



Discussion Questions for *The Honest Truth* by Dan Gemeinhart

In all the ways that matter, Mark is a normal kid. He likes to take photos and write poems, and he dreams of climbing a mountain one day. But in one important way, Mark is not like other kids. Mark is sick—the kind of sick that some people never get better from.

So Mark runs away. He leaves home with his camera, his notebook, his dog, and a plan to reach the top of Mount Rainier—even if it's the last thing he ever does.

1. Why does Mark smash the pocket watch his grandfather gave him?
2. Mark and Jessie communicate with each other through Haikus. Do you and your friends have any special ways of communicating?
3. Why is taking pictures important to Mark?
4. Jessie holds all of Mark's secrets. Would you have been able to hold the secret about his trip? What would you have done if you were Jessie?
5. Mark talks about holding memories in his mind. What special memories do you have saved in your mind?
6. What does Mark explain to Wesley about the kid that ran away?
7. There was one call to the hotline about Mark's whereabouts. Do you think Wesley or Jessie made the call? Explain.
8. The trip took a toll on Mark's body, but in the hospital his eyes had more life than ever. Why do you think his eyes were full of life?
9. Mark says that anger only makes sense when you are stuck in the middle of it. What do you think this means? Have you ever been stuck in the middle of anger?
10. What does Jessie mean about the two truths about Mark's trip up the mountain? Have you ever been in a situation where there were two truths? Explain.