



The Northern

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

“*The Northern* is both a tender-hearted, contemplative coming-of-age novel and adventure-filled road trip story that brings a unique time in sports history to life.”
— Zoe Whittall, author of *The Fake* and *The Best Kind of People*

1

How would you characterize the relationship between the two siblings at the centre of the novel? Is their relationship recognizable to you, either with siblings you had growing up or with other people in your life?

2

What do Chris and Mikey think of the baseball players when they first come upon them practicing before a game? How does their reaction evolve and grow throughout the novel?

3

In what ways does the relationship between Clara and her father, Sheridan, resemble and differ from Chris’s relationship with Coach? How are these differences represented?

4

Throughout the novel, attention is paid to the mental wellbeing of World War II veterans, namely Chris and Mikey’s father and Spitter Sheridan. How does the emotional and mental toll of the war impact the story and its characters?

5

Did you, like many of the characters in the novel, collect baseball cards growing up? What do you remember about the hobby and how did these memories affect your reading of the novel?

6

The notes at the back of the novel mention that the timeline of the story was moved to 1952 even though the legal history of the baseball card industry might have more naturally set it in the 1970s. Why do we think the author made this choice? What does setting the novel in 1952 bring to the story?