***QB1***

By Mike Lupica

**Louisiana Young Readers’ Choice Nominee 2015**

**Grades 6-8**

*Submitted by Christy C. Mayfield, Student,*

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**Title**: *QB1*

**Author**: Mike Lupica

**Publisher**: Puffin Books

**Pages**: 261

**SUMMARY**

Inspired by the Manning family, *QB1* is the story of Jake Cullen, who lives in the shadow of his father and older brother. As if being a freshman in a Texas high school wasn’t hard enough already, Jake Cullen must now live up to the family name in football. The only problem is that Jake is not interested in being a football superstar. Lupica paints a brilliant picture of a young man fighting to earn the respect of his peers and his family. This coming of age tale follows Jake’s journey to inventing himself in his own way, rather than in the way everyone expects.

**AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY**

Mike Lupica, who grew up in New Hampshire, has had a successful career in the sports industry as a newspaper columnist for the *New York Daily News* and a radio and television host for ESPN. Additionally, he is a prominent sports writer and a prolific fiction author who has received numerous awards, such as The Jim Murray Award from the National Football Association.

Biographical information taken from the author’s website

[www.mikelupicabooks.com](http://www.mikelupicabooks.com)

Accessed January 27, 2015.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Author website [www.mikelupicabooks.com](http://www.mikelupicabooks.com)

**OTHER TITLES BY AUTHOR**

*Travel Team* (2004)

*Heat* (2006)

*Miracle on 49th Street* (2006)

*Summer Ball* (2007)

**RELATED TITLES**

*Perfect Season* by Tim Green

*Foul Trouble* by John Feinstein

*Perfect Game (Little League)* by Matt Christopher

*Cal Ripken, Jr.’s All-Stars Squeeze Play* by Cal Ripken Jr.

**CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS**

**Language Arts:**

* Students will write a letter to their favorite sports athlete, asking them about the possible pressures that drove them to success.
* Students will interview a student athlete about a time when they felt success in their sport. Then, students will write a narrative essay about that moment from the athlete’s perspective.

**Social Studies:**

* Students will research family birth order and submit an essay explaining how birth order might affect sibling rivalry.
* Students will investigate the extent of Southern football culture and compare its pervasiveness to that of the culture in the Northern states. They will present their findings in a Venn Diagram.

**Art:**

Students will design a “Cowboys Wall of Fame” for Stone’s Throw Restaurant, including all of the football players who are described in detail in the text.

**Math:**

Students will graph the play statistics for each of the Cullen men as a means of comparing their success rates.

**P.E.:**

* Students will research the latest regulations surrounding concussion management in athletics.
* Students will study and practice the rules and jargon of American football.

**Science:**

* Students will research the latest developments in football helmet technology and present their findings in a Power Point presentation.
* Students will research the connection between Traumatic Brain Injuries and football and present their findings in a two page research paper with at least three credible sources.

**Vocabulary:**

Caravan

Desperation

Insecure

Impersonating

Amiable

Logical

Progression

Anchoring

Consistency

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What is the significance of the title *QB1*? What is the evidence for your interpretation? Is there a true QB1 in the story? What evidence in the text supports your conclusion?
2. Is the rivalry between the Cullen brothers just a healthy sibling rivalry? What textual evidence suggests that their rivalry might be healthy or unhealthy?
3. Why is Jake’s father so angry when Jake changes his throwing style? What might this change symbolize about Jake and his role in the family legacy? What is the textual support for your interpretation?
4. How might this story have been different if Troy Cullen had not suffered several head injuries during his football career? What is the evidence for your conclusion? How did his injuries contribute to the family dynamics that Jake and Wyatt are subjected to? What is your textual evidence for this interpretation?
5. Think about the setting of this novel. How is the setting critical to the plot progression? How and why might this story be different in a different town? A different state? A different region of the country? Explain in detail how the new setting might affect the plot.

**RELATED WEBSITES**

**Literature Discussion Strategies**

<http://www.csun.edu/~krowlands/Content/Academic_Resources/Literature/Instructional%20Strategies/Short-Literature%20Discussion%20Strategies.pdf>

Strategies for incorporating and facilitating literature discussions

**Literature Circles**

<http://www.litcircles.org/Discussion/prep.html>

Strategies and resources for incorporating and facilitating literature circles

**Graffiti Wall: Discussing and Responding to Literature Using Graphics**

<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/graffiti-wall-discussing-responding-208.html>

Includes lesson plan and materials for using graphics during literature discussions

**Pinwheel Discussions: Texts in Conversations**

<https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/high-school-literature-lesson-plan>

Strategy for comparing author’s tone and purpose with other texts, including non-fiction text. This could also be used to analyze different characters through role play. Also, includes formula for text-based question writing

**Football and Head Injuries**

<http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/subjects/f/football/head_injuries/index.html>

Links to several articles dissecting the connection between football and the long-term effects of head injuries