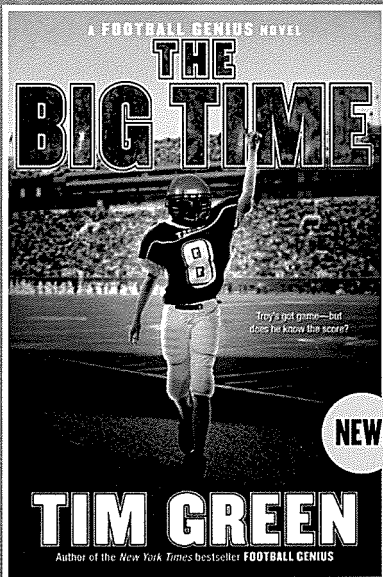
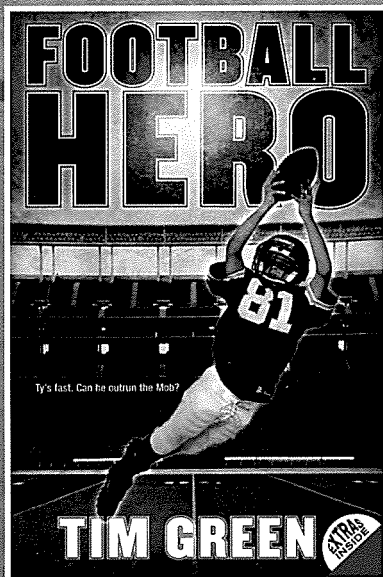
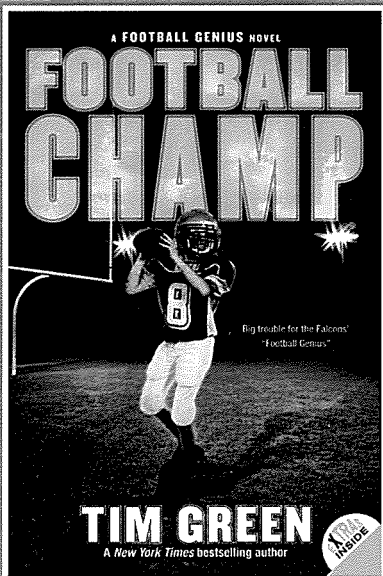
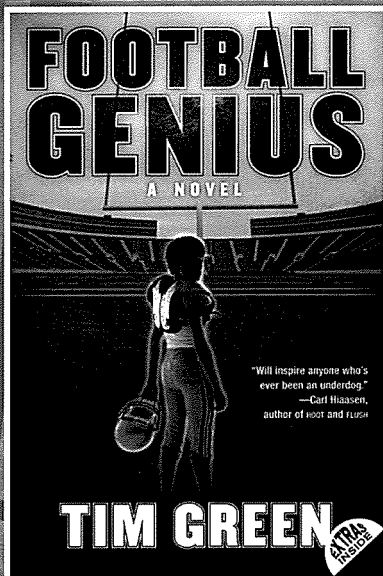


DISCUSSION GUIDE

TIM GREEN'S

FOOTBALL GENIUS NOVELS



"As close as you can come to NFL action without putting on the pads.

Filled with excitement, suspense—and great football!"

—Bill Parcells, NFL champion coach

ABOUT THE SERIES

Troy White is a normal kid. He has two best friends, gets along great with his mom, and loves football. But Troy also has an extraordinary talent: He can predict any football play *before* it happens. This “football genius” takes Troy from a normal life on the sidelines to a starring role helping the Atlanta Falcons reach the championship and his own team, the Duluth Tigers, pursue glory. But when Troy’s father enters the picture, Troy has to contend with more than just predicting plays on the field.

In a separate story arc, orphaned Ty Lewis has speed and talent on the football field, but he’s stuck working for his uncle’s cleaning service after school. When Ty’s uncle uses him to obtain insider information from his NFL player brother, Ty must use his speed to outrun—and his instincts to outsmart—a dangerous gambling ring.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Troy’s mom calls him a “hothead.” What does this word mean and how does it apply to Troy? What other words would you use to describe Troy? What words would you use to describe Ty? How are Troy and Ty similar, and how are they different?
2. Why do you think Troy, Tate, and Nathan are such good friends? What draws them together?
3. How does the media distort what Troy is doing for the Atlanta Falcons? Should you always believe what you read or see on TV? Why or why not?
4. Seth Halloway is accused of using steroids. What are steroids? How can they be dangerous? Why is their illegal use such a prevalent problem in professional sports?
5. How does Troy’s absent father affect his life? Think about how he feels about football, school, and his mother. Before Troy meets his dad, he struggles with hating him yet also wanting to impress him. Why do you think he feels these contradictory emotions? How does Troy feel about his dad after they meet?
6. Do you think Troy’s dad is trustworthy? Why or why not? Is it possible to love someone even if you don’t entirely trust him or her? Explain.

7. How does Troy feel about Seth Halloway dating his mom? How do you think you'd feel if you were in Troy's situation?
8. Why do you think professional football players make so much money? Are these high salaries warranted? Why or why not? Thinking about Seth Halloway's medical problems, what are the physical costs of being a player in the NFL?
9. Why does Troy's mom insist that he put the money he earns from the Atlanta Falcons in the bank, instead of spending it on her? Why is it important to save and invest money?
10. Are Tate (*Football Genius* and others) and Charlotte (*Football Hero*) like most girls you know? Why or why not?
11. Why do you think Troy isn't satisfied with just being a "football genius" and helping the Atlanta Falcons become champions? Why does he want to be a champion in his own right?
12. Seth Halloway says that "the best thing about sports is the friends you make" (*Football Genius*, p. 128). How do sports encourage and engender friendship? What else do sports do?
13. Thinking about the titles of the books, what does "genius" mean in relation to Troy? What does it mean to be a "hero" or a "champ"? Do those words mean the same thing, or are they something different? What does "the big time" refer to in the story? What does "the big time" mean to you?
14. Ty's brother, Thane, says, "It doesn't matter what someone else thinks of you or what they say about you. You have to know what you are, who you are" (*Football Hero*, p. 16). Over the course of their stories, how do Troy and Ty come to know themselves? Think about how you define yourself. *What* and *who* are you?
15. What behind-the-scenes information about the NFL does Tim Green reveal in the *Football Genius* novels? How is this depiction of professional football similar to and different from the way it's shown on TV and described online and in magazines?
16. What do Troy and Ty learn from playing football? How is football more than a game?

TIM GREEN'S TOP 5 FOOTBALL TIPS

- 1. Always get up.** The game is about getting up, getting up fast, and getting up over and over again. Even the most talented players get knocked down. The great ones get up.
- 2. Keep your head up.** When you tackle or block, you need to keep your head up so you don't get hurt, and so you deliver the best hit that you can.
- 3. Stay low.** The low man will win almost every battle on the football field. Tackle low. Block low. Play the game low and you'll win.
- 4. Wrap up when you tackle.** Too many kids just plow into the ball carrier without wrapping their arms around the runner's legs. It's more important to bring the ball carrier down for certain than it is to make a devastating hit. The best tacklers do both, and they will always wrap their arms when they tackle.
- 5. Treat your teammates like they're special.** Football is the ultimate team game—to win, everyone has to work hard together. And you can't just be a team on the field. You need to treat your fellow teammates with respect and kindness in the locker room, the classroom, the lunchroom, and the hallways. Every person on a team matters, not just the star player. A championship team is like a band of brothers.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

TIM GREEN, former star defensive end for the Atlanta Falcons and *New York Times* bestselling author, has written books for adults and young people, including the tween series *Football Genius* and *Baseball Great*. These series have been inspired by his experience coaching his sons' football and baseball teams in their hometown, Skaneateles, New York. You can visit Tim online at www.timgreenbooks.com.



LAURA LILLIE

- For exclusive information on your favorite authors and artists, visit www.authortracker.com.
- To order, please contact your HarperCollins sales representative, call 1-800-C-HARPER, or fax your order to 1-800-822-4090.

www.harpercollinschildrens.com

HARPER

An Imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers