

Reading Guide to *Tangerine* by Edward Bloor

ABOUT THIS BOOK

So what if he's legally blind? Even with his bottle-thick, bug-eyed glasses, Paul Fisher can see better than most people. He can see the lies his parents and brother live out, day after day. No one ever listens to Paul, though--until the family moves to Tangerine. In *Tangerine*, even a blind, geeky, alien freak can become cool. Who knows? Paul might even become a hero!

ABOUT THIS AUTHOR

Edward Bloor was born in Trenton, New Jersey, son of Edward William and Mary Bloor. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Fordham University in 1973. On August 4, 1984, he married Pamela Dixon, a teacher. He has a daughter, Amanda, and a son, Spencer. Bloor currently lives in Winter Garden, Florida.

He was an English teacher in Florida public schools from 1983 to 1986. This influenced him to write his first novel, *Tangerine* (1997), which has won several awards. His second book, *Crusader*, was published in 1999. His teaching experience inspired him to create his third novel *Story Time* (2004), which is a satire about standardized testing. Starting in 1986, Bloor has been working at Harcourt School Publishers in Orlando as senior editor.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Some might say that *Tangerine* is about appearances – that if things look good from the outside, then everything will be okay. What do you think about that idea? Where do you see it in the book?
2. What site is Paul surprised to see when he and his mom drive through Florida?
3. How has Tangerine County changed over the years?
4. What is the explosion that Paul hears in the middle of the night?
5. What does Paul dislike about his brother, Erik?
6. Why does Erik behave as he does?
7. Who would you rather have for a brother: Erik? Mike? Luis? Why?
8. Would you like to live in Paul's community? Why or why not? What is strange about it?

9. How do Paul and his family adjust to life in Lake Windsor Down?
10. Why is it important to Paul's mother that they live in a nice house?
11. What are your impressions of Paul's mother? How did she change by the end of the book?
12. Paul's mother calls Paul legally blind. Think about the idea of seeing things -- seeing past stereotypes and into people's hearts. How was Paul able to do this? What did he see?
13. How does Paul feel about being legally blind?
14. What's an IEP and why doesn't Paul want one?
15. How is Joey's experience at Tangerine Middle School different from Paul's? Why do you think that is?
16. Were you surprised when Luis died?
17. On page 257, Paul's father says "We wanted to find a way to keep you from always hating your brother." Paul replies by saying "So you figured it would be better if I just hated myself?" Do you think his parents understood what their lie did to Paul?
18. What might the relationship have been like between Paul and Erik if Paul had always known the truth?
19. Would you have kept the paint incident from Paul if you were his parents?
20. Did Erik get the punishment he deserved? Why or why not?
21. Do you feel hopeful for Paul at the end of the book?
22. Is Paul a hero? Why or why not?
23. Near the end of the novel, even though Erik's eyes are now "mere slits," is it possible that he sees things clearly for the first time?
24. On page 204, Paul's mother says, "Give some credit where credit is due. Who do you think makes all of this possible? Who do you think holds this whole thing together? Your father?" What is the "whole thing"? Does she hold everything together?

25. Tangerine is Edward Bloor's first novel. Would you read another book by him? Why or why not?