

No Cream Puffs by Karen Day

Discussion Questions:

1. What did you think about the girls at the beginning of the story trying on Plushy Pink lip gloss? Could you imagine yourself trying it on with them?
2. On page 6, Madison tells us that Gina won't play volleyball next season because Casey doesn't think it is cool. What do you think of that reason for quitting volleyball? Let's list what we would say are good reasons to quit a sport.
3. On page 7, Madison asks "what is being ladylike?" How would you answer her? I'm wondering if teachers, coaches, parents, ministers, priests, or rabbis expect girls to be ladylike today or only in the old days.
4. When Madison is considering joining the town league (page 8), a teacher says, "You'd have to figure out how to deal with the pressure." What pressure could there be?
5. On page 15, Madison's mom says that someone is a "fair weather friend." What does that mean? How would I know if I had a fair weather friend?
6. Did any part of the story make you feel sad?
7. In the middle of page 44, Madison describes how it feels to pitch well; to be a natural athlete. Could you please describe what it feels like to have a skill come naturally? What does it feel like to be an artist with a paintbrush in your fingers or a musician with an instrument or an actress delivering your lines or...?
8. On page 46 Madison threw a "cream puff" pitch. What do you think of her throwing an easy pitch for Tommy?
9. While describing her grandma (page 49) Madison lists what she considers "normal grandma kinds of things." What did you think of her list? What do you consider normal grandma kinds of things?
10. Madison is the starting pitcher on page 54 while Randy has to play third base. Madison thinks, "He wouldn't be this mad if I were a boy." Do you agree with her? Why or why not?
11. Is there a character that you really admire? If so, why?
12. Mimi says that it wasn't too long ago that girls couldn't wear pants to school. In what ways have boys and girls been treated differently in our grandparents' school years? In our parents'? Are boys and girls treated differently today?
13. Is there anything in the story that really bothers you or that you just don't understand?
14. Did the author write this book just for our enjoyment or was she trying to teach us something? If so, what is she trying to teach us?
15. On page 101, Madison asks herself why she can't tell her mom about her girlfriend problems. If she asked you, what would you say to her?
16. Did you feel sorry for anyone in the story?
17. When Madison and Tommy are talking about fixing her bike, he tells her that he is good at fixing things (page 112). She doesn't tell him that she is good at fixing things, also. Why doesn't she?

18. Please read from the last full sentence on page 142 to the end of the first paragraph on page 143. What do you think about this “inner part” of people? Does it exist? If so, how do we get to know it better?
19. Was there any place in the story where you wanted to give a character advice?
20. On pages 173-174, Tommy invited Madison to watch him skateboard. What did you think about this invitation?
21. Was there any part of the story where you thought the author made a good point? Maybe you said, Wow! or That’s right! or something like that.