

## Maus Reader's Guide

- 1) Art Spiegelman settled upon a very simplistic drawing style to tell his story. How would this story have changed if executed in a more "realistic" style?
- 2) Is the overriding metaphor of *MAUS* (Jews/mice, Nazis/pigs, etc.) pulled off successfully? Why mice? Site at least two places where the metaphor's use is called to attention.
- 3) Like any comic, it's important to be able to tell all the characters apart. With the characters rendered so simplistically, how does Spiegelman differentiate them from one another (especially mice from mice and cats from cats)? Is it important for him to always differentiate his characters?
- 4) How has Art Spiegelman's life been affected/shaped by his father's experience during WW II? Give specific examples.
- 5) How much of Vladek's survival was dependent upon luck or fate? How much depended upon his wits and skills? Do you think Art Spiegelman believes in fate?
- 6) Is Art (the character) sympathetic to his father? Is Art (the author) more or less sympathetic? What character do you, as the reader, sympathize with most?
- 7) *MAUS* is perhaps the only graphic novel of our time that is read by those who both read comics and by those who do not. No graphic novel has come close in terms of sales and critical acclaim. Why is *MAUS* such an anomaly?