



COW BELLE BEAUTY QUEEN
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READING GUIDE FOR KIDS

BEFORE YOU READ...

Think about the title. What on earth could a book with this title be about? A cow who is, or wants to be, a beauty queen? Do you think that is a daft idea? Or do you think a cow could actually be a beauty queen? Could there even be such a thing as a cows' beauty contest.

If you don't believe it, check out this website: <http://www.countryfile.com/news/cow-year-beauty-contest-launched>.

What about the words 'Cow Belle'? Do you get the joke? Can you explain it to someone else?

Take a look at the blurb on the back of the book. What does this tell you about the kind of book this might be?

Look at the writer's name. It's a bit unusual. That's because the writer is from a different country. Look near the back of the book to see if you can find out where she is from. What language would you think this book was written in?

If the book was written in a different language, how come you can read it now in English? What do you think had to happen to make that possible? Check out that page again where the author is described and see if that gives you any clues.

Who illustrated the book? And what country does she come from?

And what company published the book in English? Where is that company based?

Do you like the picture on the front of the book? What does it tell you about what might happen in the book? Who do you think the main characters might be?

Open the front cover and take a look at the picture on the inside flap. There's one on the inside flap at the back as well. Do you like these pictures? If you had to use one word to describe the pictures, what would it be? If you were allowed to use three words, what would they be?



OK, get reading

AFTER/DURING READING

When you've finished, come back to this sheet and see how many of these questions you can answer.

- 1: Who is the main character, in your opinion? Why do you think this is the main character?
- 2: What kind of girl do you think Milena is? Would you like to be friends with her? Why or why not?
- 3: What do you think of Semi-Skimmed? Did you like her at the beginning of the story? By the end of the story, had you changed your mind at all about her? Can you explain why or why not?
- 4: Milena's mum is mentioned a few times in the story but not all that much. What kind of impression do you get of her? Do you think she is a happy person? Do you think she is a good mum? Do you think Milena and her mum get along?
- 5: What is your favourite part of the story? Finding the cow in the bath? The exercises? Going to the chemist? The party? The beauty contest? Or something else?
- 6: Pick a part of the story, maybe your favourite part, and tell someone who hasn't read the book what happens in that piece of the story – maybe your mum or dad or a friend. What did they think? Would they like to read the book too? Why?
- 7: Which is your favourite picture in the book and why?
- 8: Imagine someone asked you to illustrate this story instead of the illustrator. Which bits of the story would you choose to illustrate? Why?
- 9: What is your overall opinion of the book? Did you enjoy it? If not, did you enjoy some of it? If you didn't enjoy it, can you explain why? (It's OK not to like it. Not everyone has to like every book. But you should be able to say why you don't like it.)



THINGS TO DO

Make your own illustration for any part of the story you like.

Pretend you are writing an email to a friend and you want to tell your friend about this book you've just read. Write a paragraph from your imaginary email.

Pretend the publisher sent you this story before it was published and asked you to write the blurb. Write a blurb for the story and remember that a blurb does not tell the whole story but is supposed to make someone want to read the book. If you don't like the book yourself, don't let on! Write a blurb that will sell the book, regardless of your own opinion of it.

Check out the publisher's website and see what other books they have published for your age group. www.littleisland.ie.