

FINAL SEASON TEACHER GUIDE



Dear Teachers, Librarians, Parents and Readers,

Final Season is a powerful story for students to read and experience. This book is filled with themes and lessons that transfer to many experiences in life. This Teacher Guide was developed to help you assist students in making real world connections and make content discoveries. This guide has two different components: discussion questions and choice boards.

Discussion Questions

The discussion questions highlight specific chapters in the book. These questions can be used in any way you find helpful--you are the expert in your classroom. Some teachers find these questions valuable as whole-class discussion starters. Other teachers like to pair these questions with technology like Nearpod, Google Classroom or Flipgrid to elicit responses from individual students. Regardless of how you use these questions, this is a great way for students to process the themes and events of the story.

Choice Boards

Two choice boards are included in this packet. The first choice board can be used during the process of reading the book. Student-response prompts help students interact with the book. Some teachers have found it helpful when students complete a row of responses, while other teachers have asked students to blackout the choice board. The second choice board is used after the book has been completed. Students use this choice board to choose a topic and presentation format to dive deeper into issues addressed in the story.

FINAL SEASON DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



Chapters 1-12

- In Chapter 3, Ben and his friends plan to throw rotten eggs at Mrs. Wimple's house. "Mrs. Wimple was a well-known grouch who handed out detentions in the middle school lunchroom like toothbrushes at a dental convention." Do you think Ben and his friends are playing harmless pranks or hurting someone? Explain your answer.
- In Chapter 12, Ben's mom asks "How could you even think of letting him play?" when talking to Ben's dad about football. Do you think that Ben will be safe playing football? Why or why not?
- Which character in the book is your favorite so far? Use examples from the book to support your answer.
- An internal conflict is a struggle in a character's mind. Find one internal conflict from these chapters and describe how the character could resolve that internal conflict.

Chapters 13-24

- In Chapter 13, Ben's dad says he doesn't want to go to dinner with the other lacrosse parents and players because he doesn't want people looking at him and asking questions. If you could talk to Ben's dad, what advice would you give him about questions people may ask about him?
- In Chapter 21, Ben worries about his dad, "He wondered whether or not his dad would even make it through their season." Think about a time you had a problem to worry about. Think about how you felt. Choose one word that describes your feelings and share that word with your class.
- Imagine you can ask any character in the story any question you want. What question would you ask and which character would you ask?
- In Chapter 21, Thea joins the team. When Woody finds out that Thea will be on the team, he says, "Well, there goes the championship. I can only imagine what Penn Yan is gonna think when they see we've got a girl on the team." Do you agree or disagree with Woody? Why?

Chapters 25-39

- Which scene from the book has been your favorite so far? Think of how you would make this scene into a movie. Describe in detail the setting and details you would use in your movie.
- In Chapter 31, Ben's Dad falls down in the garage and that scares Ben. As Ben's brothers help his dad into the house, Ben sneaks upstairs because "He didn't want his brothers to see him cry." Think about that sentence and describe how you feel and advice you would give to Ben.
- In Chapter 39, Woody admits to doing something horrible. Think of a character in a movie or a book that reminds you of Woody. Describe the character and the similarities the two characters have.
- An external conflict is a struggle that takes place with a force outside of the character. Describe one external conflict from these chapters and describe why it is an external conflict.

Chapters 40-53

- In Chapter 43, Ben sees that Woody's hair is cut off. Woody says, "I know it's not the same, but my parents figured I should chop my own hair to kind of, you know, be with you." What inference can you make about how Woody's parents feel about his actions? Explain.
- In Chapter 45, Ben asks his dad if he will live until November. Ben's dad says, "I could get hit by a bus tomorrow. No one knows when their time is up." What inference can you make about what Ben's dad says? Explain.

- In Chapter 51, when Raymond asks if Thea is tired, Thea says, "Fatigue is a state of mind, Coach." Make a list of 3 things Thea has done so far in the book that prove she is a strong player.
- In Chapter 53, Ben is watching his dad do the 60 Minutes interview. "Ben suddenly realized that his dad's tears weren't from sadness or despair or self-pity. The tears streaming down his cheeks were tears of joy." What is your reaction to this piece of the story?

Chapters 54-70

- In Chapter 55, Ben's brother Rich is a tough coach. Ben's dad has the opposite approach by saying, "What matters is this. We have five and a half games left together and I want you to enjoy every minute." How are Rich's and Ben's dad's points of view different? How does it impact the way they treat Ben?
- In Chapter 59, Ben's Dad is in the hospital and he agrees to have a breathing tube put in. Jessica says, "No one told him. . . that he'll probably never talk again." What is your reaction to this? How did it make you feel? Explain.
- Ben asks Thea to a dance in Chapter 65. Thea says that her brothers can drive them and then she says, "I wouldn't be surprised if they both end up taking us. Then you'll see some fireworks. Whew." What inference can you make about these lines?
- In Chapter 67, Ben considers telling Thea that he can't go to the dance because he wants to spend time with his dad. Think of a time when you thought about telling someone a half-truth. How did you deal with that situation?

Chapters 71-88

- In Chapter 74, Ben knows that his team is facing a fierce competitor. “In his bones, Ben knew he needed to lead his team to a score on the next series, or they could kiss their championship goodbye.” What actions does Ben take throughout the story that make him a good leader?
- In Chapter 77, Ben’s Dad joins the team at the game. Think of the points of view of different characters. How did Ben feel about his dad being there? How did Rich and Raymond feel? How did Ben’s mom feel?
- In Chapter 78, the author uses a simile, “Thea grinned like a wolverine bearing down on its prey.” Think of another character in the story and write a simile using that character.
- What is your reaction to the Four Brothers meeting in the end zone after the game? How did it make you feel? Did it remind you of any other book or movie?

FINAL SEASON CHOICE BOARD



DURING
READING

Choose a character from the story and write a letter to that character. Give the character advice about what he or she should do about any critical event in the story..

Choose a character in the book and write a social media post from this character. Make this complete with pictures and hashtags.

Make a playlist of songs for the events in the book. Your playlist should include 5 songs and each song should have an explanation of why you included it.

Draw a picture representing one of the conflicts in the book. Be sure to add a caption to your picture.

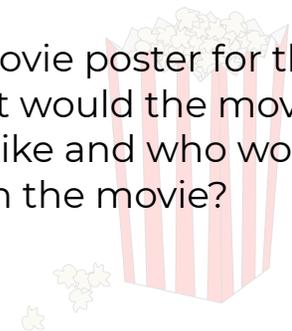
Create an acrostic poem using the title FINAL SEASON.

Choose two characters in the book who may text each other. Imagine what this text conversation would look like and write it down.

Diagram your own football play and describe why this play would be successful.

Think of another book you have read that reminds you of Final Season. Make a list of 5 things these books have in common.

Design a movie poster for this book. What would the movie poster look like and who would star in the movie?



FINAL SEASON CHOICE BOARD



RESEARCH
PROJECT

Choose a Research Topic

Research the impacts of injuries in football and head trauma. Is this sport too dangerous for youth to play?

Should girls be allowed to play football? Research the history of girls playing this sport.

Research any powerful team from history or the present. What makes this team great? What can we learn from this team?

How can bullying be stopped in school and on sports teams? Research solutions to stop bullying.

Research the disease ALS. Find the causes, the conditions and the search for a cure.

Choose a person in history who has stood up for others. Research that person and the impact they have made on the world.

Choose a Presentation Format

