**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

The author used the technique of alternating chapters, jumping between Robbie's history with Ryan from the moment they first met and Robbie's experiences at Great Oaks School (Prison). Why do you think the author chose this writing technique? Did you think it was an effective way to tell a story? Why or why not?

Robbie was very angry for a number of reasons, which led to his accidently killing Ryan. What were the things in Robbie's life that made him so angry? What would have been some alternative ways he could have handled his anger?

Robbie's beloved Uncle Grant was going off to fight in the Iraq war, and it was very difficult to say good-bye. Do you think “Good luck” was a good thing to say? Why or why not? How have you dealt with the situation when a loved one has to leave—either to go to war or for another reason? What are the best ways to say good-bye?

Ryan acted like a different person when he was interacting with the little kids in Robbie's mom's day care center and again when he was helping a strange woman with her crying baby. Why do you think this happened? Why did Ryan act differently with very young children?

Why do you think Robbie and Ryan became friends? What did they like about each other?

Is murder or youth violence ever justified? Why or why not? What about capital punishment? What can be done to prevent violence among young people?

Robbie was a long-distance runner, which was very important to him. How did running and preparing for races help Robbie? Do you think it is important for young people to be involved in sports? Why or why not? Has being involved in a sport ever helped you with problems you may have had? How?

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Angela Cerrito was born in Michigan and now lives in Germany, where she works as a physical therapist. This is her first book. For more about Angela, visit www.angelacerrito.com/angela-cerrito.html.