



## **Rock Star**

Adrian Chamberlain

Reading level: 3.0

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AR Quiz # 136629

### **Book Summary**

Duncan's life changes dramatically when he joins Primal Thunk, a rock band at his high school. Viewed as a nerd and certainly not very popular or experienced, Duncan doesn't know how to handle challenges of the new situations he faces complete with girls, parties and alcohol. He mistreats his old friends, and his "new" friends aren't his friends at all. But Duncan does meet Houston, a reclusive musician that teaches him how to play a new instrument, while enlightening Duncan to who he is as a person. The new, improved Duncan emerges with plans to set the world on fire.

### **Prereading Idea**

High school bands represent every teenager's dream of fame and success, but how many of them really make the big time? Ask students to research famous bands and find one or more of them who started as a high school band. When the students locate one, have them answer the following questions: How many of the original members from high school were still in the band when it went big time? Did the band members write their own songs and music? How did the band get their big break? Have students present their findings to the class.

**Connecting to the World—Writing and Research Ideas**

- Duncan makes several references to the school lunchroom. At the beginning of chapter 2, he talks about the cliques in his school who all sit together, and later, he refers to the noise level and lighting. Ask students to observe the lunchroom at their school and to write down a list of words and phrases that describe what they see, hear, feel, smell and touch. Then ask students to find a partner and write a poem with the words and phrases they have written down. Students can share their poems with the class and then display them on the walls in the lunchroom.
- Duncan learns and grows as a result of his friendship with Houston, the reclusive organist from the Rhythm Kings. Ask students to select a partner with whom to work and to investigate other reclusive musicians. Students should find out why the musicians left the music world, what they currently do with their time, and possible future musical plans—if any. Students can present their findings to the class in a creative format using interactive online tools.

**Connecting to the Text—Elements of the Novel*****Setting***

Setting is the time and place of action in a story. Ask students to think about the setting of *Rock Star* and to brainstorm a list of facts about the setting. After the list is complete, ask students to identify which aspects of the setting are crucial to the story. For example, is it crucial that the story occurs in a high school with teenage characters? For each item on the list, ask students to determine if that element of setting is crucial and to explain why. As students share their responses, ask the class to corroborate their reasoning. Then have students create a visual collage of the crucial elements of the setting. Post the collages in the classroom.

***Conflict***

Conflict is what makes the story interesting and entertaining to read. In *Rock Star*, Duncan deals with both internal and external conflicts and his reaction to the conflicts are what moves the story forward. Ask students to make a list of both his internal and external conflicts and to indicate how Duncan resolved each of them. Working in small groups, have students write a skit depicting one of the conflicts Duncan faces. Students may incorporate drama, exaggeration, humor, sarcasm or other elements to highlight the conflicts. Have students perform their skits for the class.

### *Characters*

A character can be classified as static, one who does not change much, or dynamic, one who changes as a result of the story's events. List the major characters in *Rock Star* and ask students to identify them as either static or dynamic. Students need to compare the character in the beginning of the story to the same character at the end of the story and ask themselves, "Has the character changed and, if so, how did they change?" Divide students into groups and assign each group a character. Have students visually portray this character as dynamic or static utilizing a series of cartoon panels to emphasize how the character changes or remains the same. Display the cartoons around the room.

### **Connecting to the Students—Discussion Questions**

1. Why is it that students who have similar likes and dislikes hang out together and form cliques? Why is it so uncommon for a student to cross the boundary from one clique to another?
2. Duncan's dad says Duncan has an overactive imagination. Would you agree or disagree with Duncan's father? Support your answer with evidence from the book.
3. Even though he feels okay about himself, sometimes Duncan wonders if people think he is a freak. How do other characters in the book perceive Duncan?
4. In chapter 2, Duncan describes his clothes, and, as readers, you know his interests. How would you characterize Duncan? Would he be someone you would want for a friend? Why or why not?
5. Why does Duncan want to dislike his father's girlfriend, Terry? What does she do to win him over?
6. When Duncan is with the guys from Primal Thunk, why does he ignore Jason and his mom? How does it make Duncan feel? What does Duncan do to make it up to Jason?
7. Duncan hates to be judged or criticized, so why is he so quick to criticize and judge others?
8. Duncan handles himself at the party in all the wrong ways. What consequences does he suffer as a result of his actions?

### **Author Biography**

**Adrian Chamberlain** is an award-winning column writer for the *Victoria Times Colonist*, and he has also written for the *Winnipeg Free Press*. He plays keyboards for a rhythm and blues band, The Soul Shakers. This is Adrian's first novel for the Orca Soundings series.