



# Junior Book Club in a Bag

## Discussion Questions

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### *Old School* by Gordon Korman

1. In the beginning of the book, what is Dexter's living situation? Where are his parents?
2. Who does Gianna describe Dexter as, "twelve years old going on eighty"? Discuss ways that Dexter's upbringing at The Pines makes it hard for him to adjust to school.
3. Dexter realizes he didn't fit in partly because it didn't *look* like he fit in. Discuss the role of T-shirts in the story. Why are clothes and fitting in important at the middle school?
4. Dexter's best friend is Leo, who is 99. What is Leo like? Describe his role in World War II. How does he treat Dexter and help him? Discuss the fact that each of them is called a "hero" in the story.
5. Describe the evolution of Dexter and Ronny's relationship. Why does Ronny attack Dexter early on, and how does Dexter respond? Why do you think Ronny is so angry?
6. Jackson says about himself, "I'm not just amazing on the sports field. I'm really smart too, if I say so myself—and I don't have to because everybody knows it". What does this tell you about him? Why is he so upset that Dexter is a better athlete? How does he try to undermine Dexter?
7. How have the residents of the Pines helped Dexter over the years? Why do they enjoy having him around? Why do they enjoy having the middle schoolers visit? Give examples of students who bond with a particular Pines resident and why they do.
8. Dexter likes the residents of The Pines, as eventually do other middle schoolers. What questions would you ask an older person about their life now and in the past, drawing from *Old School* and your own thoughts.

The above questions were taken from <https://gordonkorman.com/old-school> to enhance your discussion of the book.

# Author Biography

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Gordon Korman was born in Montreal, Canada, and grew up in the Toronto area. A 7<sup>th</sup> grade creative writing assignment resulted in his first novel *This Can't Be Happening at MacDonald Hall*. Korman's books have been translated into 32 languages and have sold over 35 copies worldwide. He currently lives outside New York City with his wife and family.

<https://gordonkorman.com/>

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