



Battle of the Bands

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Reading level: 2.9

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AR Quiz # 110007

Book Summary

Determined to make it big with their band, the Lunar Ticks, Jay, Kel and Cia practice and strive to be the best they can be. But to win an area competition against another top band, Indigo Daze, Jay needs to write an original song for the band. Finding himself falling for Rowan, the lead guitarist and singer for Indigo Daze, Jay becomes more motivated to write a song. But Jay is the prime suspect when foul play intervenes and Rowan's guitar is smashed the night before the competition.

Prereading Idea

Competitions known as “battle of the bands” became a pop culture favorite in the 1960s. Ask students to investigate the origins and history of “battle of the bands” competition and to bring to class any information they discover about a particular battle.

Connecting to the World—Writing and Research Ideas

- A lot of famous bands have started in garages with teens practicing and hoping to become successful. Ask students to select a band to research how the band began, writing a brief history of the band from its beginning to its current place in time. Ask students to supplement their report with photos, drawings, magazine articles and other band memorabilia. Students can then present what they have learned to the class.
- Song lyrics are much like poetry. Ask students to write a song/poem about an event in their lives or in the life of someone close to them that could be put to music. The poem should express emotion and, like most songs, should include a repeating line or lines for the chorus. Have students put their songs to music or illustrate them with drawings. The final song should be shared with the class or displayed on the wall.

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

The author uses imagery to paint pictures in the reader's mind of the places, the characters and the sound of the music. The first paragraph is a perfect example of one of the pictures the author paints with words. The author's similes add to imagery. For example, "slipping away like water through fingers," (ch. 5). With a partner, ask students to locate a section of the book with particularly strong imagery. Have students create a collage of images and words by illustrating the scene and adding quotations from the text that "paint the picture." Display the collages around the room.

Conflict

As leader of the band, Jay feels responsible for the band's success. However, his personal life seems to conflict with his desire to be successful. Ask students to think about their own individual personality traits. Have them identify one trait that might interfere with their success in life. Have the students write why that trait could keep them from being successful, but also how they could use that trait to achieve success. Have students share their papers in small group roundtable discussions.

Theme

The theme is the main idea of the story; it is not the subject of the work, but, instead, is an insight about life or human nature. Based on this definition of theme, ask students to write a one-sentence theme and to find a famous quote that exemplifies the theme. Have students write their quote on a sentence strip and display the strips on the walls of the classroom.

www.bartleby.com

www.brainyquote.com

Connecting to the Students—Discussion Questions

1. Jay has learned a valuable lesson about getting along with his parents. What does he do to keep his parents happy? How have they taught him such a simple, but important, lesson?
2. Why is Kel's girlfriend, Amy, a detriment to the band's success? What event finally allows Kel to see Amy for who she is? Why don't Cia and Jay tell Kel what they think about Amy? What does this say about the friendship between the band members?
3. Jay uses his lack of life experience as an excuse for not writing an original song. What is the truth behind his inability to write? What happens that allows him to finally write "Spying on the World"?
4. Jay is adept at hiding his feelings from people, especially those close to him. What motivates him to be so secretive with how he feels? Why is he so open with Rowan? How does his desire to know her better allow him to be more open with others?
5. After Rowan's guitar is smashed the night before the competition, why is Jay the number one suspect? Why do Cia and Kel think he is guilty? What is Jay's reaction to the accusation?
6. Rowan tells Jay that he goes below the surface. "That's where the important stuff in life happens," (ch. 13). What does Rowan mean? In what other areas does Jay go below the surface? What happens to allow Rowan to go below the surface?

Writer's Craft

Vocabulary Enrichment

Ask students to define the following words on a 3 x 5 note card. Then in small groups have students prepare a demonstration for each of the words. Have the small groups present their demonstrations and allow the class to guess their words.

Scowls
Scruffy
Fluke

Saunters
Smirking

Reprieve
Scoffs

Author Biography

K.L. Denman lives with her family in a small grove of cedar and grand fir trees in British Columbia. The challenge of writing brings great joy to her life, and her current passion is writing for young adults.