

HOT HAND

THE GAME PLAN: About the Book

It's simple. All Billy Raynor wants to do is shoot. After all, he is one of the best shooters in the league. But with his dad as his coach, and his parents newly separated, somehow everything's become complicated. His brother Ben hardly talks anymore. His mom is always traveling on business. And his dad is always on his case about not being a team player. But when Ben's piano recital falls on the same day as the championship game, it's Billy who teaches his dad the meaning of being a team player.

OFFENSE VS. DEFENSE:

Discussion Questions

- ⑦ "Sometimes Billy felt like he'd been missing his mom even more than his dad, even though she was the parent still living in the house." Why does Billy feel this way? What events in the book help you understand his feelings?
- ⑦ Why does Billy delete the message from Ben's piano teacher that said Ben skipped practice? Did he help Ben by doing this?
- ⑦ Does having his father coach him in basketball help Billy's relationship with his father or hurt it? What evidence in the book supports this opinion?
- ⑦ Joe Raynor complains that Billy is not "involved" enough with his team and implies that Billy is a selfish player. Do you believe Billy is a selfish player? With their family, who is more "involved," Billy or his father? How could Joe benefit from some coaching from his son?
- ⑦ Billy chooses his brother's recital over his championship game. What does this do for his relationship with Ben? What does this do for his relationship with his father?

LONG SHOT

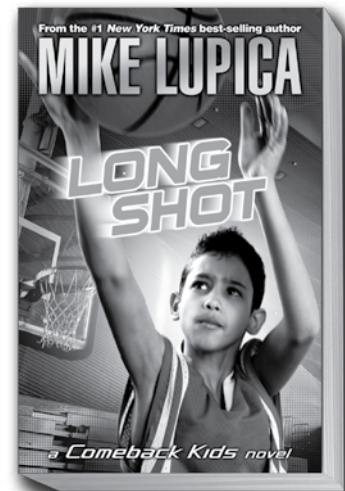
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Pedro Morales has always been content helping others look great. The ultimate point guard, he plays the game to set up his teammates—Ned, in particular, the star forward on the receiving end of Pedro's pinpoint passes. Pedro wants to make his father proud, and so he runs for class president. Yet doing so means going one-on-one against Ned, easily the most popular boy in school. And Pedro learns the hard way that being a good teammate doesn't mean that others will return the favor. Now Pedro wants to win more than ever—but this time, it's for himself.

OFFENSE VS. DEFENSE:

Discussion Questions

- ⑦ How does Ned feel about Pedro running for president? How does he express his feelings? What are some specific things he does to show Pedro how he feels?
- ⑦ Luis Morales has a strong influence on his son. How does his influence lead Pedro to run for class president? How does he help change Pedro's attitude toward basketball?
- ⑦ When Pedro and his father are together for "Soccer Saturdays," they spend a lot of time talking about their dreams. What are Luis' dreams for Pedro? What are Pedro's dreams for himself? What are Luis dreams for his family? How do their dreams fit together?
- ⑦ What was different in the way Ned and Pedro each prepared for their debate? Whose method paid off in the end? Why was that person's method a better strategy?
- ⑦ Before the election results are announced, Ned says to Pedro, "I was so afraid I might lose at something that I forgot the way real winners are supposed to act...Real winners act exactly like you." How does Pedro act like a winner throughout the book? How does Ned show the qualities of a winner toward the end of the book?



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