

Discussion Questions  
*Gym Candy*

1. Mick’s relationship with his father is one of the main themes of the book. Compare how Mick viewed his Dad when he was a little boy to how he viewed him by middle school. What changed? How did they relate by the end of the story? Did you like his father? Why or why not?
2. Drew and Mick first meet in middle school. How does their friendship change over the course of the story? Who tries harder to keep the friendship going? Examples? What did you think of Drew’s final meeting with Mick?
3. Coach Carlson does not seem at first like the kind of guy who would be a good high school football coach. Why? However, how does he prove to his players that he is, in fact, an excellent one?
4. The author writes about the game of football really well. What are some passages that stand out for you?
5. Mick first wants nothing to do with “gym candy.” What makes him change his mind—not only the first time he decides to use, but each time after that?
6. There are a number of negative side effects associated with the steroids that Mick takes. Describe them and how they affect Mick specifically.
7. What are some of the positive effects of the steroids? Describe the tension Mick feels between the advantages of using or not using.
8. Mick ends up sacrificing a lot things that average high school kids enjoy to pursue his dream of being a football star. When Mick’s counselor in the rehab center asks him if he can “stand being ordinary”, Mick is not sure. What would change for him if he is not an extraordinary football player anymore?
9. The end of the story leaves the reader kind of hanging. What do you think happens to Mick next?
10. Rank the four books we read for *Pagers* this year (1<sup>st</sup> place through 4<sup>th</sup> place). If you didn’t read them all, rank the ones you did read.
  - a. *Deathwatch* \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. *Diamonds in the Shadow* \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. *H.I.V.E.* \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. *Gym Candy* \_\_\_\_\_

Suggestions for Next Year?