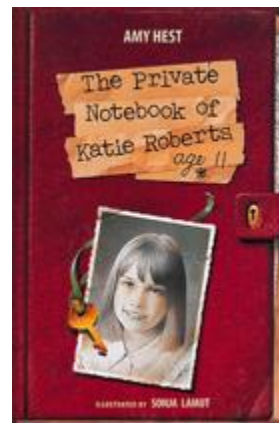


The private notebook of Katie Roberts, age 11 By Amy Hest

(Candlewick, 1995)

11 year-old Katie has to start a new life on a Texas ranch when her mother remarries.



Discussion Questions

1. Would anyone like to tells us about when this story takes place – 1947
What war did Katie’s father die in?
Why are Katie and her mother going to Texas?
Why do you think Mrs. Leitstein gave Katie a Notebook as a going away present?
What are Katie’s feelings about the Ranch and Sam – why does she feel this way?
Why does she feel lonely?
2. A person’s feelings can change – how does Katie begin to feel different about Texas?
(Birth of the cow, getting a new friend Lucie, being named editor of the class paper, being good at swimming)
P. 34 Being Jewish – Sam says you can live anywhere and still be who you are – do you think this is true?
3. Relationships can change as well – Katie believes that her relationship with her mother has changed since they moved to Texas.
How does Katie feel her relationship with her mother is different from the way it was in NY?
Why doesn’t she want Sam to adopt her?
4. Friendship. P. 51 Mother says to Katie: “You have to be a friend to have a friend” – what do you think she meant by this?
(Katie has to be nicer to people – i.e. putting Lucie’s baseball article on page 1.)
P. 71 Mother also says “Try a little harder, don’t push people away”
5. Remember when Katie’s mother sees the new crib that Sam makes for the baby –Katie’s mother cries and says to Sam.. “ I’ve never been so happy in my whole life... How did this make Katie feel?
6. When Katie’s teacher Mr. Keyes pairs her up with a boy, Matthew, to help her with her math homework, Katie doesn’t like it. Why do you think the teacher teamed up Katie and Matthew?
How does Katie’s feelings toward Matthew change?
What plan has Matthew hatched – why did Katie want to join him?
How did she feel the morning they left?
Was Mrs. Leitstein a good or bad friend to tell Katie’s parents she might run away?
How did Katie feel when her mother and Sam met the train at Little Creek Falls?

*Caroline Ward
Coordinator of Youth Services
The Ferguson Library
Stamford, CT*

