

# Reading Group Notes




# About the Book


Amber loves insects, from butterflies and dragonflies to bees and ants, but after a family tragedy she discovers she is more than just a bug whisperer. For one thing, she finds she can control flying insects when she needs to get her own back on the bullies who torment her at school. But when her problems grow bigger than just a bunch of mean girls, her powers really come into their own.

# About the Author

Anh Do is one of Australia's best-loved storytellers. His series, including *Wolf Girl*, *E-Boy* and *WeirDo*, are adored by millions of kids around the country.

# Let's Talk Before Reading

 Does the cover of *Skydragon* help you to guess what sort of story this will be? How does it do that? Look closely at the title, subtitle, fonts and colours used, illustrations and special effects (metallic foil) and discuss how each might provide clues about the story to come? In which genre would you expect to see this type of cover?

 Turn to the back cover and read the book's blurb. Does it confirm what you predicted when you looked at the cover?

 Who are some of your favourite superheroes and what is it about them that you like?


 Have you ever read an Anh Do story before? Does this story seem like it will be similar or different to his other books?




# Let's Talk About the Book




## CHAPTER 1

 The very first thing we see Amber do is set a grasshopper free outside her house after it became trapped inside. We soon find out that she is fascinated by insects of all kinds but what else does this incident tell us about her before the events that will change her life?


 *'The butterfly fluttered helplessly, until the dragonfly ended its struggle with one bite of its powerful jaws. Amber bit her lip – she felt bad for the butterfly, but she also knew that insects do what insects do.'* page 4.


Why do you think Anh Do included a scene where a powerful insect eats a beautiful but weaker insect? Were you surprised by Amber's reaction?

 Did you enjoy reading Chapter 1 of *Skydragon*? What questions did you want answered after you finished the chapter?





## CHAPTER 2

 How would you describe Reggie after reading this chapter?

 Did he do the right thing leaving his sister to go back in the house to save his parents?




 Can you think of any other stories that feature a meteorite destroying a house, town or city? What do you think the purple gloom might be?

## CHAPTER 3

-  Why do you think the image of Amber's teddy bears burning is so powerful? [Hint: if teddy bears represent innocence and childhood ...what might this image say about Amber after the fire?]
-  What do you think Amber's dream means? Did you think it was important that, *'She grinned, even though the fire left a taste of ash in her mouth.'*? page 27. Why?
-  Irene calls Amber 'Butterfly' because she found her chasing butterflies on her property when Amber was a little girl, but this nickname is also a reminder of something that happened in Chapter 1. What was that something and how do you think this might give us a clue about what might happen later in the story?
-  Did the crews who came and went from the burnt-out wreckage of her former home seem suspicious to you? Why?




## CHAPTER 4


-  Do you think that Amber is right when she thinks that most high school students are only interested in one kind of beauty?
-  Why do you think Trish and her friends are so mean to Amber?
-  Justin is cool 'in an offbeat way'. What do you understand this description to mean? Might the fact that he is 'offbeat' explain why he is kind to Amber?





## CHAPTER 5

-  Why might it be important for readers to be told that dragonflies *'eat pretty much whatever they can catch. They have excellent eyesight and powerful jaws. They're, like, the perfect killer of the bug world.'* page 49. What happened back in Chapter 1 that links with this piece of information?


# Superhero Questions


 Amber is left all alone after her parents die in the fire and her brother is in a coma. Name some other superheroes who are orphans. Why do you think this might be such a common theme in stories about superheroes?

 'With great power comes great responsibility' is called the Peter Parker (Spider-Man) principle. It means that powerful people should always do good things with their power. Give some examples where Amber does and doesn't use her power to do good. Does Reggie always use his power responsibly?


 *'He didn't know whether it was a gift or a curse. But the idea of helping others... That, at least felt good. It felt right.'* page 141.  
Would you say that Amber and Reggie's powers are a gift or a curse? Why?

 Can you name any other superheroes with insect names?


 Would you rather Reggie's or Amber's superpowers?  
If you could have any superpower what would it be?

 Amber's full name is Amber Ambrose.  
Can you think of other superhero characters whose first and last name begin with the same letter?

## And Just for Fun

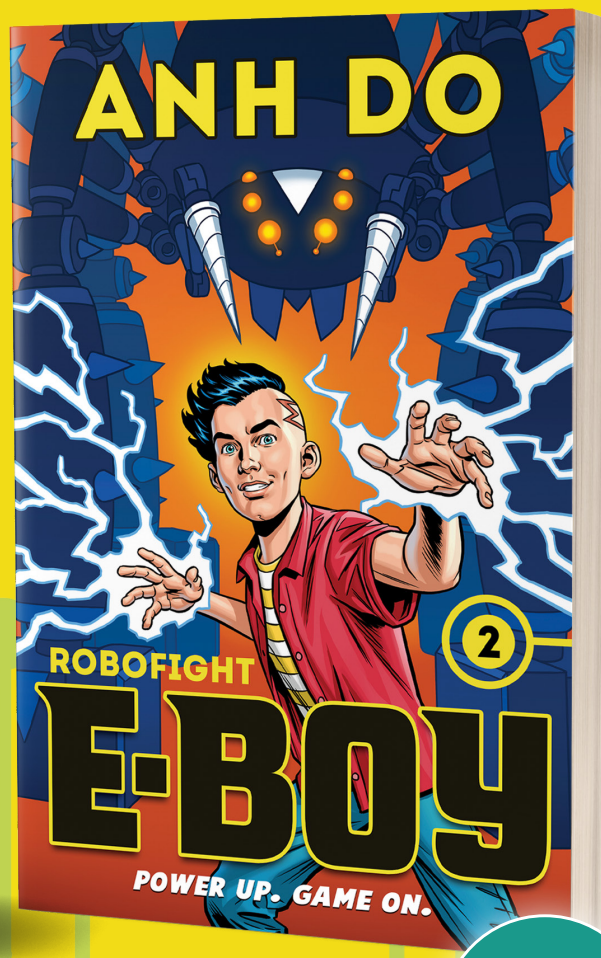
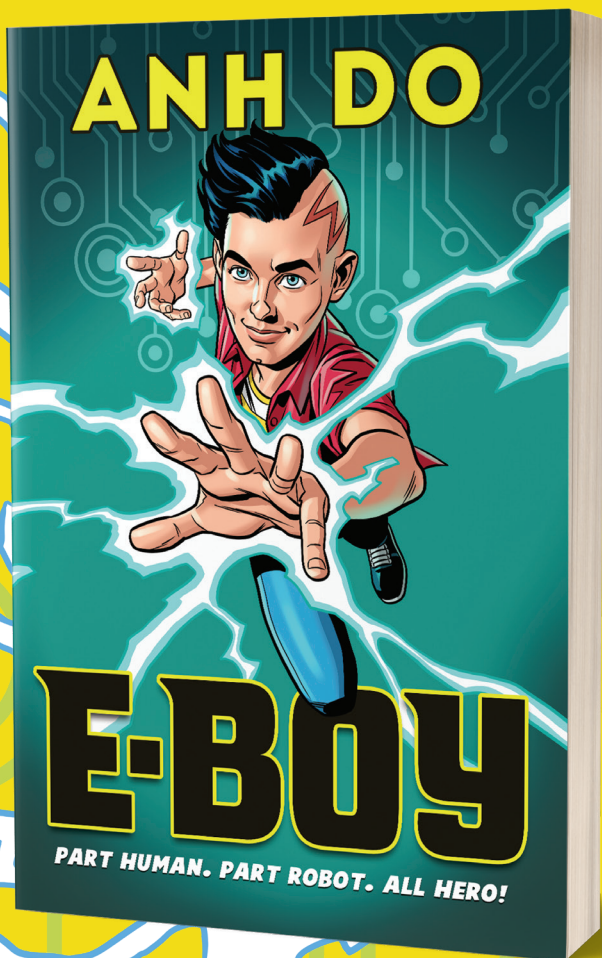
 Where might the story go from the final scene in the book?  
List three things you would like to see happen in the sequel.

 Write a sentence that could open the next book.

 Who would you cast as Amber and Reggie in the film version of *Skydragon*?



**PART HUMAN.  
PART ROBOT.  
ALL HERO!**



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