Things Not Seen by Andrew Clements
DTDL Battle of the Books 2011

Who wrote Things Not Seen?
Andrew Clements (p. 0)

In what season does this story take place?
Winter (starts in February) (p. 1)

Why does Bobby often take a shower in the dark?
He thinks it’s like an extra ten minutes of sleep (p. 1)

True or False – Bobby can see himself.
False (pg. 1)

What is Bobby’s last name?
Phillips (p. 2)

Bobby says he doesn’t usually tell his parents much. Why does he decide to tell them about being invisible?
They are smart, and this seems like a problem where smarts count (p. 2)

What does Bobby’s mom do?
She’s a professor at the University of Chicago (teaches literature) (p. 3)

Whose motto is, “When in doubt, give an order.”?
Bobby’s mom (p. 3)

What does Bobby first do to really get the attention of his parents that he’s invisible?
Pulls out a chair, sits in it, and glugs down his orange juice (p. 3)

How did Bobby’s parents first react to Bobby telling them he was invisible?
They told him to stop joking around (pg. 3)

How does Bobby convince his parents that he is invisible?
He sits down at the kitchen table and begins eating his breakfast and drinking his Orange Juice (pg. 3)

Bobby’s mom’s motto is: when in doubt, do what?
Give an order (p. 3)

What are Bobby’s parents’ names?
David (p. 5) and Emily (p. 6)

Who does Bobby’s dad think they should tell about Bobby’s condition?
No one (p. 6)

Why do Bobby and his parents decide not to tell anyone about Bobby’s problem?
They were afraid of all the media attention and that the Government would take Bobby somewhere “safe” (pg. 6)

How old is Bobby?
15 (p. 8)

Why does Bobby attend the U of C lab school?
Because it’s a school for kids whose parents are professors and/or geniuses; because his family moved there six years ago (p. 10)
What do Bobby and his father use to experiment with how his hand reacts to light?
The desk lamp in Bobby’s room (p. 12)

Is Bobby transparent?
No (p. 14)

What word does Bobby’s father like to use when someone discovers something?
Bingo! (p. 14)

What does Bobby say he spends most of his time doing when he’s not at school?
Reading (p. 15)

True or False – Bobby is able to see his food as he swallows it?
False (pg. 16)

What was special about Bobby’s spit?
It was invisible (pg. 16)

Why does Bobby decide to go to the library on his first day as an invisible boy?
His parents left him alone (pg. 19) & he wanted “to see what it is like to be invisible [in public]” (pg. 20)

What does Bobby wear to go outside to disguise his invisibility?
Stocking cap, turtleneck, scarf, sunglasses, gloves (p. 20)

How does Bobby feel at first while he is walking around the library?
Dizzy & disoriented (pg. 22)

Why does Bobby feel dizzy and disoriented and have trouble moving around when he’s invisible?
Because he can’t see his arms/hands or legs/feet (p. 22)

How does Bobby injure his toe at the library?
He tries to help a girl at a computer and she pushes back her chair over his toe (p. 24)

What does Bobby do to scare the girl working at the computer in the library?
He yells and pushes her chair after she backs her chair into him (pg. 24)

What special collection do they have on the third floor of the library Bobby visits?
Chicago’s music (p. 25)

What instrument does Bobby play?
Trumpet (p. 25)

How does Bobby first “meet” Alicia?
He runs into her while leaving the library (pg. 27)

What does Bobby drop when he bumps into Alicia while exiting the library that almost gets him busted?
His scarf (p. 28)

How does Bobby realize that the girl he bumps into at the library is blind?
She has a thin white cane (p. 28)

Why doesn’t Alicia freak out when Bobby runs into her in the library and his scarf comes off?
She is blind (p. 28)

What did Bobby say to Alicia after their first meeting that he later thought was probably a bad thing to say? See you around (p. 30)

What kind of car did Bobby’s father drive? Gray Ford Taurus (p. 30)

Why does Bobby feel like a jerk after telling Alicia he’ll see her around? She is blind and cannot see (pg. 30)

How does Bobby first learn about his parents’ accident? He sees the story on the news (pg. 35)

What TV show does Bobby watch that he says is safe and predictable? Gilligan’s Island (p. 35)

How does Bobby first find out about his parents’ car accident? He sees it on the TV news (p. 36)

Who is Bobby’s nosy neighbor? Mrs. Trent (p. 37)

When Bobby first finds out about his parents’ accident, both his doorbell and phone ring. Who is at the door and who is calling when he answers the phone? The cops are at the door and the hospital (Dr. Fleming) is calling (p. 37-38)

Who is the first person to talk to Bobby after the accident? Dr. Fleming (pg. 38)

How old is Bobby? 15 (pg. 38)

Who does Bobby’s mom suggest stay with him while his parents are in the hospital? Aunt Ethel (p. 39)

Why did Bobby’s mother suggest Aunt Ethel as a babysitter for Bobby? Because he can’t actually have a babysitter because of his invisibility, and Aunt Ethel lives in Miami, so she was just a ruse to get the doctor off their backs (p. 40)

Why does Bobby decide to go and see his parents at the hospital? “Because they’re family” (pg. 41)

What does Bobby’s mom give him when he visits her in the hospital? Money ($60) (p. 50)

Why doesn’t Bobby visit his father at the hospital? His mom tells Bobby he’s in no shape for company and will probably be asleep (p. 50)

Why doesn’t Bobby use their front door when he returns from the hospital? Their neighbor, Mrs. Trent might see him (pg. 54)
How does Bobby feel about being alone in his house at night? He’s scared (p. 55)

Who says: “But fear doesn’t need doors and windows. It works from the inside.”? Bobby (p. 56)

True or False – Bobby was afraid during his first night alone. True (pg. 56)

What extracurricular activity does Bobby do? Jazz band (p. 57)

What does Bobby do to escape his fear during his first night alone following the accident? Watches TV (Nick at Night – I Love Lucy) and eats ice cream (pg. 59)

When Bobby’s dad suggests they need a theory to explain Bobby’s situation, Bobby disagrees. What does he think they need? Action (p. 63)

What trick does Mrs. Trent use to try and get Bobby to let her in the house on his second day alone? The “get your foot in the door with some cookies” trick (pg. 64)

What does Mrs. Trent try to use to get Bobby to open the door? Cookies (p. 64)

When “Aunt Ethel” retrieves Mrs. Trent’s cookies, what are the three reasons that Mrs. Trent doesn’t get a good look at her? The collar on the pink robe is turned up; there is a bath towel wrapped around her head; the real Aunt Ethel is about 1,200 miles southeast of there (p. 65)

When Mrs. Trent visits Bobby how does she make sure she can get a good look at Aunt Ethel? She leaves the cookies five feet from the door (p. 65)

What excuse does Bobby give Mrs. Trent for not opening the door? He has the flu and it’s cold outside (p. 65)

Who goes outside to pick up Mrs. Trent’s cookies? Bobby, dressed as Aunt Ethel (p. 65)

What kind of warrior does Bobby compare himself to and why? Greek; he learned that Greek warriors would train and go into battle naked (p. 69-70)

Bobby says his family moved to Chicago when he was in fifth grade (p. 165). Where did they live prior to that? Texas (p. 72)

What is Alicia doing when Bobby sees her in the listening room? Reading/listening to an audiobook (p. 75)

How does Bobby justify going into the listening room and talking with Alicia? It’s been three days with essentially no human contact (p. 75)

What is Alicia reading when Bobby approaches her in the listening room? The Scarlet Letter (p. 76)
How does Alicia go to school?
She takes correspondence courses (independent study) through a school on the North Shore (p. 77)

How does Alicia have access to the library if she isn’t a student?
Her dad teaches at the university (p. 77)

What does Alicia’s dad teach?
Astronomy (p. 77)

How long has Alicia been blind?
About two years (p. 77)

What does Alicia’s dad have in common with Bobby’s parents?
Her dad teaches at the university (like Bobby’s mom) and is a science nerd (like Bobby’s dad) (p. 77)

What does Bobby’s mom teach?
English literature (pg. 77)

How long has Alicia been blind?
2 years (pg. 77)

When Bobby first talks to Alicia in the listening room he tried to leave but she called him back. Why?
No one has ever asked her about being blind or how it happened (p. 80)

How does Bobby learn Alicia’s name?
Walt, the library security guard, says it as they are leaving (p. 82)

Why does Bobby pass the “elevator test”?
He’s in the elevator with Alicia and everyone gives her lots of space because they see her cane and know she’s blind (p. 82)

How does Alicia know that Bobby isn’t wearing a shirt when they are out walking together?
She has to put her hand on his chest to stop herself from falling and feels that he’s not wearing anything (p. 85)

What tow reasons does Bobby give Alicia as to why no one has noticed that he is naked when he tried to walk her home?
Everyone is blind; he is invisible (p. 88)

How does Alicia react to finding out Bobby is invisible?
She thinks he is being mean and messing around with her (pg. 88)

How does Alicia come to believe that Bobby is invisible?
She asks a passerby which of them is taller and the stranger tells her that no one is there (p. 89-90)

Once Alicia realizes Bobby is invisible, what new look does she give that Bobby’s parents also gave?
The look of someone trying to process impossible information (p 90)

What chore does Bobby have to do when his mom gets home?
Clean/vacuum (p. 100)

How does Bobby’s mom react when she learns that Alicia knows Bobby’s secret?
She is angry (pg. 101)

When Bobby meets Alicia at the library the day after she learns his secret, he think she looks dressed up for what? A date (p. 102)

How does Alicia’s blindness make her parents neatness freaks? Because they’re afraid if something’s in the wrong place she’ll trip over it (p. 104)

How long has Alicia been blind? 2 years (p. 104)

How did Alicia become blind? She fell out of bed and hit her head. In the morning she couldn’t see (p. 105)

How did most of Alicia’s friends react when she became blind? They disappeared (p. 107)

Who was the only friend that stuck around once Alicia became blind? Nancy Fredericks (p. 107)

Who barges into the listening room while Alicia and Bobby are talking? Alicia’s dad (p. 108)

Where/How does Alicia’s dad learn about Bobby? In the library / Alicia’s mom asked him to check up on Alicia and he saw her talking to someone who was not there (pg. 108-109)

When Alicia’s mother is finally convinced of Bobby’s situation, what is her first question? What does this young man wear when you meet him? (p. 110)

What does Alicia’s mom give Bobby when he comes to her house? A white terry cloth robe (p. 111)

What book did Alicia checkout from the library a week before she became blind that Bobby started reading to her? Welcome to the monkey house (p. 113)

Which fictional character inspired Bobby to write down absolutely everything he can remember about the two days before he became invisible? Sherlock Holmes (p. 115)

What are the two possible “crime scenes” Bobby investigates? His room and the bathroom (p. 115)

How does Bobby’s mother explain his long absence from school? He has the flu (p. 116)

What is the “most dangerous thing” that Bobby learns during his first three weeks of being invisible? “People who run schools are nosy” (pg. 116)

What does the school want for Bobby’s file? A doctor’s note (p. 117)
What does Bobby call the various groups of people trying to figure out what happened to him?
The Save Bobby Phillips Committees (p. 118)

Who are on the Save Bobby Phillips Committees?
1: Bobby’s parents, Alicia’s parents, Alicia (p. 112)
2: School nurse, Bobby’s teacher, guidance counselor, people who run Bobby’s school; then add on the Cook Country Board of Health and the Department of Children and Family Services (p. 118)

What does Bobby say is the difference between the two Save Bobby Phillips Committees?
The second committee (school, DCFS, etc.) has an action plan (p. 118)

The first Save Bobby Phillips Committee is composed of Bobby’s and Alicia’s family. Which three places/organizations make up the second Save Bobby Phillips Committee?
Bobby’s school, Cook County Board of Health, Department of Children and Family Services (p. 118)

Who visits Bobby’s home from the Department of Children and Family services?
Officer Martha Pagett (p. 119)

Why does Miss Pagett get a search warrant?
To determine Bobby is safe (pg. 120/131)

What does Bobby’s mother “mistakenly” call Ms. Pagett?
Miss Badger (p. 121)

Who knows about Bobby’s secret?
Bobby’s mom, dad, Alicia, Alicia’s mom, dad, Aunt Ethel (p. 124), Sheila

How long does it take officer Pagett to first get a search warrant?
45 minutes (p. 125)

What are the conditions of the first search warrant issued by the Officer Pagett?
They can make a superficial survey of the premises to see if Bobby is there (p. 128)

How does Mrs. Pagett know that while Bobby’s parents were in the hospital, Aunt Ethel was supposedly staying with him?
Mrs. Trent told her (p. 129)

After the police conduct there initial of Bobby’s house, how long does Officer Pagett give Bobby’s parents to show that he’s alive and well?
Five days (p. 130)

What book does Alicia read in honor of Bobby?
The Invisible Man by H.G. Wells (p. 135)

Bobby reads an article in Time that causes him to think that maybe there are others out there like him. What is the article about?
UFO abduction experiences (p. 136)

When Bobby was reading about people being abducted by UFOs, what did it make him realize?
That he might not be the only invisible person out there (p. 138)

How many similar cases did doctors find to Alicia’s case?
Why does Bobby want to find other invisible people?  
So they can compare notes to try and figure out what happened (p. 141-142)

What school did both Alicia’s mom and Bobby’s mom go to?  
Northwestern (pg. 146)

What two things do Bobby and Alicia’s mom have in common?  
Both went to North Western and both majored in English (p. 146)

What did Alicia’s mom do before Alicia became blind?  
She worked for a public relations company (p. 147)

How do Bobby and Alicia begin searching for other invisible people?  
They use the Internet (pg. 147)

Which two search terms do Bobby and Alicia use to find information online?  
Invisible people; invisibility (p. 148)

What do Alicia and Bobby do during the dinner party while their parents are chatting?  
Search online for invisible people and invisibility (p. 148)

Once Alicia’s dad looks at Bobby’s data charts, he finds something. Then Bobby’s dad asks everyone to gather items. What are they?  
Bobby’s electric blanket (plus controller and wires), an oscilloscope, and the info that came with the electric blanket (and a small screwdriver set) (p. 151-152)

Why does Bobby have a hard time finding his dad’s oscilloscope?  
Because their basement is full of stuff (high-tech junkyard) (p. 151)

What item from Bobby’s room does Alicia’s dad think may be the cause for Bobby’s invisibility?  
His electric blanket (p. 153)

Why does Alicia’s dad think the electric blanket is part of the reason Bobby is invisible?  
They create electromagnetic disturbances (pg. 154)

Alicia talks about never seeing celebrities get old and mentions a particular movie star. Who was it?  
Brad Pitt (p. 158)

When did Bobby’s mom give Bobby the blanket?  
First day they arrived in Chicago (pg. 165)

Why does Bobby call Sears to ask about his electric blanket?  
He wanted to find out if other people have had the same problem and returned the blanket (p. 167)

What information does the customer service representative tell Bobby on the phone?  
That they are encouraging customers to return the blanket for something else, and people with pacemakers should not use the blanket (p. 167)

Who does Alicia advise Bobby to call after his phone call with the Sears customer service representative?  
The legal department (p. 169)
How does Bobby plan to find out who has returned their blankets?
He plans to sneak into the offices and steal it (pg. 172)

When Bobby says: "I’m off to commit my first real crime," what is he referring to?
Going to Sears and stealing information on who returned their electric blankets (p. 173)

What is Alicia supposed to do while Bobby is at Sears looking for information?
Ask about a job (p. 176)

What law has companies make sure they hire everyone, including people with disabilities?
Americans with Disabilities Act (p. 176-177)

What does Alicia do when they arrive at the Sears Offices?
She asks to speak with the employment office (pg. 178)

How did Alicia feel after visiting the Sears offices?
She felt scared and alone (pg. 178)

How many electric blankets were before it was discovered that some percentage had malfunctioned?
9,308 (p. 181)

How many customers have complained, and of those, how many accepted a new blanket?
379 complained; 163 accepted a new blanket (p. 181)

On which number phone call does Bobby finally reach someone useful?
59 (p. 190)

What word does Mr. Borden use to describe Sheila that makes Bobby take notice?
Gone (p. 190)

Who does Bobby find that is also invisible and where do they live?
Sheila Borden; Miami (p. 194)

To whom is the next call Bobby makes after he talks to Mr. Borden?
Alicia (p. 199)

Who is Sheila Borden?
She also had an electric blanket and turned invisible (p. 206)

What was it that caused Bobby’s invisibility?
His electric blanket (p. 206)

How long has Sheila been invisible?
Three years (p. 206)

What was the first thing that Bobby did when he turned invisible that Sheila felt she couldn’t do?
Tell his parents (p. 207)

Why did Sheila Borden move to Florida?
It’s warm (better to walk around naked) (p. 207)
What kind of disguise does Sheila use when she has to go out clothed?
Covers herself in a black veil like a Muslim woman (p. 207)

What are the facts Bobby knows after talking to Sheila?
That this is not a temporary condition, that the electric blanket was the specific cause, just the blanket is probably not all of it, knows it happened to both of them in the winter (along with the dates and locations) (p. 211)

What astronomical phenomenon does Alicia’s dad figure out reacted with Bobby’s blanket’s electrical field to make Bobby invisible?
Solar winds (p. 218)

After Bobby figures out the blanket is really the source why does his dad still decide to keep it a secret?
It is too dangerous (pg. 220)

How does Bobby eventually become visible again?
He sleeps under the electric blanket again and it reverses the process (pg. 224-233)

Whose idea is it for Bobby to use the blanket again to try and reverse the invisibility?
Alicia’s (p. 227)

What does Alicia suggest Bobby try to reverse the invisibility?
Go back to sleep with the electric blanket on again (p. 227)

What two things cause Alicia to suggest trying the blanket again?
The solar winds were still abnormal; talking about two negatives making a positive (p. 235)

How does Sheila react when she finds out Bobby is not invisible anymore?
She does not want to know how he did it (pg. 238)

What does Alicia do when Bobby goes to her house to tell her he is visible again?
She checks to see if he really is wearing clothes and then feels his face (p. 242-243)

At what moment did Bobby say he knew he was back?
When the police officer looked him in the eyes (p. 243)

What does Bobby mail to Sheila?
The electric blanket and controller (p. 246), a list of names from Sears, all of his dad’s notes and diagrams, information sheet about the blanket, information about SOHO (p. 247) and a note from Bobby (p. 248)

In the end, what does Bobby do with the electric blanket?
Mails it to Sheila (p. 248)

Books that Bobby mentions he’s read:
Lord Jim, In Our Time (plus all of Hemingway), Catch-22, Cat’s Cradle (and other Vonnegut), Great Expectations, Tolkien, A Wrinkle in Time, Michael Crichton, The Odyssey, Richard Feynman (p. 15-16); Sherlock Holmes (p. 115)

What promise does Sheila ask Bobby to make the first time he calls her? What about the second time?
That he won’t tell anyone about her (p. 209)
Forget about her and don’t contact her again (p. 238)

Where Questions
Where is Bobby when he discovers he is invisible?
The bathroom (p. 1)

Where does Bobby’s mom work?
University of Chicago (pg. 3)

Where does Things Not Seen take place?
Chicago (p. 4)

Where does Bobby tell his parents that he is invisible?
In the Kitchen (pg.3)

Where does Bobby’s dad work and what does he do?
He is a physicist at Fermilab (p. 4)

Where does Bobby go to school?
University of Chicago Lab School (p. 10)

Where is Bobby’s favorite place (outside of home and school) to hang out?
The library (a big one that’s part of the university) (p. 15)

Where do Bobby and his parents live?
Chicago (pg. 20)

Where does Bobby go on his first day of invisibility?
The (Regenstein) library (p. 20)

Where is the first place Bobby travels to when he is invisible?
The library/ Regenstein Library (p. 20)

Where does Bobby disrobe when he is in the library?
The men’s room (p. 21)

Where does Bobby hide his clothes in the library’s men’s room?
In the ceiling (p. 21)

Where does Bobby go first when he’s out on the town on the nice weather day?
His school (p. 71)

Where does Bobby meet Alicia the second time?
At the library, in a listening room (p. 74)

Where does Bobby’s mom tell Ms. Pagett (from DCFS) that Bobby is?
In Florida, staying with a relative (p. 121)

Where is Bobby’s dad’s oscilloscope located?
In the basement (p. 151)

Where did Bobby’s blanket come from?
Sears (p. 165)

Where does Sheila Borden live?
Miami (p. 194)
Where is Bobby when he learns about the accident?
At home in the TV room (pg. 35)

Where are Bobby’s parents taken after their car accident?
Presbyterian St. Luke’s (p. 40)

Where does Aunt Ethel actually live?
Miami, FL (p. 40)

Where does Aunt Ethel Live?
Miami, FL (pg. 40)

Where does Bobby hide his clothes while at the hospital?
In a bed, under a blanket (p. 44)

Where does Bobby meet Alicia for the second time?
Library listening room (pg. 75)

Where does Alicia find out Bobby is invisible?
On a street corner (pg. 88)

Where did Alicia take Bobby when she found out he was invisible and naked outside and must be freezing?
Starbucks (p. 92)

Where was Alicia when she went blind?
At home in her bedroom (pg. 105)

Where exactly does Alicia’s dad learn about Bobby’s secret?
In the library’s listening room (p. 109)

Where does Bobby’s mom tell child services that Bobby is?
In Florida with a relative down in the southern part (p. 121-122)

Where did Bobby’s mom purchase the blanket from?
Sears (pg. 165)

Where was Shelia when Bobby contacted her?
Miami, FL (pg. 194)

Where does Bobby let Alicia know that their theory worked and he is no longer visible?
At her home (pg. 241)