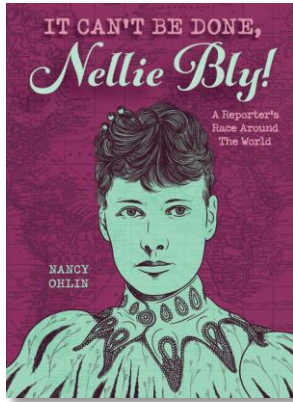




PEACHTREE

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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## It Can't Be Done, Nellie Bly!

Written by Nancy Ohlin

### ABOUT THE BOOK

Nellie Bly was a newspaper reporter for *The New York World*, but instead of writing about “ladylike” subjects like tea parties and charity balls, Nellie wrote about the social problems of her day, like poor job conditions, dilapidated housing, and dishonest politicians. If someone told her “It can’t be done, Nellie Bly,” she went right ahead and did it anyway. But when Nellie read Jules Verne’s novel, *Around the World in Eighty Days*, she was inspired to circle the globe even faster herself. Did the plucky young reporter go too far?

Young readers will cheer for Nellie as she embarks on her 22,000-mile trip equipped only with one sturdy travel dress, a small satchel, and a pet monkey she picks up in Singapore as her traveling companion. Traveling by ship, train, and foot, she has all kinds of incredible experiences—from surviving a monsoon at sea to visiting a leper colony in China.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Compare Nellie Bly’s world to today. In what ways have things changed? In what ways are they similar?
2. Can you think of any present-day examples of someone trying to accomplish a feat like Nellie Bly?
3. What are some challenges of preparing for a three-month trip around the world today? How might these challenges have been different in Nellie Bly’s time?
4. Nellie’s suitcase is just 7 inches by 13 inches. How much could you fit into a bag that size? What would you pack if you only had that much space?
5. What are some circumstances that could have affected the success of Nellie’s trip?
6. What are some assumptions people made about Nellie during her trip? Do you think people would still make these assumptions today?
7. *The New York World* planned to cover Nellie Bly’s experiences during her trip but did not always have consistent cablegrams from Nellie to publish. What solutions would you have devised in order to regularly cover Nellie Bly’s trip without regular reports from Nellie herself?
8. What do you think was the most exciting part of Nellie’s trip? The scariest?
9. Have you had any travel experiences similar to Nellie’s?
10. If you had to plan a trip around the world, where you would go? What sorts of sights or activities would you like to see or do?
11. What do you think are the most important qualities and skills for a traveling reporter?
12. Do you think it would be easier to travel around the world in 80 days today? Are there any ways traveling around the world in 80 days would be harder today?