



Book Club in a Bag

Discussion Questions

“Beartown” by Frederic Backman

1. What does hockey mean to the people of Beartown? What does winning the semi-final mean for the town's future?
2. The town and the parents of the Beartown junior hockey team place great expectations on the shoulders of seventeen-year-old boys. How does this pressure affect the boys? Have the club's leaders (David, Sune, Peter, and the others) prepared the boys to deal with this pressure? Have the boys' parents?
3. How do issues related to social class affect the people of Beartown and the hockey club? Do those who live in the Hollow have a different world view from those who live in the Heights? Does hockey cut through class distinctions or reinforce them?
4. How do Peter and Kira complement each other in their relationship? How does he make up for her weaknesses, and vice versa? Do you think they have a solid marriage? A happy one?
5. There are many different parents and styles of parenting portrayed in the book. Which parents do you think are the most successful at preparing their children for the real world? Why?
6. Consider this sentiment echoed throughout the book: "What is a community? It is the sum total of our choices." (p. 312) By this definition, how do the townspeople of Beartown ultimately measure up? What kind of community have they built?
7. Several characters must find the courage to go against the grain of the tight-knit Beartown community. What is at stake for each character who does so, and is it worth it for them in the end?
8. Discuss the difference between male and female roles in the small village of Beartown. What is expected of the girls and women vs. the boys and men? Which characters break these expectations, and what are the consequences of doing so?

The above questions were taken from Simon & Schuster, Reading Group Guide.

www.simonandschuster.com/books/Beartown/Fredrik-Backman/9781501160769/reading_group_guide

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