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PEACHTREE
DISCUSSION GUIDE

Speed Demon

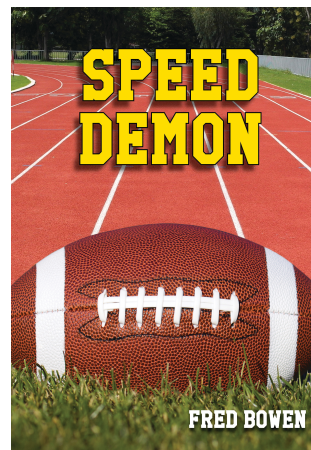
Written by Fred Bowen

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Ages 7–12 | Realistic Fiction
Fred Bowen Sports Story Series
Lexile • F&P • GRL R; Gr 4



**WRITING PROMPTS &
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**
aligned with Common Core Reading Standards

Use details from the text to support ALL of your responses.

CHAPTERS 1–3

How is Tim’s new school different from his old school? What are some of the challenges Tim is facing at the new school? What is Coach Hawkins like? How can you tell? How does Tim’s father feel about football? How is that different from how his mother felt about the game when she was alive?

CHAPTERS 4–6

How does Tim feel about football at the beginning of practice in Chapter 4? How do those feelings change over the course of the practice and the first game in Chapter 6? Use three words to describe Cody. How does Tim feel about Cody inviting him to the varsity football game? Why is the invitation important to Tim?

CHAPTERS 7–9

What are some of Tim’s reactions to the Hilton Prep varsity football game? How are his reactions different from those of Cody and his other teammates? Describe Tim’s relationships with Marquis and Sophia. How do Marquis and Sophia feel about football at Hilton Prep? What does the race tell you about Tim, Marquis, and Sophia?

ABOUT THE SERIES

Fred Bowen’s fast-paced middle-grade stories offer readers themes of competition, cooperation, facing change, gender roles, overcoming challenges, and new experiences. In addition, they feature play-by-play action, snappy dialogue, and engaging plots. Bowen’s books are not the usual sports-fiction fare; each book loops in a little sports history and includes back matter with fascinating glimpses into that history and the heroes who made it happen.

ABOUT THE BOOK

Tim Beeman is the “new kid” at Hilton Prep. During his first week at school he sets a record for ninth graders in the 50-yard dash. Now Tim is feeling pressure to play football from the football coach and some Hilton students. Tim is tempted to play because football is a big deal at Hilton. Still, he is not completely sold on the sport. His mother, who died three years ago, was against him playing. Also, Tim is not sure he will like getting hit. What will he do?

THEMES

Family | Teammates | Friends | Peer pressure
Fear | Decision-making | New environments
Independence

CHAPTERS 10–12

Tim backs away from trying to make a crucial catch in the King Academy game. How does Tim feel about his failure to go after the ball? Compare and contrast those feelings to how Cody feels about the play. Cody says, “Real football players take the hits.” What does he mean by this?

CHAPTERS 13–15

The weather is changing as the football season progresses. What effect do these changes have on Tim’s attitude toward the game? Tim takes some hits during the Franklin game. Describe Tim’s reaction to these hits. Compare and contrast them to the reactions of Cody and the Hilton players and coaches.

CHAPTERS 16–18

Describe how Tim’s feelings toward playing football have changed during the course of the book. What are some of the events that have caused his feelings to change? Tim’s father and Cody keep mentioning how talented Tim is at football. Does this make Tim’s decision easier or harder? Compare and contrast Tim’s football and track friends. How are they the same? How are they different?

OVERALL QUESTION

In just a few words, write down what this story is about (the overall theme or big idea). Explain your answer.

“THE REAL STORY” FOLLOW-UP QUESTION

“Bullet” Bob Hayes, Darrell Green, Deion Sanders, and the other players named in “The Real Story” were more than players who could run fast. They were “real football players.” How can you tell they were “real football players?”

REVIEWS

“The books in the Fred Bowen Sports Story series are fast-paced, and at just over 100 pages, they’re perfect for reluctant readers.... Young readers will devour these stories, along with their painless lessons, and still have time to join their friends for games.”

—*School Library Journal*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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

www.fredbowen.com

Available in the Fred Bowen Sports Story series

BASEBALL:

Dugout Rivals
The Golden Glove
The Kid Coach
Lucky Enough
Perfect Game
Playoff Dreams
Throwing Heat
T.J.’s Secret Pitch
Winners Take All

BASKETBALL:

The Final Cut
Full Court Fever
Hardcourt Comeback
Off the Rim
On the Line
Outside Shot
Real Hoops

SOCCER:

Go for the Goal!
Out of Bounds
Soccer Team Upset

FOOTBALL:

Double Reverse
Quarterback Season
Speed Demon
Touchdown Trouble

Discussion Guide prepared by Peggy Jackson

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