



Fred Bowen is the author of Peachtree's popular *Fred Bowen Sports Story* and *All-Star Sports Story* series. A lifelong sports fanatic, he has coached youth league baseball, basketball, and soccer. His kids' sports column "The Score" appears each week in the KidsPost section of the *Washington Post*. Bowen lives in Maryland.

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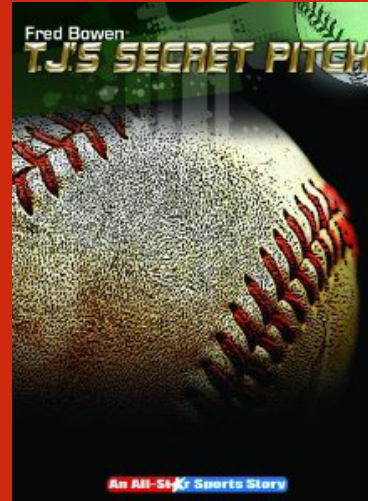
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Peachtree Pointers for T.J.'s Secret Pitch was prepared by
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Discussion Guide



Accelerated Reader & Reading Counts Tests:
Reading Counts Test #: Q17653
Reading Counts Level: 3.4
AR Quiz#: 17597
AR Reading Level: 4.3

T.J. is smaller than his teammates and his pitches just don't have the power to get the batters out. When he learns about 1940s player Rip Sewell, he may have found a solution. But will his teammates give him a chance to prove that he can be a pitcher? And will T.J.'s secret pitch help lead his team to victory?

"Bowen...skillfully interweaves fact and fiction and uses historical sports plays and concepts as a backdrop for the story."

—School Library Journal

Questions

Chapter 1-3:

What is T.J.'s goal and how has he prepared to reach it? Was it enough?

Why do others think that T.J. cannot be a pitcher?

How successful was T.J. at pitching when his coach gave him his first chance?

Was his coach, friends, and teammates supportive of his efforts?

What would you do if you really wanted to do something?

How does T.J. feel at the end of the first chapter? Have you ever felt the same way?

What happened that made T.J. feel differently by the end of Chapter 3?

Chapter 4-5:

What did T.J. discover and do you think it will allow him to pitch by season's end?

What gave T.J. confidence to try his secret pitch on his team players (during a real game)?

Does he get a chance early in the season to pitch in a game? Why or why not?

Chapter 6-7:

What did Coach Upton do in the last inning and why? Was it fair to T.J.?

What is T.J.'s secret pitch? Does the pitch work? If you play baseball, do you think this pitch could work for you?

Who is Rip Sewell?

What does "eephus pitch" mean?

What book did T.J. and Grandpa use to look up info about Truett Banks Sewell aka "Rip" Sewell?

Reading a chart: (page 48)

Where was Sewell born?

How many hits did Sewell get in 1939 Pittsburgh?

How long did Sewell play professional baseball?

Did he have more wins or losses?

What year did he play the most games?

Why is there a space of time between playing his first and second year of professional baseball?

Chapter 8-9:

Did the coach like the way T.J. pitched at first and what changed his mind?

Did the team support the coach having T.J. pitch the last game? Why or why not?

How does T.J. feel the night and morning before the big game? Have you ever felt this way? If so, when and what was going on?

Chapter 10-12

Does T.J.'s pitch work?

What did T.J. do to get a final strike and win the game?

How did T.J. feel about being championship pitcher and winning the game? How did he feel about his secret pitch?

Chapter: The Real Story

What lesson did Sewell learn during his baseball career?