize that he is motivated by fear of what could happen to him. Others might say that Bruno understands that Shmuel is in a bad situation and that he should stand up for his friend no matter what could happen.

9. Why does Shmuel forgive Bruno so easily for betraying him? What does this suggest about Shmuel? Shmuel forgives Bruno so easily for the betrayal because he really does value the friendship. Once Bruno says, “I’ve never let a friend down like that before Shmuel, I’m ashamed of myself” (175), Shmuel smiles and forgives him. This suggests that Shmuel does not hold a grudge and that he cares about his friend.

10. Why is it significant that the boys touch for the first time? The boys touch for the first time by reaching out to each other under the fence after Bruno apologizes and after Shmuel accepts the apology. It is significant because it is an outward sign of their friendship (175).

11. Mood is the overall atmosphere of a literary work. Happiness, sadness, terror or tranquility—mood can be any strong feeling or emotion that the author creates through language. Read the following passage:

   “You will finish polishing all the glasses,” said Lieutenant Kotler in a very quiet voice now, so quiet that Bruno almost couldn’t hear him. It was as if all his anger had just changed into something else. Not quite the opposite, but something unexpected and dreadful. “And then I will come to collect you and bring you back to the camp, where we will have a discussion about what happens to boys who steal. This is understood, yes?”
What mood is set by the passage? Underline the words that help create the mood. The mood of this passage is sinister and foreboding.
Chapters 16-18

1. Why is Bruno happier about his life at Out-With?  
   Bruno is happier about his life at Out-With because his parents seem more cheerful, Lieutenant Kotler was transferred, and Shmuel is his friend.

2. Why does Bruno have a hard time understanding Gretel’s explanation for the fence?  
   Gretel’s explanation about the fence makes little sense to Bruno as he has no prejudice against the Jews.

3. How does Bruno come to look more like Shmuel?  
   Bruno looks more like Shmuel after his father shaves his head because it is infested with lice.

4. How does the Commandant become convinced that his wife should take the children back to Berlin?  
   When Bruno tells his father about seeing the children on the other side of the fence, the Commandant realizes that the horrors of the camp are too close to his family.

5. Why is Shmuel particularly unhappy when he shows up at the fence after being absent for two days?  
   Shmuel is unhappy because his father disappeared after going on a work duty.

6. How does Bruno plan to get into the camp unnoticed?  
   Bruno plans to get into the camp unnoticed because he has a shaven head and will wear a pair of the striped pajamas that Shmuel will bring for him.

7. Why does Bruno’s plan to visit the camp seem “very sensible” to the two boys?  
   Bruno sees his visit to the camp as an adventure and a way to see what is on the other side of the fence and Shmuel sees it as a chance to get help in locating his father.

8. Why does Gretel give up her dolls and replace them with maps?  
   Gretel gives up her dolls and replaces them with maps because she is growing older and her interests are changing. She is more concerned with the adult word than she is with playing.

9. Why is Gretel unable to answer some of Bruno’s questions?  
   Even though Gretel has replaced her dolls with maps, she is unable to answer some of Bruno’s questions. She explains to Bruno that the fence is in place to keep the Jews from coming to their side of the fence. When Bruno asks if she and Bruno are Jews, Gretel says no, but she does not know the answer to Bruno’s question of “What are we instead?” (183). She is able to repeat information she has been told, but it is obvious she still does not fully understand it. (Some students may feel that the parents should provide them more information, while others may feel that the parents need to protect the children from knowing too much about the horrors going on around them.)

10. An author’s purpose may be to inform, entertain, or persuade the reader, or to express an idea. Sometimes the author has more than one purpose for writing a piece. What do you think is that author’s main purpose in writing The Boy in the Striped Pajamas?  
    Answers may vary but could include that the author’s main purpose is to provide information about the Holocaust through the innocent eyes of a child.
1. How does the weather threaten Bruno’s plans? Because it is raining hard on Friday, Bruno does not know if he can pursue his plan to get into the camp.

2. Why do the boys want to embrace when Bruno first appears on Shmuel’s side of the fence? The boys want to embrace because Bruno wants Shmuel to know how much he likes him, and Shmuel wants to thank Bruno for all his help.

3. How does the reality of the camp differ from the way Bruno imagined it? Bruno imagined children playing and happy families sitting in rocking chairs and going to shops and cafes; however, he sees crowds of sad, skinny, hopeless people being bullied by soldiers.

4. Why doesn’t Bruno leave when he sees what the camp is really like? Bruno doesn’t leave when he sees what the camp is really like because he wants to keep his promise to Shmuel to look for his father.

5. How is Bruno prevented from going home? Bruno is prevented from going home because he and Shmuel get caught in a march.

6. How does Bruno come to hold Shmuel’s hand in the airtight room? Bruno forgets the names and faces of his other friends and realizes that Shmuel is his best friend. To show his friendship, he takes hold of Shmuel’s hand.

7. How do the members of Bruno’s family react to his disappearance? Bruno’s mother is in denial and expects to see Bruno in Berlin. Gretel misses him very much and spends a lot of time alone in her room crying. Bruno’s father spends all his time thinking about Bruno.

8. How does the Commandant come to the horrible realization of what happened to his son? About a year after Bruno’s disappearance, the Commandant returns to the place by the fence where Bruno’s clothes were found. He discovers that the “base of the fence here was not properly attached” and he realizes that when lifted, a small boy could have fit underneath it (215). He realizes that Bruno must have crawled under and been killed along with the inmates.

9. What has most likely happened to Shmuel’s father? Why is the boy slow to realize this? Shmuel’s father has most likely been killed. He is slow to realize this because it would require him to accept a harsh reality.

10. Why would nothing in the world have persuaded Bruno to let go of Shmuel’s hand at the end of Chapter 19? At the end of chapter 19, Bruno won’t let go of Shmuel’s hand. At this point in the novel, he comes to the realization that he can no longer remember the names of his friends in Berlin because Shmuel is now his best friend. It is significant that he will stand by his friend in this situation because he earlier denied his friendship with Shmuel. After Bruno apologizes for his betrayal, Shmuel reaches for Bruno’s hand for the first time as an outward sign of his friendship.

11. Who do you think is most responsible for Bruno’s death? Cite evidence to support your response. Answers may vary but students should defend their choices with textual evidence.

12. Foreshadowing refers to clues that the author gives to suggest events that will occur later in the book. What events in the novel foreshadow Bruno’s fate? Events in the novel that foreshadow Bruno’s fate are when Shmuel’s father is missing, when Bruno and Shmuel become involved in the march and Bruno is aware that everyone around him looks frightened, and Shmuel telling Bruno, “I never see people after they’ve gone on a march” (211)