



Hitmen Triumph

Sigmund Brouwer

Reading level: 3.2

978-1-55143-873-3 PB

AR Quiz # 119489

Book Summary

Left winger Nolan Andrews thinks it's great that he can play hockey in Calgary, where his identical twin brother, Nathan, is a star center for the Hitmen. When Nolan finds out that a lot of things about Nate's new life in Calgary don't make sense—or might not even be legal—Nolan has to make some difficult and dangerous choices that will affect him and his brother for the rest of their lives.

Prereading Ideas

- Family relationships can be difficult when there is conflict. Ask students to think about what they would do if they suspected a family member was involved in criminal activity. How far would family loyalty go?
- Where does the expression “Am I my brother's keeper?” come from? What does it mean?
- Which of the senses produces the most powerful memories for you? Why do you think that is?

Connecting to the Text

Character

- Nolan and his brother Nate are identical twins. How does the author of *Hitmen Triumph* make sure that readers understand both their similarities and differences?
- Have students make a list of all Nate's and Nolan's characteristics. Are they more alike than not?
- Would the story change if Nolan and Nate were brothers but not twins?

Plot

The plot of *Hitmen Triumph* depends on the use of technology. If the technology (specifically all Nolan's hearing devices) was taken away, how else could the author tell the story?

Theme

One of the main themes in *Hitmen Triumph* is the importance of trust in a relationship. Ask students to write a personal journal entry about trust in their own lives: have they ever betrayed someone's trust, or been betrayed themselves? How did it feel?

Setting

Some people say that the setting is like another character in a novel. Is this true of *Hitmen Triumph*? What features of the city of Calgary are important to the plot and why? Could the book be set in another city? Ask students to pick a key scene and rewrite it, setting it in their own town. For example, the scene where Nolan is placed on the railroad tracks or the scene by the "drowning machine."

Connecting to the Curriculum

Geography/Environmental Studies

- Nolan mentions that there are plans to change the weir on the Bow River to make it safer. Have students research the current state of the Bow River Weir and write a brief report on any changes that have happened since the book was published (2007).
- Have students create a map of Calgary using the descriptions in the book.

Science/Psychology

- Ask the students to purchase inexpensive ear plugs; then get half the class to wear them in class one day and the other half the next day. Discuss how it felt to be partially deaf.

- Nolan wears cochlear implants. Have students research what cochlear implants are and how they work. Why would a deaf person not want a cochlear implant?
- Many deaf people use both sign language and lip reading. Have half the class learn some basic sign language and practice it on each other; have the other half practice lip-reading and lip-speaking. Which is easiest to learn?
- Nolan doesn't think deaf people or people with other disabilities should get special treatment, but he supports the Special Olympics. Is this a contradiction, or are the two things different? Have students debate the issues.

Media Studies

- DVD piracy is an issue in *Hitmen Triumph*, which came out in 2007. How has the issue of piracy changed since then? Have students stage a mock trial in which someone is charged with downloading movies and music from the Internet.
- Get students to write a brief newspaper article about organized crime, based on the events in *Hitmen Triumph*.

Connecting to the Students—Discussion Questions

1. Is Nolan's approach to bullying (ch.2, ch.11) smart or stupid?
2. How would you go about winning back someone's trust after you have betrayed them?
3. Is it ever ethical to spy on other people?

Resources

Calgary

www.harviepassage.ca
www.cbc.ca/canada/calgary/story/2007/06/11/weir.html
www.viewcalgary.com/panorama/vBVinNW10.htm
www.srd.gov.ab.ca/fishwildlife/fisheriesmanagement/bowhabitatstation/pearceestateparkinterpretivewetland.aspx
www.ucalgary.ca/map/map_calgary.html

Sense Memory

www.wisegeek.com/what-is-sense-memory.htm

Disabilities

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cochlear_implant
www.lipreading.net
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Sign_Language
www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/hearing/asl.asp
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special_Olympics
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Disability_rights_movement

Author Biography

Sigmund Brouwer is the bestselling author of many books for children and teens. He has contributed numerous titles to the Orca Currents series, the Orca Echoes series and the Orca Sports series. He and his family live in Red Deer, Alberta, and Eagleville, Tennessee.

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