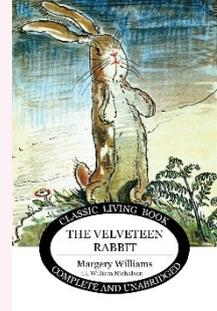




## GIRL'S BOOK CLUB GUIDE

# THE VELVETEEN RABBIT

By Margery Williams



“Generally by the time you are Real, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out and you get loose in the joints and very shabby. But these things don’t matter at all, because once you are Real, you can’t be ugly, except to people who don’t understand.”

## GENRE

Children’s Literature

## THEMES

Friendship

Love

Becoming *Real*

Aging

Transformation

Immortality

**Immortality:** the ability to live forever; to have eternal life.

**Becoming Real:** In this story, when we love and are loved in return, we become *real*.

## CHARACTERS

### *The Boy*

“The Boy” (who is never given another name throughout the story) is a young child and the owner of the Velveteen Rabbit. The Boy is like most children, in that he gets sentimentally attached to certain toys for some time, but eventually outgrows them.

## *The Velveteen Rabbit:*

The Velveteen Rabbit is a toy rabbit that is given as a Christmas gift to the Boy. The rabbit appears to be just a toy, but internally he has feelings, hopes and dreams. His deepest desire is to be loved and to feel complete and “Real”.

## *The Skin Horse*

The Skin Horse is a toy horse that has been with the Boy’s family for many years. The horse is old and falling apart. He knows his glory days as a toy are over, but he is grateful for the years of love and play that he once enjoyed.

## STORYLINE

The Velveteen Rabbit tells the story of a young boy and one of his favourite childhood toys- a stuffed rabbit. The rabbit is given to the Boy as a Christmas gift, and soon becomes his closest companion. In the daytime, they play together in the garden, and every evening, the Boy holds the rabbit for comfort while he sleeps.

Over time, the constant use of the rabbit begins to make it look shabby and old. However, the rabbit is content to be loved so deeply, and can think of no greater purpose for himself than to live life alongside the Boy. But when the Boy becomes unexpectedly ill, we find that both he and the Velveteen Rabbit are in for big life changes ahead.

This story is about coming of age, and the balance between pain and joy as we grow out of childhood. Throughout our lives, we establish many sentimental attachments to things and people. Years go on, and our lives and circumstances can and do change.

This book is a beautiful reminder that we can look back with love and gratitude on special moments from the past, while also looking ahead to the excitement and mystery of the eternal future that God has already planned for us.

# 1 QUESTION ONE

Have you ever had a precious toy that you loved the way the Boy loves the Velveteen Rabbit? If so, what was it? Why do you think our interest in these toys change as we get older?

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# 2 QUESTION TWO

How does the Velveteen Rabbit feel when he first meets real rabbits outside in the woods? What is their reaction to meeting him? Are they kind?

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# 3 QUESTION THREE

How does the Velveteen Rabbit help the Boy feel better when he falls ill with scarlet fever?

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## 4 QUESTION FOUR

Does the Skin Horse seem happy about the way he has spent his life with the family? We are not told specifically what happens to him after the Boy gets sick; what do you hope happens for him?

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## 5 QUESTION FIVE

Why do you think the Rabbit comes back to visit the Boy, even after he has become real?

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## 6 QUESTION SIX

The Velveteen Rabbits' transformation from being a worn-out toy into a real rabbit, is symbolic of our journey from death into new life in heaven with Jesus. What are you most looking forward to about eternity?

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*This BTB Book Club Guide was written by Corinna Sanders.*

Corinna Sanders is a married, homeschooling mother of 2. She loves to bake pies, do crafts and drink too much coffee. You can regularly find her leaving her local library with a gigantic stack of books.