



Slob

Ellen Potter

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Outrageously funny and smart, this story of an obese boy who takes on his bullies is as heartwarming as it is clever.

Twelve-year-old Owen Birnbaum is the fattest kid in school. But he's also a genius who invents cool contraptions, like a TV that shows the past. Something happened two years ago that he needs to see. But genius or not, there is much Owen can't outthink. Like his gym coach, who's on a mission to humiliate him. Or the way his Oreos keep disappearing from his lunch. He's sure that if he can only get the TV to work, things will start to make sense. But it will take a revelation for Owen, not science, to see the answers are not in the past, but the present. That no matter how large he is on the outside, he doesn't have to feel small on the inside. With her trademark humor, Ellen Potter has created a larger-than-life character and story whose weight is immense when measured in heart.

Slob Details

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Author : Ellen Potter

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From Reader Review Slob for online ebook

SashaM says

The book Slob, by Ellen Potter, is a book that I truly felt inclined to read. From the front cover to the blurb on the side, I knew that I had to read about a kid who was 57 percent fatter than the national average and one point short of a genius. I loved how the book was so realistic; Owen's (main character) parents died in a tragic accident, and the way he copes is by filling the void in his stomach with food. I think this writing is powerful because it also includes the story of a club called G.W.A.B.(girls who are boys), that protests for equal women's rights, among other things. I like the fact that the story is a bit of a mystery, and that at the end of the story there is a twist that reveals the secret of the missing cookies. I probably would recommend this story to other people if they enjoyed a fun, but somewhat confusing story. If this book was part of a series, I would like to continue the series.

Lesli Diaz says

I gave this book a 5/5 because I really enjoyed reading it and it meant to me something. I will recommend this book to the all the 6th grade students because maybe they will learn something about the book that will make them think or change the way of looking at someone or even mean something to them. This book was about a 12 year old boy that weighted 200 something pounds and everyone bullied him at school because he was the fattest kid in school, Owen. Also, his parents died and he needed to investigate who the killer of his parents was.

Jennifer Wardrip says

Reviewed by Natalie Tsang for TeensReadToo.com

Ellen Potter's SLOB is as delicious as its main character's beloved Oreo cookies (more on the cookies later). Things are not going well for twelve-year-old Owen Birnbaum. Even if you're one point from having a genius IQ, there are still some problems that are almost impossible to solve.

Owen's 57% fatter than the national average, which is bad enough, but after he embarrasses his gym teacher, Mr. Woolsey is out for revenge. Plus, someone is stealing his Oreos, which is the only thing that makes his school lunch of tofu and tea bearable. Owen suspects it's the school sociopath who keeps a switch blade in his sock.

Some people would shrug and say that's how the cookie crumbles, but not Owen. He's not a quitter. Admittedly, he's not much of a fighter either, but he's great at inventing contraptions to solve his problems. For over a year now, he's been building a TV that can see into the past.

While Owen tries utilizing his sleuthing skills to get to the bottom of the Oreo mystery, readers also have to discover exactly why he's spent the last two years trying to look into the past. The characters are full of quirks like Nima the Buddhist who sells momos in front of the Museum of Natural History, and Jeremy, Owen's little sister, who insists on dressing and acting like a boy.

Ellen Potter manages to keep the perfect balance between dark, gritty cookie and smooth, sweet cream. Being a kid, especially being Owen Birnbaum, is no joke, at least not in the hardy-har way. Though Owen is inevitably the butt of some jokes, his own witty and wry observations make his adversaries seem like amateurs. I found myself laughing plenty at the insanity of grownups, both well-meaning and diabolical, of sixth grade feminist groups, and kid sisters.

This is a book that doesn't make being a kid seem like either a cakewalk or a prison sentence. Five stars!

Mario says

Moving story about brilliant boy who can't forget

In present day New York City lives Owen Birnbaum. Owen had something stolen from him 2 years ago. He can never get it back, but he can get revenge on the one who stole it from him, at least he thinks. In this realistic fiction book by Ellen Potter, Owen is a 12 year old kid who is probably fatter than you. He's also probably smarter than you. Owen isn't the class clown or the class bully, he's the class loser. Throughout the book Owen struggles with his self image and past, and tries to put it behind him.

I found the point of view of Owen very interesting, because he was almost always the smartest person in the room, but got bullied and didn't stand up for himself. His sister Jeremy thinks that he is great and popular. As he says, "She has this idea about me. She thinks I am a better person than I actually am. Nicer, funnier, and smarter."(25) But he knows that he isn't nearly as popular as she thinks. He feels grateful and unfit of her praise. It is really cool to hear that perspective. During the book, Owen tries to catch notorious psychopath in the act of stealing his oreos. He also is almost attacked by scavengers at a demolition site. The book is fun and suspenseful during moments.

The book shows how human he is. He just wants to get back what he lost. Owen tries to get his homemade machine to work, so that he can catch the culprit of the crime. He may be over hopeful at times, and he wants help but never thinks that the helper is right.

I think the theme of this book is that everyone deserves a second chance at life, and you should have a second chance of being able to give them that chance. This theme exhibits itself in a lot of forms in the story. From what he is told to the new friends he makes to the ones he already had, Owen learns how to think in another person's shoes. The theme is an important one and it showed me a few ways I could be a better person.

Owen realizes that what he needs isn't food, but friends and hope. *Slob* by Ellen Potter is a moving story about brilliant boy who is stuck in the past and struggling with his future.

Potter, Ellen. *Slob*. New York: The Penguin Group, 2009. Print.

Lindsey says

Based on the title of this book, I expected a look into the struggles that an overweight kid faces at school and in everyday life. There really wasn't much focus on this, but I ended up not being disappointed with the content that was there instead. The author has a similar sense of humor to me, and I felt like I could have written some scenes myself. Some of my favorite parts were the times Owen spent with the Buddhist named Nima who sold food from his street cart and liked to watch Bollywood movies. He was a positive and

optimistic character who liked to share his wisdom with Owen. Overall, I think I enjoyed this book because Owen was such a likable character - a good kid who had a realistic outlook on most things.

Kathy says

First, just take a look at that cover. What comes to mind? Looking at the cover, you think you know what this book is about, but you don't.

"A three-story red-brick nightmare of educational progress." (p.2)

That's how Owen Birnbaum introduces us to school, his school at least. At Owen's school students can determine their own "educational progress" by studying whatever floats their boat at the moment.

Being the smartest kid in the school, and now the fattest, brings problems for Owen, even at such a progressive school. Someone has been stealing his Oreos and his PE teacher, Mr. Wooly, is determined to humiliate him. Owen wasn't always fat and he wishes he could go back to the moment that changed everything for him. Owen believes that his latest invention will allow him to do just that, if he can get it to work!

Using the note with the word SLOB written on it as inspiration, Owen works to uncover the cookie thief and find the missing piece to his invention. With the help of his sister, Jeremy, he has almost figured out how to uncover exactly what happened that night almost 2 years ago.

Ellen Potter is genius. I was totally captivated by the language in this book. It was funny without being stupid. "It made me feel squirrelly in my stomach. But maybe I was just hungry." (p. 29) I think this book will appeal to both boys and girls at our school and will use it for book club in the fall. It's a great middle grade read with potential as a good read-aloud. The references to old TV shows will also appeal to teachers/librarians who may have watched those shows growing up. Jeremy's participation in Girls Who Are Boys, GAWB, will resonate with the tomboys. And Mr. Wooly? I had a teacher just like that and, unfortunately, some of them still exist today. Students will see that. They will get it. It will be a great discussion. I can't wait! I give it 5 stars.

Rebecca says

Elements & style: the characters are Owen Birnbaurm[main characters],Jeremy Birnbaurm, Mason Ragg, Nima,& mr. Wolly. The climax is when Owen finds out about how his sister Jeremy was faking the break though that Owen was finding who killed his parents. The antagonist in the start was Mason Ragg a guy with the swicte blade in his sock, so Owen hough he was taking his oreos.My mood when I was reading this book was dark & sad.

Characteriztion: Owen is a fat twelve year old boy really he is fat 57% fatte than the average weight of a twelev year old boys. Jeremy is Owen's older sister she want s to look like a boy she is part of a group called gwabb [girls that want'a be boys]. Mason Ragg is a dark looking guy who is suppose to have a swicte blade

in his sock [not]. Nima is a foreign guy that sells momos [Owen loves them]. Mr. Wooly is a mean coach that tries to humiliate Owen.

Plot: the plot starts with Owen at school one day when his oreos are missing at lunch time the oreos are his only bliss in life. He confronts Mason & when Mason doesn't know what he is taking about Owen thinks he is lying. Owen tries to find who killed his parents with a TV & so retro TV magazines. When Owen finds out that his sister was making up how he tried to find who killed his parents he finds out that his friend took his cookies & that Mason was nice they became friends & Owen excepts that his PARENTS are dead & he lives with the operator that heard his call when he thought his parents were killed.

Carolyn S says

DATE: 12-6-12

I'm currently reading the book "Slob" by Ellen Potter. So far I've gotten to page #117 and I have to say the book is pretty interesting... Owen (the main character) is an overweight twelve year-old boy, but although he may not be physically great, Owen has very high I.Q. scores and he whizzes through his homework in no time flat. One thing I really like about the book is Owen's incredible way of thought and his low self-esteem. He lets bully's attract to him like magnets and when they insult him he pretends to be a boulder, because boulders just stand there letting it all happen. Another thing I like about the book "Slob" are the other characters, some are Owen's enemies; some are his friends; and most just ignore or tease him. Mason, for example, is a troubled student that transfers schools a lot and it's a rumor that he carries a switchblade knife in his sock "just in case." Owen suspects Mason is stealing his everyday lunch Oreos and he immediately takes action to try to put a stop to it. Although I've already said all these wonderful things about the book I have to tell you one last one.. it's about how Ellen Potter writes the book so everyone can understand it. Like once, someone said something complicated and I got all confused, I flipped to the next page and Owen had said EXACTLY what I was thinking "-What? I don't get it?" That made me feel much more connected to the book and I began to really get into it. My overall rating would be FOUR & A 1/2 STARS!! And sometime in your life I really hope you get the chance to read it!!!

Rafal says

2017 BookTubeATHON: Read a book you bought because of the cover.
This book was so boring.

Delaney says

SLOB by Ellen Potter is about 12- year old Owen Bienbaum who happens to be the fattest kid in school. But, he is also a genius. He is trying to invent a TV that shows his past. There is something that happened two years ago that he had to see. Genius or not, he's still the fattest kid in school, and isn't always treated right.

Like his gym teacher, who is out to get him. Or how his Oreos keep disappearing from his lunch box. He thinks that if he can get the TV to work, thinks will start to make sense. It will take a miracle for Owen to realize that the answers are not in the past, but in the present. His sister "Jeremy" is part of an organization called GWAB. The acronym stands for Girls Who Are Boys. This book really spoke to me. Owen is full of honesty and tries not to let anything get to him. He tries to hold his head up high and make the best of everything. When he finds out his sister has betrayed him, he feels angry. He gives up hope of finding out what happened on that horrible night in his parents shop. In the end, everything turned out great and Owen realized that the past doesn't matter. It's the present that counts. I would recommend this book to anyone who loves a twist...

Barb Middleton says

Owen is fat. Really fat. He's 57% fatter than most 12-year-old boys. And he's a middle schooler. Ugh. He wasn't always that way. Food for Owen Birnbaum fills the ache in his stomach that comes when he thinks of his past. Hints are slowly revealed as to what the tragedy is that happened to Owen and his sister, Caitlin or Jeremy. Caitlin is dealing with the past by joining the club GWAB, Girls Who are Boys, where she cuts her hair, wears boys clothes and changes her girl name to the boy name, Jeremy. Owen builds a contraption called the Nemesis, a device that will go back in time and capture a specific moment. Owen thinks it will make things "right" for both of them and put to rest their awful past.

Owen is picked on at school mercilessly by other students and his bully gym teacher, Mr. Wooly. When Owen's oreo cookies are stolen from his lunch every day, he sets out to find the thief. He thinks it is Mason Riggs, an outcast like Owen, who has horrible burns on half his face and is rumored to carry a knife in his sock. Owen comes up with a plan to catch Riggs in the act, but things don't turn out as he planned. While the story is realistic the ending reveals the mystery of the missing cookies with an unexpected twist.

The writing has nice character development and a slow revelation of the tragedy. Nima, the man from Tibet, is a refreshing and unique character. I wasn't sure why the author had him be a smoker. I would like to ask her that question. Maybe so he didn't seem so perfect and wise? He is only 21 years old in the book. Some might think the start is a little slow but I liked the character development. The plot takes off pretty quickly and the tragedy is revealed about two-thirds of the way through the book.

A teacher at our school said that this book is a great read aloud.

Morgan says

Slob was one of those books that you have high expectations on because of it being on the one star reader list, but despite that i thought it was a let down of sorts. To start off i didn't get the title to me it's irrelevant to anything that happens in the book, and it gives you the wrong idea about what the story will be about. Secondly the main character, Owen, gave me a bit of Deja Vu. He was the ideal dork that is obese, has next to no friends, and is picked on by the schools gym teacher, and to top it all off miraculously he loses all his baby fat in the end and everything ends up alright. Another big downside to the book was i thought the plot had no "pizazz". It was utterly boring and i felt myself guessing what was going to happen even before i got within 30 pages of the event happening.

In my opinion one of its only redeeming qualities was Owen's sister, Jeremy. I loved the fact that she went totally against what was expected of her as a girl, and stayed strong even though she was looked down on by the whole school.

Anyce Paul-Emile says

He lost his mother and father, but doesn't know who killed them. He gets bullied for being fat. He is having his stuff stolen. You would think this is the worst of his life, but it's not. These are some things that are happening in the life of 12 year-old Owen Birnbaum who is also the smartest kid. Also if you are curious at all about what his IQ is let me just tell you this. You may never know. I am still curious about his IQ. It doesn't say it anywhere in the book. This is a dramatic/funny fictional story that has you laughing and sad at the same time. This story had me angry, sad, laughing, and curious throughout it.

This book is placed in New York, manly in December. It takes place in Owens home and middle school. This book is about a boy named Owen who is trying to make a device that will help him find out who it was that killed his parents. Not only is he having this on his plate, but he also needs to figure out who is stealing his Oreo cookies, and trying to stay away from his mean gym teacher who keeps on trying to humiliate him. Owen calls his invention Nemesis and Owen is trying to use it to go back to the date that his parents were killed and find the man who killed them. Days go on and he finally gets somewhere. Nemesis starts to work. ***SPOILER ALERT*** Nemesis does not actually start working. It is actually his sister Jeremy making it seems like it is working. Owen later finds out and is angry with his sister, but later is over it. (P.S. This is the worse part, next to the death of his parents.)***SPOILER ALERT*** this story also has how he is trying to find the person who stole his Oreos. His new mother is having him on a diet, and the only joy of it for him is being able to eat those Oreos during lunch, but when they are stolen he wants them back. The story would have to be person vs person/people, because Owen is against the cookie stealer, his gym teacher, the guy who killed his parents, etc.

I am going to tell you my opinion on the book now. The book got me angry. It got me angry because it talked about how in the beginning of the story it tells how Owens gym teacher, Mr. Wooly, put a strap around Owen's neck and had him sit and stay. He was treating Owen like a dog. This got me so angry. He only did this just because Owen didn't do the summersault because Owen new if he did he summersault the way Mr. Wooly was teaching it, he would topple over. This is not the only thing he does to humiliate Owen.

Throughout the story, during gym class Mr. Wooly has many different tricks up his sleeve just to torcher Owen. You could tell that he is only torturing Owen because he is fat. This is why the story got me angry. This story also got me laughing because the story has different funny jokes all around, such as, "I ate another PB&J, a bowl of cereal, and a hunk of cheddar cheese. I scaled the chair and phone book and the dictionary to the Stop-and-Think Cabinet without stopping to think, and grabbed five Oreos out of the package and devoured them in less time than it took me to get them. I'd be sorry later, I knew, when Mom discovered it, but it seemed totally worth it. After the cookies were finished, I had second thoughts, but of course it was too late to do anything about it. That's why I climbed back up and ate seven more." This had me laughing so much I had to keep rereading it. The whole story is full of little things like this. That is what makes it funny. I rate this book 4 out of 5 stars. I rate this because at some points of the story it got boring. There needed to be more things added. I would recommend this book to everyone because this is also a story of the life of someone who is getting bullied. This is a story with many things going on in a 12 year-olds life and how he goes through it, so if I were you I would read it.

Serenity Gause says

Are you fat and real smart and someone killed you mom and dad, then you would love this book. But I hate it. This book is realistic fiction. And this is the most boring book I ever read.

First of all, this book took place at a school and sometime at a fat kid house name is Owen Birnbaum. Not only he is the biggest kid at his school he is the smartest. His IQ is so high that he promises his mom that won't tell no one. He is really a normal kid, but someone is still his cookies and Nemesis to work. Nemesis thing that Owen is building to see who killed his real mom and dad. But he could never figure out how to get Nemesis to work. Plus, he knows who is stilling his cookie, but he can never see who does it. So he came up with a plan to see who is really taking his cookies. For Nemesis he will have to find pieces to get it to work. Then, Nemesis started to work and his cookie were still gone. His whole story is person vs. person because he knows someone to is taking his cookies.

I was moved by how Owen's little sister stands up for him, because no matter what she would fight anyone who looks at her brother in a bad way. She must love him a lot to fight for him. I didn't understand a lot about the book. The way he set it up was weird. I said that because he talks about what his mom was like to his mom, it wasn't in till the middle of the story he said his real mom and dad was died and he was taking it by someone. I was thinking why she doesn't remember all this stuff that he was talking about.

Why did Owen let his cookies sit out there in the open. He is just let people take his stuff. I said that because he leaves his cookies in his place where he always leaves it. If I was him I would put them somewhere that no one would look or keep them with me. Also, I think he is over acting about the cookies. I mean he is fat he should be trying to eat better. And cookies are not good to be eating.

I gave this book 1 star, this book is boring, confusing book I ever read. Some of my friends started to read this book but none of them had finished the book. They said it was boring so I wanted to read it for myself to see what they are talking about, and they were right. I was only on the first page and I could tell it was going to be boring. To be honest I wouldn't recommend this book to no one. The one thing they said that was tough was, "That no matter how large he is on the outside, he doesn't have to feel small on the inside."

Tiffany Neal says

I adored Owen. I absolutely loved his voice and honesty and the twists threaded throughout the plot. Not just a fun story, but also leaves a few subtle messages that kids need to hear. Enjoyed everything about this. A contender for read aloud next year!
