



Things Not Seen

Andrew Clements

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Bobby Phillips is an average fifteen-year-old boy. Until the morning he wakes up and can't see himself in the mirror. Not blind, not dreaming. Bobby is just plain invisible...

There doesn't seem to be any rhyme or reason to Bobby's new condition; even his dad the physicist can't figure it out. For Bobby that means no school, no friends, no life. He's a missing person. Then he meets Alicia. She's blind, and Bobby can't resist talking to her, trusting her. But people are starting to wonder where Bobby is. Bobby knows that his invisibility could have dangerous consequences for his family and that time is running out. He has to find out how to be seen again before it's too late.

Things Not Seen Details

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From Reader Review Things Not Seen for online ebook

Amy-Jo Conant says

Lexile - 690

DRA - 40

GRL - T

Target audience - probably grade 6

The idea/concept of the book is pretty impressive. A boy becomes invisible and befriends a blind girl as he deals with his new "condition". On the surface, this is a pretty fascinating idea. The concept is loaded with symbolism right from the beginning.

However, this book just didn't get off the ground for me. The pace is slow. Aside from the fantasy element of becoming invisible you pretty much a story of a boy who is having trouble connecting with his parents.

The whole reason for his invisibility ends up being fairly plausible but I can't help but think perhaps I would have been more powerful to leave it to the reader to decide. I had come up with all kinds of ideas that were much more symbolic.

Warning: Can the boy be invisible if he has clothes on? And there you have it. It's awkward at first, a little surprising. You eventually completely forget about it as you are reading. Well, maybe not completely. It is a bit bizarre.

Alaina Meserole says

Things Not Seen was kind of interesting to read.

One day Bobby, a 15 year old boy, buys an electric blanket and wakes up the next day invisible. Of course things get pretty complicated for his family and his life. His dad, who is physicist, is trying to figure out what exactly happened to him and maybe try to bring him back in a way. Then the whole school situation is a no-no because he can't go. He's freaking invisible. So, now everyone thinks he's some missing kid.

A bunch of crazy things happen in this book and I really enjoyed it. I also really enjoyed meeting Alicia.. well, Bobby meeting Alicia. She's blind so it doesn't really matter if he's invisible in a way. She can't see him.. but she also can't touch him either. However, the thing that was just so weird to me was that Bobby was basically naked the entire time he was invisible. Which I get that he probably wouldn't want to wear clothes because he's invisible.. but he's just hanging around with Alice naked. She's his crush and I just couldn't wrap my head around that really weird situation for the longest time. Kind of made me cringe but there's nothing I can do about that.

Bobby's life was a complete mess when he became invisible on accident. Everyone starts to wonder what happened to him or where he actually is. It was an interesting story but it was also so freaking weird for me to read.

In the end, I ended up loving Bobby and Alicia's relationship throughout the book. Some things kind of weirded me out in the book but I did enjoy the overall outcome of it all.

Makenzie Lienemann says

Fifteen year-old Bobby Philips was your average-nobody. He walked through the halls of his preparatory school day in and day out without a single bat of the eye. Until one day, when he didn't even notice himself. He wasn't blind, and he definitely wasn't dead; he was invisible. His parents were frantic, as any parent would be, when their child up and vanishes. Bobby's dad was a scientist, and new that every effect has a cause, and if they could figure the cause out they could reverse the effect. Days went by and still there was no solution in sight. Afraid the government would lock Bobby away forever, they didn't tell a single soul. Bobby, covered head to toe in clothes, bumped into a girl at the library after he snuck out for the afternoon. When they fell, Bobby's scarf did too, but she didn't seem to notice there wasn't a boy under the clothes. Then Bobby saw the walking stick beside her, she was blind. It was absolutely perfect, a blind girl, and an invisible boy craving human interaction. Will Bobby try to be friends with the blind girl? Will he find the cause of his invisibility? Will he overcome his new weaknesses and just learn to live with it? Sometimes in life you have to lose yourself before you can truly find yourself.

I picked this book up in the library because it seemed different that all the other books I have read. It seemed like more of a mystery than a love story. I am sick of love stories. As I read on I realized there was a girl involved, but its not your stereotypical guy-gets-the-girl they live happily-ever-after type stories. I was curious as to what caused Bobby's invisibility, but it seemed to go on forever and ever. I didn't think there was enough of a climax. The problem started at the very beginning and took the whole book to resolve. Nothing out of the ordinary happened any where in the middle though.

When Bobby leaves the house his mom always calls him what seems to be a hundred times to make sure he's okay and where he is suppose to be. That reminds me a lot of my own mom. My mom always knows where I'm going when I leave the house but she never fails to text me and ask me where I'm at. If I don't answer within roughly three seconds she calls me and wonders why I didn't answer her text. Although it's annoying to have a worried mom, Bobby and I both know it's for our own good.

Overall it was an okay book. Not a complete waste of my time, but I definitely won't be suggesting this book to anyone any time soon. Potential readers could range in age drastically. There isn't anything inappropriate throughout the book, but I think it would fall more towards middle school and up category due to comprehension.

Kristy says

"It's a Tuesday morning in February, and I get up as usual, and I stumble into the bathroom to take a shower in the dark. Which is my school-day method because it's sort of like an extra ten minutes of sleep.

It's after the shower. That's when it happens.

It's when I turn on the bathroom light and wipe the fog off the mirror to comb my hair. It's what I see in the mirror. It's what I don't see.

I look a second time, and then rub at the mirror again.

I'm not there.

That's what I'm saying.
I'm. Not. There."

Okay, so that's the back of the book snippet... but it's also the very first paragraph in the book. WHAM! Drops a load on us right of the bat. Normally, that might be wonderful, but I thought maybe we should atleast know (bobby's) name before we jump into the whole 'I'm invisible' thing.

I expected to go through a lot more to wind up invisible. I expected a sort of 'life being invisibile' thing, which I sort of got, but it was not exactly how I had envisioned it going.

Bobby's invisible, blah blah blah. He runs around either dressed to visit the artic or naked. He meets a blind girl. We follow both of their stories of growing and self realization. Our Blind girl, Alicia sort of makes the story for me. She helps Bobby. Bobby helps her. I wish there was a little more to their relationship than what we got.

The cause of this mysterious invisibility was ridiculous! I'm no scientist, but you have to admit it was a little odd!

Blankie + Some crazy Solar power/Spirit in the Sky= Invisibility

Thanks Mr. Clements, I'm sure there are tons of scientists who were just waiting on said information. The mystery of invisibility is now solvd. Thanks.

Gabby R. says

Andrew Clements really kept this interesting and reallistic. If it was a series, I would have devoured it in a few days.

Ryan says

This book is an under-appreciated young-adult classic. An everyboy named Bobby wakes up one morning to find himself invisible. But his biggest concern isn't how to use this new power for good or evil; it's simply how to get back to his normal life. The characters are all incredibly well written, and Bobby's thoughts are engaging and familiar, or at least they would be if I'd ever been invisible. Though it has a few bits of sci-fi in it--mainly centering around Bobby becoming invisible, and attempting to become visible again--it's more or less a coming of age novel, with a heavy dose of adventure. There are many surprises: some of them, temporarily worrying plot developments, and others, heartwarming discoveries and insights. I really, really liked this book--after all, I read it over 10 years ago and I still remember it well enough to say all this. And yes, it deserves a five star review. It may not be your typical classic, but I know I'll be re-reading this book soon now that I've recalled it, and I know I'll do so over and over again in the years to come.

Keshet says

“Things Not Seen” tells about a boy named Bobby Phillips, who wakes up one morning and can’t see

himself in the mirror! He understands he's invisible...

Bobby can't go to school or meet with any of his friends. One day he goes to the library, and he meets a blind girl named Alicia. Alicia doesn't know he is invisible and that is why Bobby trusts her so much. Things start to get complicated when the school starts wondering why Bobby has been absent for so long, and why his parents are not willing to let him be seen. Bobby doesn't know what to do, he has a problem, and he is scared!

I chose this book because my 6th grade teacher recommended it to me for a book report. It was full of suspense and I couldn't keep my eyes off it! I loved this book and I would recommend it to young teenagers who like suspense novels.

Cheryl says

Intelligent SF for teens? A fable for all ages about people who are "different" - ? An adventure for MG readers? Never mind the labels, just read it. I did, twice, and now I'm going to read the second, which I own, and try to find the third....

(But don't worry if you don't want to start a series - the first stands alone just fine.)

David Center says

The outside reading book I chose to read is the book things not seen by Andrew Clements. I chose to read this book because it look very intersetting even the tittle of the book made me want to know more about this story. In this review I will summerize, tell you my recondemnation, and give you my evaluation of the book Things Not Seen.

This book is about a young boy named Bobby Phillips who wakes up one day and cannot see him self in the mirror. He thinks maybe it is just his eye sight but he would come to know that no one in his family could see him ither. At first this really scared him but he realized of all the things he could do and learn about He starts to explore more and figure out things he could do useing his invisibilty to his advantage. As a couple of weeks pass by he changes his mind about the whole thing and wants to be seen by people again. His parents and himself try to find many way to. While they are trying to figure this stuff out he meets a girl named Alicia who cannot see her self ither but this is becuase she is blind. These two characters become very good friends because they can feel what one another are going through and they feel for each other. Bobby and his family think of maybe setting that night up when this incconet happened and doing everything that night over again. When he woke up that morning he could be seen again by everyone. He still felt bad for Alicia because he waqs fix but she never could be fixed but the two will still be bestfriends forever.

I would recomend this book becuase it has a very interesting story line. This book also has many meanings to it. The fisrt meaing is that you should be nice and not judge people because you have no idea on what their going through. The second meaning is that when things go bad and you dont think they will work just keep trying because sooner or later you will acomplish your goals. This book was a good book but i feel like they could have added more adventure to it to make it more epic. If they did this thiis book would revive five

stars. Besides that this book was very well written and i would recomend it to all of my good read friends.

This is my review of my out side reading book. The story was very well Written and i never wanted to put this book down it had me on the edge every time i read this book. I recomend this to everyone and i hope you enjoyed reading my review of the book Things Not Seen by Andrew Clements

Tiffany Neal says

I've been using this book as a read aloud for the past couple years, and every year, the kids beg me not to put it down. It starts off with a bang and sucks the kiddos in immediately, and Bobby (snarky teenage boy) is a relatable character for most of my students.

Although the story gets a bit bogged down (as a read aloud) with all the technicalities and scientific mumbo-jumbo in the middle-end, it doesn't seem to bother the kids much and they enjoy it all - all except for the small love interest thing, which at 4th grade is still kinda oogie to them.

Katie says

Absolutely breathtakingly amazing. Epic!!!! There's a second one and I HAVE to get it now. My soul can't go on without the next book!!!!

Ryan says

The three star review has nothing to do with my not enjoying the book. I enjoyed it immensely. It is for a younger audience, though, and there were some aspects that I think could have been improved. Primarily, I think that Bobby's voice is very appealing and would be even more so to a reader equal in age to him. However, I think that the portrayal of Bobby's relationship with his parents was a bit overdone. I understand that angst is a big part of adolescent life, but his parents were obviously trying very hard and there were very few times that Bobby actually gave them credit. Normal teenage people may have mood swings, but that does not mean they have angry outbursts in every interaction. On a different topic, I thought that the ending was well done. There was some ambiguity, when there could have been a full-on lover's embrace, but the truth of the matter is, the main characters are still young, and I think their slight awkwardness was quite fitting. Overall, a good (at least most of the time) portrayal of adolescents reacting to adversity.

KConaway says

This book surprises - the idea of an invisible boy seemed too far-fetched for a novel that would otherwise fit into the catagory of realistic fiction. But Clements finds a way, in the creation of Bobby's relationship with Alicia, to make this a story that digs deeper into other issues about invisibility. When will Bobby's parents stop ignoring him to see him for who he really is? Who sees Alicia for who she really is now that she's blind, and what can she now "see"? This was a good choice for discussion with my 6th graders.

Cassandra Barboza says

Almost anyone can relate to the feeling of being invisible, of being ignored. But can anyone know what it's truly like to become invisible. This book is a book for younger children but it nevertheless brings to perspective the reality of the world we live in today. We have parents that don't completely know their children because they lead such busy schedules and a society where being handicapped can mean being ostracized and becoming invisible.

Bobby wakes up one morning, invisible. No one can see him. Even though many an author could have come up with a story about Bobby causing mischief and having fun with his invisibility the whole story through, the author actually shows that invisibility is a hindrance and not a gift as many people wish to believe. Yes, Bobby does have some fun with his invisibility, which is completely rationale since the character is only thirteen but the story quickly begins to center on the fact that being invisible is more complicated than it seems. Bobby quickly finds Alicia, a girl who had recently become blind. She is the only person to which Bobby can reveal himself to because she understands what it's like to not be seen. She is the version of Bobby that exists all around us and is not based on science fiction. The book looks into the significance of becoming invisible through the guise of invisibility while digging deeper into the real life matter. Invisibility is becoming afraid to do the things you don't think you can do anymore. But the books shows that anything can be done if you are dedicated and committed to fighting for a place in the visible world. It's a book that shows there is more to be seen than what is just in front of us.

In style and writing the book is very honest. If the character gets mad he gets mad. The author does not prevent the characters from having real emotions. The characters react like real people would. They are not unbelievably gracious. I want to write characters that are truly possible and not idealized versions of people. Bobby acting petulant during the beginning of his situation is like what a real thirteen year old would do and I am glad that the author wrote the scenes to reflect real life.

j says

It never stopped being weird to me that the invisible teenager spends most of the book hanging around naked in public next to a girl he has a crush on.

The other interesting detail that stuck with me: invisible poo only stays invisible for a little while. Does that count as a spoiler?

Akyla says

This is an imaginative modern day science fiction story (more science than fiction) about a boy who wakes up one morning to find himself invisible and befriends a recently blind girl who can relate to this newfound unusual disability.

I found this a great book overall. Unlike some books for young adults, this book was not predictable for adults. Although the gravity of the situation of a missing child and the impact on his parents needed to be emphasised to a younger reader, it does not take away from the amazing writing and intriguing storyline. A

must read for anyone who has ever felt "invisible" in school or life.

Dustin Crazy little brown owl says

A fun & wonderful read! I loved this book from start to brilliant finish! *Things Not Seen* is an interesting, creative and I believe successful way to introduce disability to teens and adults. Bobby Phillips wakes up one morning and is invisible; throughout the book invisibility is shown to parallel living with a disability. One passage early in the book says: "... it's not like I've got the chicken pox or the flu or something. This is completely...different, and it's happening to me, and it means that I can't do anything like I did it yesterday. So that's why I'm saying...what do I do?"

Soon Bobby meets and becomes friends with Alicia who is blind. Because one of them can't see and the other can't be seen, they make a great team. The way Alicia's mother reacts to Bobby is very humorous. She says to Alicia: "What does this young man wear when you meet with him?" and Alicia replies, "On really cold days, he wears Saran Wrap, but most of the time he's naked." Bobby recounts his first visit to Alicia's house saying "Her mom lets me in, but she says, 'stand right there', and then she runs - really runs - and brings me a long white terry cloth robe to wear."

I really enjoyed the writing style of Andrew Clements and have since read the two follow up books: *Things Hoped For* and *Things That Are*, as well as *FRINDLE*. Other great books for teens (and older) on disability issues include: *Rules*, *Hurt Go Happy*, and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*.

Laura says

This is a book I read because my daughter insisted on it. I should listen to her more often. Bobby is a young boy who becomes invisible one day. His physicist father and English professor mother decide to keep it a secret. Unfortunately, they are involved in a car accident that keeps them away from home for several days. Bobby must fend for himself and "stay out of sight" until his parents can help him find out why he is invisible. Of course, as any fifteen year old would do, Bobby decides to try out his invisibility. In the process of doing this he meets a vision-impaired girl, Alicia, who becomes his friend. When Bobby's parents get home from the hospital, they have more trouble to deal with in Child Protective Services. They are concerned about the fact that Bobby seems to be missing. The parents, Bobby, Alicia, and her parents try to work together to solve Bobby's invisibility problem. This Book was a California Young Reader Medal Winner for the year 2005 in the Middle School category. It is a science fiction story that sixth graders through eighth graders will all enjoy. The symbolism of invisibility is especially striking. I think middle school children often feel invisible or wish they were invisible as they go through changes in their lives. Children who are learning to adjust to growing older and the feelings associated with it will understand some of the concepts. It is excellent for understanding friendship, acceptance, and understanding of others.

Franky says

There are times in life that we might feel invisible to the world.

For teenager Bobby Phillips, this is quite literal.

Waking up one day and discovering that he can't be seen, he begins to question how this could have possibly happened. With the help of his parents, he tries to figure out just why he would suddenly "disappear" one day without cause. His parents keep his school in the dark as to Bobby's condition as they look for a cure. Bobby soon learns that being invisible isn't as fun or easy as you might think it would be. Befriending a blind girl named Alicia, he gains some perspective on what it means to be different than everyone else.

At certain points *Things Not Seen* strays off into typical young adult fiction, but, for the most part the author is able to deal with complex adolescent issues in a unique, mature way. The two central characters—Bobby and Alicia—carry themselves in a realistic way. One of the key themes explored in *Things Not Seen* is this idea of accepting oneself for who you are, even if you are different from others, and we learn many lessons through Bobby's invisibility and Alicia's blindness. They help each other understand things from the other's perspective and develop trust in each other.

Sometimes the plot gets a little too wacky as they search for answers to Bobby's invisibility. I also question some of the motivations and decisions made by Bobby's parents as they try to solve this invisibility problem. Bobby becomes a bit too whiny and self-centered at times, also.

Still, Clements manages to deal with life issues in a unique, refreshing way and uses such a clever plot concept that it was a fun, easy and engaging read. The conclusion is really one of the strongest parts of the novel.

Seahee Park says

Clearly by looking at other books Clements wrote are for children or teens. However, myself not being a children nor a teen, reading his book, 'Things Not Seen' was definately not just another teen book from Clements.

At first, when I read about two or three chapters I thought this book will be about an avarage teenager looking for the real meaning of life and becoming more mature. (You know just another kid book thing) However, as I flipped through the book, there were more meanings to it.

Of course just like other stories about a teen, this book talks about an irresponsible teen growing up to be a mature young adult. Before the invisibility happened, Bobby's parents decided what is good for him or what he had to do. But after becoming invisible, soon he finds out that he is the one who needs to change and take in charge of his own life. By doing so, his problem (of being invisible) was solved and he bacame more responsible.

However, there are more important factors to look at.

Firstly, the blindness comes out a lot in the book. The girl, who Bobby meets at the library, is a blind so when they met she did not know about Bobby's little secret and soon becomes his friend (or more than just a friend). She (the blind character) was the key to this story. If she wasn't a blind then it would've been almost impossible for Bobby to change and deal with his problems maturely. It was just because she was a blind, they became friends and grew up to be more mature while helping each other's problems. When the girl needed help, Bobby became her eyes, and when Bobby needed help, she became his body. This was quite remarkable how the author thought about putting to completely unusual characters and made things work.

Moreover, when Bobby turned invisible, his parents did not know where to look at when talking to him. Bobby's mom wanted to touch and feel him to make sure he is there. During the whole time when Bobby was invisible, his parents needed his guide in order for them to know where he was (even Bobby describes how anxious his parents looked when they could not 'see' him.). The way that Bobby described about just observing his parents and how they reacted made it seem like they are blind. By reading this part of the book, I could get a glimpse of how people with blindness might feel. Also, through the part where Bobby describes how other people act when they see the blind girl walking by herself (how people would not get close to her, and they glance at her but never stare) made me rethink about how the society thinks about people with disabilities.

Who decides what is normal and what is abnormal? This question kept popping out while I read this book. Of course not everyone becomes invisible or blind. But it could happen to people and there is no certainty that will not be me. A few years ago my mother was diagnosed with breast cancer. I've never thought one of my parents will have such a thing. (and of course my mother didn't either.) But surely I realized that nothing is for certain. Anything could happen to anyone. (right?) Back to my point, who really decides people with 'visible' disability are abnormal? I can't even define what really is being normal and what is not. Can anyone in the world say, 'I am a hundred percent normal'? By reading this book, we need to rethink about the definition of normality and abnormality.

Secondly, this book also contains another message; the way of looking at a life. Towards the end of the book, Bobby finds another person who became invisible like him about three years ago. That person (a woman) lived invisible for three years without even trying to find a way to get back to her life. She managed a way to not communicate with others in person and went out when necessary. Even when Bobby called her to tell her how to become visible again, she did not want to hear him and told him not to call anymore. By reading about her and knowing how she felt before 'the' incident made me understand about her situation. She probably felt meaningless about her life and when even she was not invisible she felt like the whole world is seeing right through her. Her situation with her parents were not satisfying although she always misses them. Also, I could assume that her self-confidence is at low. On the other side, Bobby (by becoming invisible) realized how much he missed being at school talking to his friends, (even he wasn't a very popular kid and had only few friends) playing instruments with others. He wanted so bad to have a regular himself back, and when he did he couldn't be more happier about his life. Being in the same situation (in a very rare situation),

Bobby and the woman had totally different perspective of view their problems. For Bobby not being able to be seen was a misery but to the woman it was a refuge. Not being able to be seen by others made her feel more comfortable and feel sheltered from her reality (living with her what-she-thought miserable life). This part was surely unexpected and I was surprised, because there are alot of times that I thought some people's life was simply easier and better than mine since they were born with a lot more things than myself. But even two people are given the same exact thing, the result could come out very differently. If one is sucessful than others, it is not because he/she was born with more things but because that person looked at the situation differently and made a crisis into an opportunity. This book tells this lesson very clearly.

In conclusion, this was not just another teen fiction from Clements but it had deeper thoughts and messages that could make its readers rethink about ourselves.
