

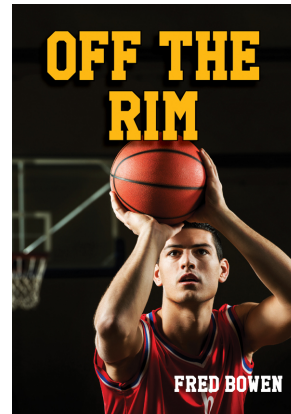
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PEACHTREE
DISCUSSION GUIDE

Off the Rim

Written by Fred Bowen

PB: 978-1-56145-509-6
Also available in e-book

Ages 7–12 | Realistic Fiction
Fred Bowen Sports Stories Series
AR • AC • Lexile • F&P • GRL Q; Gr 4



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

Chris needs help with his basketball game. He's spending too much time on the bench. He turns to his friend Greta—the star forward on the girls' team—for some shooting lessons. But even her expert tips can't make Chris's shots go in. Then he gets some interesting advice from a very unlikely source. But can that advice work for Chris?

THEMES

Practice | Hard work | Sacrifice | Basketball history
Teaching/learning new skills | Helping the group

WRITING PROMPTS & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

aligned with **Common Core Reading Standards**

DIRECTIONS

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

CHAPTERS 1–3

Who is a better basketball player, Greta or Chris? How do you know? What does the chart in chapter 3 tell you about Chris as a shooter? Who is the best shooter on the team according to the chart? Who is the second best shooter? Compare Jason's attitude about basketball to Chris's attitude about basketball.

CHAPTERS 4–6

How does Chris feel about being stuck on the Eagles' bench? How does Jason feel? How are their feelings different? How does the author make sure you understand that Greta is a great player? List some of her basketball skills. How does Greta feel about teaching Chris to shoot? How can you tell?

CHAPTERS 7–9

Compare and contrast Greta's mom (Mimi) in chapter 7 to Chris's mom in chapter 2. What are some of the differences between girls 6-on-6 basketball as played in Iowa and the game boys play? How can you tell what Greta thinks about her mom's basketball career? What are Mimi's instructions about playing defense?

CHAPTERS 10–12

What does the race in chapter 10 tell you about Chris and Greta’s personalities? How is Chris changing? How can you tell that Coach Anderson is beginning to notice Chris? Why is he beginning to notice him? How does the game in chapter 12 emphasize the importance of defense?

CHAPTERS 13–15

Compare Chris’s sister Anna’s role on her volleyball team to Chris’s role on his basketball team. Do you think Chris and Anna like each other? What makes you think they do or don’t? How does Chris feel after the game against the Wildcats? How has the relationship between Chris and Greta changed since the beginning of the book?

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 QUESTION

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

REVIEWS

“Bowen is quickly joining the ranks of today’s most popular sports-fiction authors...he skillfully interweaves fact and fiction and uses historical sports plays and concepts as a backdrop for the story.”

—*School Library Journal*

“Bowen is a natural when it comes to writing sports stories and informing his readers about the past. These books are perfect for kids ages 8 to 12.”

—*Newsday*

“[Bowen’s] pace is excellent and he has a knack for efficient evocation...”

—*Washington Post*

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



PEACHTREE

Discussion Guide prepared by Peggy Jackson

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