

DEEP ZONE

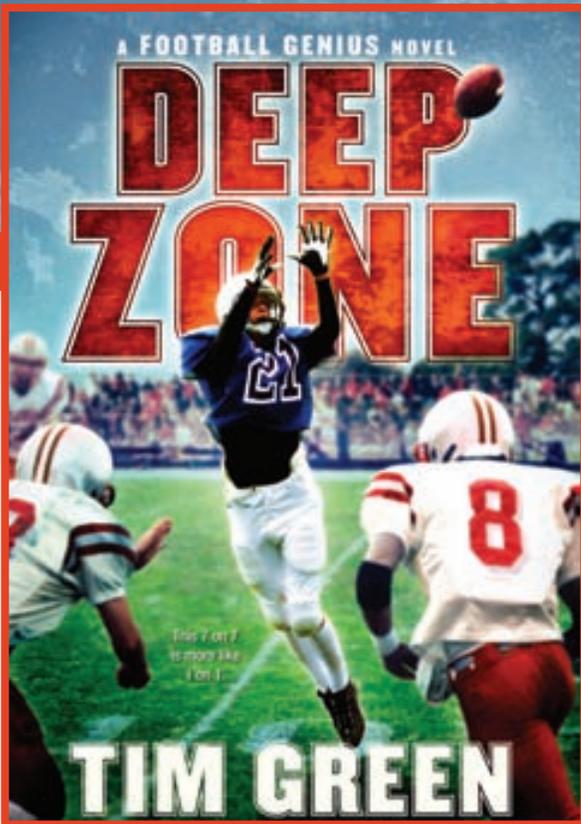
DISCUSSION GUIDE

ABOUT THE BOOK

Troy White can predict a football play before it happens. Star quarterback on his state football team, Troy's a natural for the 7-on-7 tournament that's being held at the Super Bowl in Miami. With any luck, his "Football Genius" will also be working for the Atlanta Falcons on that big day!

Ty Lewis is a wide receiver with exceptional speed. His brother Thane, who plays for the New York Jets, urges Ty to get on a 7-on-7 team, saying his running prowess will make him a winner.

From the moment the two football champs cross paths, Troy and Ty begin to size each other up. Troy is suspicious of Ty's interest in his friend Tate, while Ty worries his speed will never be a match for Troy's game smarts. But when the two rivals find themselves tangled in the same dangerous web of deceit, they discover that they have more in common than their love of football—and that their pasts are more entwined than either could ever have imagined.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

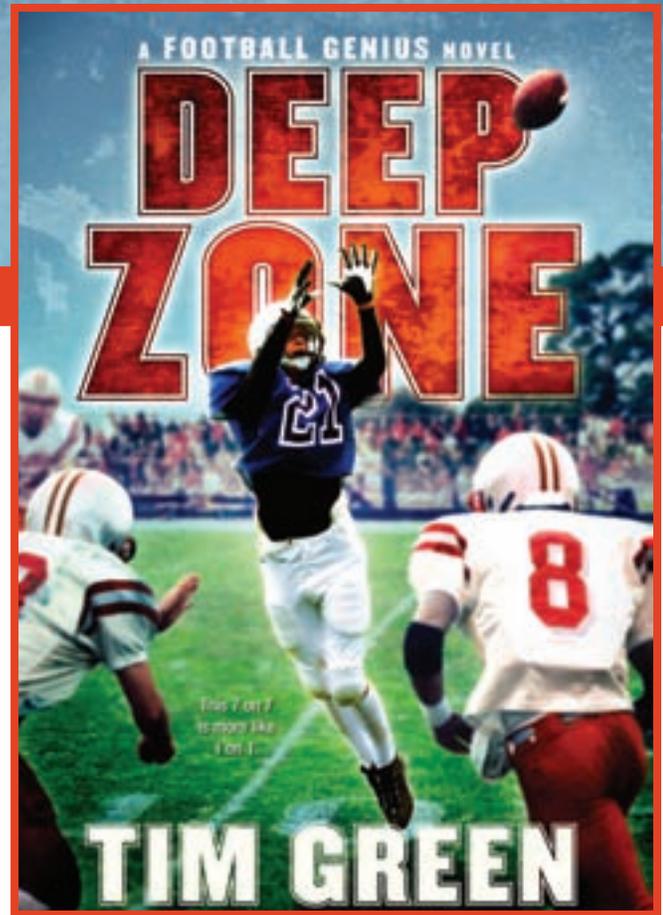
1. What do you think allowed Ty to make the 7-on-7 team? Was it luck, or skill, or something else entirely? Did his mentors play a large role in helping him make the team? Has there ever been a time in your life when, in addition to luck and/or skill, you have needed to dig deep and find that special "something else" in you to help you achieve a goal? Who has helped you reach your goals?
2. Uncle Gus shows up at Thane and Ty's home unexpectedly, putting the guys in danger and asking for a favor. Do Uncle Gus's actions show any concern for the safety of his nephews? How does he get Thane to agree to do him the favor? How would you respond if you were in Thane's position, and why?
3. Ty makes the winning catch that enables the Raptors to travel to Miami for the 7-on-7 Championship. He seems to be the MVP on his team, yet for the team picture he sits in the back, almost out of sight of the camera. What does this action say about Ty's character? Do you think Ty is a good teammate? Would you want him on your team? What kind of team player are you—a leader? An attention getter? A quiet MVP?
4. Thane says to Ty at the Falcons Players' Party, "People who judge you by what you wear or how good you look aren't worth knowing anyway" (p. 121). Do you agree with this statement? Can you think of a time in your own life when you found these words to be true or false?
5. At the Falcons Players' Party, Ty has an embarrassing accident. Do you think it was really an accident? Why or why not? Why do you think no one, especially Thane, believes Ty when he insists it was an accident? Have you ever had a similarly embarrassing experience? How did you feel and what did you do afterward?
6. Coach Bavaro employs many strategies to help his team win on the football field, some of which come from his experience as a player. Ty and David Bavaro use some of the strategies to win during the 7-on-7 tournament, but sometimes they ignore the coach's direction and follow their instincts. Have you ever been in a situation where you had to decide whether to follow your instincts or to follow the advice and experience of someone else? What did you do? How did you reach your decision?
7. Facebook is used by everyone for many different reasons. Research the origin of Facebook: Who was it developed by? Who and what was it developed for? In the story, Ty uses Facebook to reach out to his cousin, Charlotte. Do you think this is a good use of Facebook? Why or why not? How do you use Facebook? Do you think that your use of Facebook reflects the developer's intent?
8. There are three novels referenced in *Deep Zone*: *Charlotte's Web*, by E. B. White; *Crispin*, by Avi; and *The Giver*, by Lois Lowry. What book would you recommend to Troy, Ty, and Thane? Why?

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EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- 1. Man Eaters.** There is much more to the Everglades National Park than the alligators, pythons, and spider crabs that Thane, Ty, and Tate experience. Have students research the park and collect facts, stories, and photographs, and commission them to create travel brochures highlighting what they've found.
- 2. Make Your Escape.** Hold a classroom meeting and appoint all of your students Family Safety Monitors of their respective homes. Assign each student the task of holding a family meeting and developing an escape plan at home. Be sure each student's plan includes a map marked with the escape route (and an alternate route) and a meeting place for everyone in the household away from the danger. Students should make a packet for each room of the house or apartment. They can also conduct a drill at home, the same way schools have fire drills.
- 3. Blab the Book.** Break your students into teams and ask each team to create an audio or video book trailer "blabbing" *Deep Zone*. Teams can use any equipment they may already have (cameras, phones, etc.), but you should make sure to provide internet access and a basic videoediting program for those that may not have access at home. Have a screening party and share all of the trailers with the class!



- 4. Two Voices.** Have students explore the character relationships in *Deep Zone* using poems for two voices. Ask the class to partner up and have each set of partners choose two opposing characters and two friendly characters from the story. Each set of partners should collaboratively write two poems for two voices—one for the friendly pair and one for the opposing pair. Pairs can read their poems aloud to the class. [Note: See Paul Fleischman's *Joyful Noise: Poems for Two Voices* (HarperCollins, 2005) for examples of this type of poem.]

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



After graduating coaledictorian from Syracuse University, **Tim Green** was a first-round NFL draft pick and played for eight years as a star linebacker for the Atlanta Falcons. Tim also earned his law degree with honors and has worked as an NFL analyst for FOX Sports and an NFL commentator for NPR, among other broadcast experiences.

Tim Green is the *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Dark Side of the Game* and adult suspense novels such as *Exact Revenge* and *American Outrage*, along with several books for young readers including *Football Genius*, *Football Champ*, *Football Hero*, and *The Big Time*. He lives with his wife, Illyssa, and their five children in upstate New York.

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