


PEACHTREE
DISCUSSION GUIDE
Includes Common Core Standards Correlations

Dugout Rivals

Written by Fred Bowen

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Also available in e-book

Ages 7–12 | Realistic Fiction
AR • RC • Lexile • F&P • GRL Q; Gr 4



WRITING PROMPTS & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

aligned with Common Core Reading Standards

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

Jake is pumped about the upcoming season. There’s a new kid on the team who is amazing. His name is Adam and he can do it all—pitch, hit, and field. But then Adam’s talents start to dominate every game and Jake resents all the attention he’s getting. Everything changes, however, when Jake learns something about Adam and something about himself.

THEMES

Friendship | Jealousy | Empathy | Divorce
Teamwork | Sports | Baseball
Learning that everyone cannot be the “star”

DIRECTIONS

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

CHAPTERS 1–3

Chapter 1 ends with Jake thinking this is going to be *his* year. What does he mean by that? At the end of chapter 3, Jake is worried and thinks, “Maybe this isn’t going to be my year after all.” What happened? Why did Jake’s mood change?

CHAPTERS 4–6

Adam seems like a nice guy. He’s helpful and encourages his teammates. But describe Adam from Jake’s point of view. How has Jake’s point of view changed since the beginning of the story?

CHAPTERS 7–9

At the end of chapter 9, Adam’s mom invites Jake to spend the night. Reread that scene. Explain the sentence: “Jake stood in the middle of everyone, feeling as if he were invisible.”

CHAPTERS 10–12

How does the setting in chapter 10—the sleepover at Adam’s house—show a different side of Adam? How does the sleepover affect the way Jake thinks about Adam?

CHAPTERS 13–16

At the beginning of the story, Jake wants to be the star of the team and he is frustrated that Adam is getting so much attention. By the end of the story, Jake feels very differently. He doesn't need to be the star; he is happy to be an important teammate. Why did he change?

OVERALL QUESTION

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

“THE REAL STORY” FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

How does the information in “The Real Story” relate to the theme or the plot of the book?

REVIEWS

“...Bowen’s stories move along briskly with rapid-fire action sequences and end with surprising twists.”

—*School Library Journal*

“...Perfect for reluctant readers, or those making the jump into chapter books... Young readers will devour these stories, along with their painless lessons, and still have time to join their friends for games.”

—*SLJ online, Curriculum Connections*

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

FOOTBALL:

Double Reverse
Quarterback Season
Speed Demon
Touchdown Trouble

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



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Discussion Guide prepared by Peggy Jackson

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