



Discussion Questions

Stand Tall by Joan Bauer

Source: Madison Public Library, emporia.edu, and christievilesack.com

1. Describe how each of Bauer's characters is an overcomer.
2. Tree has earned his nickname because he is already 6'3" and not very good at sports. His peers give him a hard time. Give examples of times in your life that you were picked on by your peers.
3. "Sometimes life hits us with things we aren't prepared to handle.
'It's tough around here now, I know. We've all lost a piece of ourselves. War does that – it blows things up and leaves an empty place where something important used to be.'
'Is that how you feel about your leg, Grandpa?'
'Yep. Is that how you feel about your Mom and Dad?'
Tree looked down. 'Kind of.'
'I'll tell you something about empty places. They doesn't get filled in right away. You've got to look at them straight on, see what's still standing. Concentrate on what you've got as much as you can.'" (Stand Tall by Joan Bauer)

Describe some things that happened in your life that were not planned on. What empty places did they leave in you?

4. Grandpa taught Tree that sometimes to find out how things work you have to take them apart. What have you taken apart to see how it works?
5. In helping his grandfather, Tree can "steady a one-hundred-eighty-pound man by himself, fold up and carry a wheelchair one-handed," but he feels that doesn't count much in basketball, schoolwork or anything else. Do you have skills or talents that you feel go unrewarded or unacknowledged? If so, what are they?

6. Life sometimes is about making adjustments to the circumstances we are stuck with. Grandpa lost a leg. Tree was inordinately tall, and burdened with his parents' divorce. Sully's hearing was poor. Did they, and do we, have a choice about adjusting to adverse situations? Discuss the consequences of those choices, good and bad.