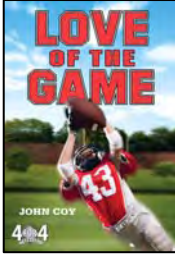
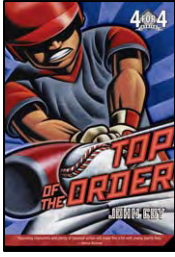


## DISCUSSION GUIDE

### Overarching Questions and Activities

**4 for 4 Series  
by John Coy**



*Top of the Order:* 978-0-312-37329-0

*Eyes on the Goal:* 978-0-312-37330-6

*Love of the Game:* 978-0-312-37331-3

*Take Your Best Shot:* 978-0-312-37332-0

Grade Range: 3-7 grade; Age Range: 8-12 years

### Discussion Questions

1. *"I don't notice day-to-day changes, but when I think back to fifth grade, a lot has changed."*(*Take Your Best Shot* p. 125)

The 4 for 4 series covers seven months, from May of the boys' fifth grade year to November of their sixth grade year. How have Jackson, Gig, Isaac, and Diego changed between *Top of the Order* and *Take Your Best Shot*? What specific events in each book changed them or taught them something? Who do you think has changed the most?

Think back to seven months ago. How have you changed since then? What have you learned? What events in your life have caused you to change? Have you changed as much as Jackson, Gig, Isaac, and Diego have?

2. *"You have to know what you want. Otherwise, he'll decide for you. . . He'll push, but if you stand your ground with him, he'll respect your decision."* (*Top of the Order* p. 56)

The four boys sometimes clash with authority figures like parents, teachers, and coaches, but at times they have to stand up for what they believe in or what is right for them. When do they admit that they were wrong, and admit that adults were right? When do they stand up for themselves because they know what they want? How do their decisions change them and help them grow?

3. How do Jackson's first impressions of people change after he gets to know them? Does he ever misjudge people, and think a person is different from how he or she actually is? Why? How does he discover what they're really like?

For example, why is Jackson surprised when Ted comes through for him? (*Love of the Game* p. 151-152)

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4. “Right now my best chance to start is switching to defense. I don’t care what Gig and Isaac think. I’ve got to do what’s best for me.” (*Love of the Game* p. 77)

Throughout the books, Jackson, Gig, Isaac, and Diego talk a lot about how important it is for them to stick together. However, they sometimes realize that they need to make decisions on their own, even if their friends disagree. How do they each learn to make decisions independently? What do they each decide to do that the others don’t approve of?

5. Do each of the boys have a different sport that they’re best at and enjoy the most? Which sport is it for each character? Do you have a favorite sport? Is it the same as the one you are best at?

6. What are their different strengths and weaknesses of each of the characters, in sports and in life? Do you find that some of the things that you are strong with in sports are also things that you’re strong with in other areas of your life? Do some of the things you struggle with show up in other areas. Or is there a difference between success in sports and success in other areas of life?

7. What new challenges do you think will face the boys during the rest of the school year? The rest of middle school? How do you think baseball will go for them in sixth grade? Will Sydney come out for the team?

8. Which of the characters do you relate to the most? Why? Do the other characters remind you of people you know? Do you think you and some of the people you know would make good characters in a book?

### Author Bio

John Coy is the author of many acclaimed books for young readers and teens, including *Night Driving*, *Crackback*, *Eyes on the Goal*, *Love of the Game*, and *Take Your Best Shot*. He lives in Minneapolis, where he writes full-time and teaches writing workshops for children and adults. He travels all over the world promoting his books and literacy. Visit John at [www.johncoy.com](http://www.johncoy.com).



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