



PEACHTREE

DISCUSSION GUIDE

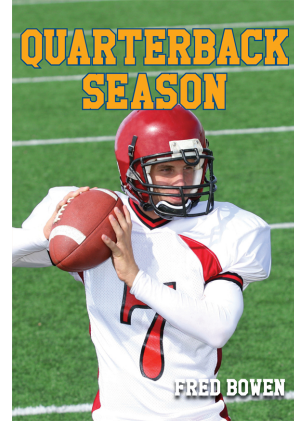
Includes Common Core Standards Correlations

Quarterback Season

Written by Fred Bowen

PB: 978-1-56145-594-2
Also available in e-book

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

Matt wants to be the starting quarterback on his team, but he’s got some serious competition from the annoying but talented Devro Beech. To make matters worse, his English teacher is on his case about a new class assignment: he has to keep a journal. He doesn’t know what to write about. Then his teacher says, “Keep a diary about playing on the football team.” So he does. And as he writes, he starts paying closer attention to what’s happening on and off the field. And he discovers that not everything is what it seems to be...not even Devro.

THEMES

Jealousy | Determination | Friendship
Sports | Football

Instant Replay by Jerry Kramer | Pleasures of writing
How writing helps you to focus for deeper understanding

DIRECTIONS

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

Note: The story is told in diary form and is organized by week rather than by chapter.

WEEK 1

Write down how many grammar and spelling errors you can find in Matt’s first week of journal entries. What is Ms. Ignacio’s reaction to Matt’s entries?

WEEK 2

Matt is confident that he will be picked to be the starting quarterback and he says he’s not worried about Devro. Why does Ms. Ignacio think that Matt probably isn’t being completely honest about his feelings?

WEEK 3

Compare Matt’s journal entries in Week 1 with this week. What makes this week’s entries so much better?

WEEK 4

Matt only has to write three entries a week for homework. Why does he write an extra entry this week?

WEEK 5

Matt's teacher always includes a quote at the end of her e-mails and the quotes usually relate to Matt's journal entries. This week the quote is: "Ever tried? Ever failed? No matter. Try again. Fail better." Why does Ms. Ig choose that quote? What does it mean to "Fail better"?

WEEK 6

Why is Matt so upset that he lost his playbook?

WEEK 7

When Colby says that he saw Devro with Matt's playbook, Matt assumes that Devro stole it. Why is Matt so quick to think something bad about Devro?

WEEK 8

Do you think Matt would rather win a big game with Devro as quarterback or lose a big game with Devro as quarterback? Remember to back up your opinion with details from the text.

WEEK 9

Matt is tricked twice by Ms. Roberts and then remembers that Ms. Ig says, "You've got to keep your eyes open. Things aren't always what they seem." How does that thought apply to the way Matt thinks about Devro?

WEEK 10

This story is told from Matt's point of view. How would it be different if it were told from Devro's point of view? What would Devro think about Matt?

WEEK 11

Compare Matt's feelings about Devro at the beginning of the story with the way he feels about Devro now? Did Devro change or did Matt just change the way he felt about him? Explain.

WEEK 12

Once Matt started reading *Instant Replay*, he couldn't stop. What made it so interesting to Matt?

WEEK 13

How did writing a journal help Matt better understand his feelings and thoughts about his football season?

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

"...another absorbing sports tale from the prolific and dependable Bowen...The author expertly balances the subplots and football action."

—*Booklist*

"Finally, a well-written sports story for boys! ...Boys will get excited about sports, writing, and sports history in this well done story...This book would work well for a reluctant reader."

—**Integrity Books for Boys blog**

"...I want to process this immediately and give it to one of my readers who will ONLY read short sports books.

I think it would be an excellent way for him to improve his own writing. I love how the writing changes and is modeled for students."

—**Ms Yingling Reads blog**

AWARDS

- Kansas State Reading Circle Recommended Reading List (intermediate) —Kansas National Education Association
- Children's Choices —International Reading Association / Children's Book Council
- Young Adult Top Forty —Pennsylvania School Librarians Association
- Louisiana Young Readers' Choice Award (nominee, grades 6–8) —State Library of Louisiana and Louisiana Center for the Book
- Virginia Readers' Choice (Master List) —Virginia State Reading Association
- Maud Hart Lovelace Award (nominee, grades 3–5) —Minnesota Youth Reading Awards

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
Luck 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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