Who wrote *Fish in a Tree*?
Lynda Mullaly Hunt

Ally has two teachers during the story. What are their names?
Mrs. Hall (p. 1) and Mr. Daniels (p. 14)

What does Albert wear every day?
A dark t-shirt that says *Flint* (p. 2)

When we first meet her, what is Ally doing instead of her writing assignment?
She is drawing or “doodling”. (p. 2)

What happens to Ally when she looks at the “brightness of dark letters on white pages for too long”?
Ally gets a headache. (p. 3)

Why does Ally get a new teacher at her school?
Her old teacher, Mrs. Hall, has a baby (p. 2-3)

What does Ally call it when she is imagining the events around her in her mind?
Ally calls it a “mind movie”. (p 3-4)

What classmate of Ally’s is always mean to her?
Shay (p.4)

What is Ally’s principal’s name?
Mrs. Silver (p. 5)

What book did Ally always read with her grandpa?
*Alice in Wonderland* (p. 7)

Which character keeps a collection of wooden blocks that she takes out when she is nervous?
Suki (p. 8)

What type of card did Ally give to Mrs. Hall during a class party and why was this strange?
A sympathy card. (p.9), because Mrs. Hall is having a baby, not mourning a loss. (p.10)

What is the main reason Ally struggles in school so much?
She has a hard time reading (p. 10)

What does Ally like to draw in?
Her Sketchbook of Impossible Things. (p.11)

Why didn’t Ally tell Mrs. Hall or Mrs. Silver that she couldn’t read?
She was afraid. She didn’t want them to think she was dumb and she doesn’t think they can help (p. 13)

What does Principal Silver ask Ally to read while she’s in her office?
The poster on the wall. (p.13)
What is A.C. Peterson Farms and who works there?  
It is a restaurant where Ally’s mother works (p. 16)

When Ally tries to read, how does she describe what the letters look like?  
They move, the letters squiggle and dance. (p.17), black beetles marching (p. 13)

Why had Ally’s family moved around a lot?  
Her dad is in the army and gets stationed or deployed in new places (p. 19)

Who comes to the restaurant where Ally’s mom works to torment Ally?  
Shay & Jessica (p. 20)

Who is Travis?  
Travis is Ally’s older brother. (p. 24)

What are the two kinds of day that Ally’s Grampa & her Dad would ask if Ally and Travis were having?  
A silver dollar day or a wooden nickel day. (p.24)

Why is Ally’s father not living at home with her family?  
Her father is in the army and is currently deployed. (p. 24-25)

What does Travis do for fun and to make money?  
Travis restores old machines and works at a garage (p. 25-26)

How does Travis feel about school?  
He doesn’t like it and wishes he could quit (p. 25)

What school subjects is Ally good at?  
Math, art (p. 27)

Why did Ally’s dad and grandpa take her and Travis to pawn shops?  
To look for old coins (p. 30)

Why does Travis choose coins from 1933?  
Because that is the year their Grandpa was born. (p.34)

What does Mr. Daniels call his class?  
“Fantasticos.” (p. 38)

Ally used to love math. What does she say is the problem with math now?  
Now math has letters and long stories. (p. 39)

When Ally first meets Mr. Daniels, what does he tell her about going to the principal’s office?  
That he’s going to try really hard not to send her, that they’ll deal with it together (p. 42)

For the show & tell, “what represents you,” assignment Mr. Daniels gives his class, what do the students bring in?  Name three things and who brings them.  
1. Shay brings pictures of her horse, Diamond, her riding helmet and jacket. (p. 43)
2. Jessica brings a picture of Shay. (p.43)
3. Oliver brings a lightbulb. (p.44)
4. Albert brings a jar of oxygen and hydrogen (water) (p.45-46)
5. Keisha brings a special cupcake she made. (p.46-47)
6. Suki brings two foods, hone-senbei (her grandfather’s favorite – shrimp and fish bone crackers) and hot wasabi peas (p.48-50)
7. Ally brings a 1943 steel penny. (p.51-52).

Why does Ally think Mr. Daniels and Oliver may have some kind of signal? Oliver gets excited easily and talks a lot, but when Mr. Daniels pulls on his ear, Oliver stops talking (p. 49)

Where is Suki originally from? Japan (p. 50)

Which two classmates talk about missing their grandfathers? Ally & Suki (p. 19 & 50)

What kind of book does Mr. Daniels pass out to the whole class? Journals for them to write in. (p.53-54)

When does Mr. Daniels say he’ll correct or grade the work the students do in their journals? Never. (p.54)

What does Ally draw for her first entry in her classroom journal and why does she say it represents her? Ally draws a black cube. (p.55), she says it’s a picture of a dark room, where no one could see her, because it is easier to be invisible (p. 56)

When Mr. Daniels rearranges the classroom seating, who does Ally get seated next to? Keisha (p.58)

What do Shay, Jessica and some other girls have that symbolizes their friendship? Woven friendship bracelets (p. 60)

Why does Ally want a friendship bracelet? Because she has never had the kinds of friends who have matching bracelets, and the bracelets tell the world that the person wearing it has someone who cares about them, who just likes them; she wants to feel a part of something (p. 60)

Ally feels bad when she makes fun of someone with Shay and Jessica. Who is it, and what are they making fun of? They are making fun of Albert and how the backs of his shoes are cut out (p. 62)

What event does Ally get a new dress for? Her school’s holiday concert (p. 70)

What do all the girls get to carry at the holiday concert? Bouquets of flowers (p. 72)
What happens to Keisha’s bouquet of flowers at the holiday concert and what does Ally do in response to this?
Keisha accidentally breaks off a bud by touching her bouquet and then Mrs. Muldoon takes Keisha’s bouquet away from her. (p. 73) Ally tears her bouquet apart to share with Keisha (p. 74)

What challenge does Mr. Daniels give the class that Ally ends up being really good at?
The box challenge – they have to figure out what is inside wrapped boxes (p. 78)

Why doesn’t Travis help Ally with her writing assignment when she asks him?
He says he’s no better at that than she is (p. 84)

What treat does Keisha give to Ally after the holiday concert bouquet incident?
A cupcake that says “WOW” inside. (p. 86)

What does Ally do to get out of the assignment about writing stories?
Ally pretends she hurt her arm. (p. 88-89)

When Ally tells Mr. Daniels that she injured her arm by tripping over her cat, why is Mr. Daniels skeptical?
Because she had told him previously that her family had no pets (p. 89, 51)

Why does Albert’s family not have a lot of money?
His dad doesn’t have a job because he is trying to invent something that will “leave his mark on mankind.” (p. 93)

What show does Albert love that he talks about a lot?
Star Trek (p. 93)

What does Shay call the lunch group of Ally, Keisha & Albert?
The Island of Misfit Toys. (p. 93)

Why does Ally deliberately turn in a poorly done paper to Mr. Daniels?
She wants to be told that work she knows is terrible isn’t good enough. (p.96-97)

What does the word “Flint” on Albert’s shirt mean?
“Flint” is a character on Star Trek. (p.99)

What does Albert say is significant about the character of Flint?
Flint “retreats from the “unpleasantness of Earth and the company of people.” (p.100)

Why does Albert frequently have bruises?
A group of boys beat him up after school (p.102)

Why doesn’t Albert fight back with the boys after school?
He doesn’t believe in violence and he thinks he would get blamed for starting the fight because he is bigger (p. 103)
What happened between Ally and Shay the year before that caused Shay to hate Ally?
Ally thought that Shay stole her crackers, so Ally grabbed a chunk of her cake, ate it, and said, “So how do you like that?”

What broke on Travis’ car just three hours after he bought it?
The wiper motor (p. 110)

Why does Ally go to Shay’s birthday party?
Because she invited everyone and Ally’s mom insists that she go (p. 115)

Where is Shay’s birthday party?
At the Butterfly Gardens (p. 116)

What incident happens with Ally at Shay’s birthday party?
Ally accidentally injures a butterfly when she tries to hold it and make a wish (p.117)

When Shay brags about her new purple sweater, Albert tells Shay is how the color purple was made. What was ancient purple dye made from?
The slime of a kind of snail. Albert calls it snail snot. (p. 120-121)

What does Ally do to help her remember new vocabulary words?
Ally makes a “mind movie” for each one. (p. 122)

What two vocabulary words does Ally raise her hand to explain because she feels she’s an expert on them?
Alone and lonely (p. 123)

When Mr. Daniels asks the class to write about their favorite fictional character, who does Ally create as her imaginary hero?
Roy G. Biv. (p. 128)

What does Ally eventually find out about the friendship bracelets that cause her to not want one anymore?
She discovers that Shay charges her friends for them (p. 131)

Who wins Mr. Daniels’ first annual Fantastico Poetry Award?
Ally (p. 134)

Why is Ally angry about winning the “first annual Fantastico Poetry Award”? 
Ally thinks it’s just a pity award. (p.136)

After Ally wins the poetry award, Ally and Keisha have a conversation in the bathroom about being different than everyone else. Why does each girl feel different?
Ally’s brain doesn’t work like everyone else, Keisha looks different (p. 139)

What does Keisha invite Ally and Albert over to her house to do?
Bake/try baking the cupcakes with cookie dough letters. (p. 142-143)
What game does Mr. Daniels offer to teach Ally?  
Chess (p. 147)

What does Mr. Daniels offer to Ally in exchange for her coming in after school to play chess?  
Mr. Daniels will excuse her from homework on the days she stays to play chess. (p. 148)

During a field trip, Albert collects many acorns. Why?  
Albert is concerned that the acorns have a fungus, which would make the trees in danger. He wants to do further research on the acorns (p. 152)

Ally’s class has a field trip to the Noah Webster House. Why does Ally particularly dislike Noah Webster?  
He was the first to create American spellers with standardized spelling rules, which Ally struggles with, along with the first schoolbooks (p. 154)

At the museum, what does Shay draw on her slate?  
Ally wearing a dunce cap. (p.154)

When does Ally finally admit to Mr. Daniels that she can’t read?  
During their field trip to the museum, after running out and sitting on the swings (p. 157)

What does Mr. Daniels tell Ally is the reason he thinks she struggles with reading?  
He thinks she is dyslexic. (p.157)

Where does the title of the book, *Fish in a Tree*, come from?  
A quote that says a fish will think it is stupid if it is judged on its ability to climb a tree, similarly to how Ally thinks she’s stupid just because she can’t read (p. 159)

Why does Mr. Daniels tell Ally she’ll be doing *him* a favor by letting him help her with reading after school?  
Because he is taking classes for special education and it will help him with his projects (p. 165)

Why does Mr. Daniels think Ally learned chess so quickly and also why she’s a good artist?  
Her mind learns in pictures (p. 167)

Who do Ally, Travis and her mom have a Skype with?  
Ally’s Dad. (p.168)

When Skyping with his dad, what does Travis tell him is a problem at work?  
The new manager is always hanging over him and wants Travis to read and follow the manuals. (p.171)

Why can’t Ally, Keisha and Albert have any food when they go to Albert’s house?  
Because Albert’s family has no food. (p.178-179)

Ally’s grandpa used to say to “be careful with eggs and words.” Why?  
Because neither can ever be fixed (p. 184)

Why does Ally think Mr. Daniels has betrayed her when they have a substitute teacher?  
He has left instructions saying she doesn’t have to write, just draw, and it makes the class laugh.
Name the classmates and the chess piece that Ally feels they represent.

1. Keisha: bishop. Tall and powerful & able to move across the entire board in one move.
2. Albert: king. A piece with a ton of value, but unable to move more than one space at a time. Always running from and hiding behind others
3. Ally: the knight. The clever piece that moves only in an L, because Ally feels she’s spent her entire life jumping over things.
4. Shay: queen. The piece with the most power to move and frighten, always looking for your weakness, to get you flustered and force you into a mistake. Against her, keep your eyes moving, be careful, have a plan and know you eventually have to take a stand. And that pawns sometimes become Queen. (p. 191-192)

Mr. Daniels challenges the class with the Wolf-Chicken-Grain puzzle. Who is the first to solve it correctly?
Ally. (p. 197)

Who does Mr. Daniels congratulate along with Ally for solving the Wolf-Chicken-Grain puzzle and why?
Everyone who didn’t just give up, because “no matter how smart you are, success is reached with hard work, too.” (p.197)

Which two students run against each other for class president?
Shay and Ally (p. 199)

Who made a campaign sign for Ally and what does it say?
Albert, it says: “ALLY IS YOUR ALLY. GIVE HER YOUR VOTE!” (p.202)

Albert tells Ally that her name is a homonym. What does that mean?
A word with the same spelling but different sounds and meanings. (p.203)

Who, besides Shay, is angry that Ally won the class president election?
Shay’s mom. (p. 209)

Who does Ally run to tell that she was voted class president?
Her mom (p. 210)

Ally finds a note on her desk at school. What is the name at the bottom of the note?
Max. (p.212)

Why doesn’t Ally meet Max at lunch like the letter asked her to?
She couldn’t read the letter (p. 215)

When Mr. Daniels asks the class if they could have unlimited amounts of any single object, what do Shah, Albert, and Oliver choose?
Shay – money (p.218)
Albert: antibiotics
Oliver: Scotch tape or Elmer’s glue. (p. 219-220)

Ally and Keisha make shirts to go with Albert’s “Flint” shirt. What do their shirts say and why?
Steel and Magnesium, because Flint, Steel and Magnesium are used to start fire and the three of them together are going to set the world on fire (p. 223)

What book did Mr. Daniels give Ally to read?
*Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing* (p. 225)

What did Ally include in her three-dimensional book report project that Shay said was not part of the book?
A picture hanging on the wall of a solider (a picture of Ally’s dad) (p. 227)

What is Ally’s dad’s job?
He is an army captain with a tank division (p. 227)

Travis acts serious around Ally and then tells her he wants to ask her a question. What does he ask?
What Mr. Daniels does after school with her to help her with her reading (p. 229)

How does Ally say using sheets of colored plastic helps her with reading?
“She puts them over pages and it makes the headaches better, like turning down the brightness on a computer.”(p.230)

Before Albert really knew Ally, what did he used to call her and why?
“The Flying Tiger” (p. 232) because like the Flying Tiger planes (which were used in WWII and repainted every few missions to throw off the enemy), she was always trying to make people think one thing when the opposite was true. (p.233)

What was Albert’s nickname for Keisha and why?
The Baby, because she’s quiet until she wants something and then she’s loud and she usually gets her way. (p. 234)

What is Albert’s nickname for himself and why?
The Elephant—because he has a thick skin and doesn’t show what he feels. (p.235)

Albert says he has nicknames for Ally, Keisha, and himself. What are they?
Ally – the Flying Tiger, Keisha – the Baby, Albert – the Elephant (p. 232-234)

Who are some of the people Mr. Daniels says may have had dyslexia?

What extra credit assignment does Mr. Daniels give his class to give them a taste of how hard it is to read with dyslexia?
He gives them a code to crack (p. 241)

What does Mr. Daniels give Ally as a gift to say that “he’s noticed”?
A metal paperweight with a quote from Winston Churchill: “Never, never, never quit.” (p. 242)

Who think it’s cool that letters move when Ally tries to read?
Fish in a Tree by Lynda Mullaly Hunt

Oliver (p. 245)

What is the joke when Albert tells Shay he sees some letters backwards? Those letters appear the same forwards and backwards. (p. 248)

After Albert stands up to Shay, who apologizes to Ally? Jessica (p. 248)

What does Suki make and give to Ally, and what does she say about it? A wooden letter A, it’s A for Ally and Amazing and I Admire you.” (p. 249)

What finally made Albert fight back against the boys who beat him up? He was protecting Keisha and Ally (p. 256)

What does the poster in Mrs. Silver’s office say? “SOMETIMES THE BRAVEST THING YOU CAN DO IS ASK FOR HELP.” (p. 261)

Who apologizes to Ally for the “bumpy road we’d had for a while”? Mrs. Silver. (p. 262)

Mr. Daniels has Ally deliver a note to the principal. What does it say? That Ally is student of the month (p. 262)

What does Ally carry around in her pocket and eventually gives to her brother? A piece of paper that says possible (p. 264)

Who does Ally ask Mr. Daniels to help learn to read? Ally’s brother Travis. (p. 265).

Whole-book questions
School personnel
Mrs. Hall – Ally’s first teacher
Mrs. Silver – Principal
Mr. Daniels – Ally’s second teacher
Mrs. Muldoon – Music teacher
Miss Kessler - reading consultant (p. 158)

Who are Ally’s two good friends in the story? Albert and Keisha

Who is the main character of Fish in a Tree? Ally

Who is Travis? Ally’s brother

What student in Mr. Daniels’ class is always mean to the other students? Shay

What disorder does Ally have that causes her to struggle with reading?
Dyslexia
In what setting does most of the story take place?
A school/ Mr. Daniels’ classroom