

# JAKE and LILY

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

Newbery Medal–Winning Author of MANIAC MAGEE

**JERRY SPINELLI**

# JAKE



and

# LILY



# ABOUT THE BOOK

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Jake and Lily are no ordinary twin brother and sister—they have “goombla,” a secret, special power that bonds them together. For years they are inseparable, but as they grow older and apart, the goombla seems to disappear. Does growing up mean you have to lose half of yourself? Jake and Lily do not realize how inseparable the bond between them is until they drift apart and discover that maybe the goombla is not gone after all.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. Jake and Lily warn in the introduction that the beginning of the story is weird. Do you agree? What do you think is weird about it?
2. How often do Jake and Lily wake up together at the train station? How is waking up at the train station related to where they were born? What does Lily mean when she says of herself and Jake that “not quite all of us was born” until that first time they awoke together at the train station (p. 16)?
3. What is “goombla”? Why do Jake and Lily keep it a secret from everyone? Why do Jake and Lily decide to tell Poppy about goombla? What does Poppy try to explain to Jake and Lily when he takes them to French Creek State Park (pp. 70–72)? Do you think Poppy’s idea is related to goombla?
4. Why does Poppy want Jake and Lily to write the story about their goombla? What is Poppy’s advice to Lily about getting the goombla back? What happens in the end to make the goombla come back to Jake and Lily?
5. Why do you think Lily gets upset when Jake tells her how different he and she are? Why is Jake insistent on pointing out their differences? Do you think Jake and Lily are more different than they are similar? Why, or why not? Why does Lily take the blame for the wineglass that Jake broke? Do you think this incident demonstrates their differences?
6. What does Poppy tell Jake and Lily about entanglement (p. 73)? How are they an example of entanglement? Why do you think Lily tries to end the story with the chapter about entanglement? Why does Lily tell Poppy she’s sorry that he ever told her about entanglement?

7. Why does Jake start hanging out with Bump and become a Death Ray? How does Jake feel about leaving Lily behind when he hangs out with the Death Rays? He says he's not doing anything wrong and that he's "just a kid trying to grow up" (p. 104). Why does Jake equate growing up with not hanging out with Lily?
8. How does Lily feel about Jake hanging out with the Death Rays? Do you think it's right for her to feel this way? How would you feel if you were her?
9. What are "goobers"? According to Bump and the Death Rays, what is it about Ernie that makes him a supergoober?
10. What do you think of the way the Death Rays treat Ernie? What is strange about Ernie's reaction when Bump asks him why he moved from Gary, Indiana? How does his reaction change the way the Death Rays see him? Why do you think Jake takes the blame for destroying Ernie's clubhouse? How does Ernie's reaction affect Jake?
11. What does Poppy mean when he tells Lily that she needs a life? Acting on Poppy's advice, what are some of the unsuccessful ways that Lily tries to get a life? Why does Poppy encourage Lily to help build the clubhouse? What does helping with the clubhouse make Lily realize about herself?
12. When their mother insists that Jake spend the day with Lily, how does the day go? Is either twin happy about this arrangement?
13. How are things different with the Death Rays when Bump goes on vacation? What happens when Ernie's mom invites them into the house? What does Ernie's mom's question about being a twin make Jake realize?
14. Why is Lily dreading her next birthday? What happens on this birthday, and why do you think the day goes this way? What does it mean to Jake, and what does it mean to Lily?
15. What happens when Jake and Lily climb aboard the locomotive? What do you think the ending of the story means for Jake and Lily's relationship? If you were to write another chapter to the story, what would happen in it?

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Molly Thompson



## JERRY SPINELLI

received the Newbery Medal for *Maniac Magee* and a Newbery Honor for *Wringer*. His other books include *Smiles to Go*, *Loser*, *Space Station Seventh Grade*, *Who Put That Hair in My Toothbrush?*, *Dump Days*, and *Stargirl*. His novels are recognized for their humor

and poignancy, and his characters and situations are often drawn from his real-life experience as a father of six children. Jerry lives with his wife, Eileen, also a writer, in Wayne, Pennsylvania. You can visit him online at [www.jerryspinelli.com](http://www.jerryspinelli.com).

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