

*Hertz Gets Fused* by Suzanne Purvis | Reading Guide

General Questions:

1. This book starts with a bang! What were your first impressions of Hertz? Did you like him? Did you feel sorry for him? Why or why not?
2. How does Hertz feel about the prospect of a summer with Pops? Have you ever spent extended time with a relative you didn't know well? In what ways can you relate to the situation Hertz finds himself in with Pops?
3. A big part of Hertz's consequence for setting his room on fire is no technology for the summer. What would you miss the most if you were grounded like him? Phone time, video games, shows, or something else? (Or would you find it a *relief* to be unplugged for a whole summer?)
4. Hertz gets a crash course on driving his great-uncle's golf cart and realizes that "Driving for real is not as easy as keeping Mario or Luigi on their race track." For Hertz, this moment represents his disconnect between real-world experience and all the various experiences of "expertise" he has in his digital worlds. Have you ever had a similar moment where you realized that your life online (video games, social media, etc.) did not match up with reality? What was that like?
5. The Sheriff of Show Low immediately doesn't like Hertz. Why? What evidence are we given in the story that shows us how he feels about Hertz?
6. Hertz teams up with Fey and Allen for the Scavenger Hunt. What is his motivation for participating? What does he get from the Scavenger Hunt that he didn't anticipate?
7. Hertz panics when the Sheriff accuses him of setting a fire during the Scavenger Hunt. Who does Hertz blame? Why? (For the leader: this can be an opportunity to talk about how we often take advantage of people we are closest to, friends and family. Also touch on Hertz's quick apology.)
8. Hertz and his new friends work together well as a team! What happens when Hertz gets on a computer at the library to finish the Hunt?
9. What does Hertz feel when he opens the new tablet from his mom? (Leader: this is a great opportunity for discussion about the complexity of emotions.)
10. Did the mystery of who was setting the fires resolve how you expected? Why or why not?
11. Were you surprised by what Hertz bought with his Crime Stoppers prize money?

## Thematic Questions:

1. Hertz's reputation follows him to Show Low where the Sheriff has heard about setting his room on fire and immediately suspects him of a recent fire. Is this fair? Talk about reputations. Why are they important? What happens if you make a mistake and end up with a bad reputation? What does it take to change your reputation?
2. Even though Hertz knows he's innocent of the fire in Show Low, he is shaking as the Sheriff questions him. Have you ever been accused of something you didn't do? How did you feel?
3. A major part of this story is the character growth between Hertz and Pops. Share several examples where you see their relationship develop, grow, and change.
4. The Sheriff ends up apologizing to Hertz, even though he doesn't right away. Hertz feels some compassion for the Sheriff because of how he has messed up before. How do you think the Sheriff will change (if at all) because of his interactions with Hertz? How did Hertz change because of his interactions with the Sheriff?



*Hertz Gets Fused* is a contemporary novel in verse written by Suzanne Purvis and published by Owl's Nest Publishers.

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