



Peotone Junior High School  
Seventh Grade Summer Reading  
*Schooled* by Gordon Korman

### **Summary**

Capricorn Anderson, nicknamed Cap, has grown up on the Garland Farm commune with his grandmother and caregiver, Rain. When Rain falls and breaks her hip, Cap must spend eight weeks with a foster family. After being home schooled all his life, Cap suddenly becomes the “new student” at Claverage (C Average) Middle School. In often humorous ways, Cap is bullied by the “popular” students. He even becomes eighth grade president, a position traditionally given to the biggest “dweeb” in the school. Slowly, the students come to know Cap and even begin to respect some of his “freakish” ways.

### **About the Author**

Gordon Korman was born in Montreal, Quebec on October 23, 1963. Korman received his bachelor’s degree from New York University in 1985, with a major in dramatic and visual writing and a minor in motion picture and television. Gordon Korman’s hallmark in children’s literature is his humorous novels. He transforms real-life situations into hilarious plots with his vivid imagination. He and his wife, Michelle, a third-grade teacher, live on Long Island, New York with their three children.

### **Background Information**

During the 1960’s communes were important parts of the cultural lifestyle. They consisted of communities of people living together, sharing property, work, and decision-making for a common good. Residents, often called “hippies,” embraced a utopian mindset and rejected established institutions and middle-class values. They adopted an eco-friendly lifestyle, living as one with nature, and favored peace, love, and freedom for all. Hippies were an established social group during the 1960s. Their popularity began to decline during the mid-1970’s although their legacy is evident today in such things as music festivals, health foods, and the “green” movement.

This is the lifestyle of the main character, Cap Anderson. He has never used a telephone or watched TV. He meditates, does tai chi, and has very little knowledge of 21<sup>st</sup>-century society. His upbringing makes him completely different from the students he is forced to attend school with, and these differences are the reason they bully and harass him.



## Vocabulary

\*Please familiarize yourself with the following vocabulary terms. Some of these terms will appear on the final test.

**Grimace-** (noun) a facial expression, often ugly or contorted, that indicates disapproval, pain, etc.

**Conviction-** (noun) a fixed or firm belief.

**Trajectory-** (noun) the curve described by a projectile, rocket, or the like in its flight or a curve or surface that cuts all the curves or surfaces of a given system at a constant angle.

**Constituent-** (noun) a person who authorizes another to act in his or her behalf, as a voter in a district represented by an elected official.

**Kibosh-** (idiom) put the kibosh on, to put an end to; squelch; check.

**Vantage-** (noun) a position, condition, or place affording some advantage or a commanding view.

**Raucous-**(adjective) rowdy; disorderly

**Hue-** (noun) a gradation or variety of a color; tint

**Sham-** (noun) something fake or false (verb) to pretend

**Bandwagon-** (noun) a party, cause, movement, etc., that by its mass appeal or strength readily attracts many followers

## Reading Comprehension/Discussion Questions

\*On your own paper, answer the following questions in complete sentences and use the words from the question in your answer. If applicable, please include the page number on which you found each answer. **There are a total of 36 questions.**

### Chapters 1-3

1. What do you notice about the point of view after reading Chapters 1-3 of the novel?
2. Cite some of Cap's beliefs about modern society. Do you think these are his own beliefs or are they Rain talking through him?
3. Why does Mrs. Donnelly take in Cap? What might have happened had she not been kind enough to do this?
4. How do you think Zach will treat Cap? Explain.

### Chapters 4-6

5. Why is Cap sent to the assistant principal's office?
6. Summarize Hugh's advice to Cap regarding Zach.
7. If you were Hugh, would you have warned Cap against running for president? Why or why not?
8. Summarize the way Zach and Naomi treat their new class president. How does Cap react to this harassment?

### Chapters 7-9

9. What do you think about the way the eighth grade president is chosen at C Average Middle School?
10. What metaphor does Mrs. Donnelly use to describe middle school? Explain what she means by this.
11. What kind of person is Cap? Give evidence from the story to support your answer.

### **Chapters 10-12**

12. Contrast the stereotype of Cap with the real Capricorn Anderson.
13. If you were Cap, would you have driven the bus to the emergency room or pulled over as ordered by the dispatcher?
14. With newfound help, do you think Cap's Halloween dance will be a success?

### **Chapters 13-15**

15. What kind of person is Sophie's dad? Give evidence from the story to support your answer.
16. Holly van Arden suggests an expensive pizza project for the Halloween dance. What has Cap committed to thus far, and whom does he think will pay?
17. After the tie-dying project, Hugh notices that for the first time there are no spitballs in Cap's hair. What might this mean for Hugh?

### **Chapters 16-21**

18. Evaluate Mr. Kasigi as both a person and as an assistant principal.
19. What does Hugh mean when he says, "I was purchasing wedge insurance, and Darryl was Allstate"?
20. How did you feel as you read about Cap being tackled by the football team?
21. Why does Darryl punch Cap?

### **Chapters 22-26**

22. How does Garland Farm look to Cap when they return?
23. Whose fault is it that Cap misused the Student Activity Fund? Why?
24. What is Zach's motivation for arranging a tribute to Cap?
25. How does Sophie come to the conclusion that Cap sent the bracelet? How does this revelation make her feel?

### **Chapters 27-31**

26. Describe Cap's mixed feelings about being back at Garland Farm.
27. How has Cap grown as a person since Rain's accident?
28. What does Zach realize as Cap begins to say good-bye to each student by name?
29. Summarize Rain's reasons for selling Garland Farm. Do you think Rain did the right thing?

## **Literary Analysis**

### **Identifying Similes and Metaphors**

Authors often express an image or idea through a comparison that is not meant to be taken literally. Two types of comparisons used are similes and metaphors. Each of these comparisons illustrates a point by showing similarities between situations or things that are mostly not alike.

\*A **simile** is a comparison using like or as: Her personality is like a sunny summer day.

\*A **metaphor** is a comparison that uses one thing to name another (does not contain like or as): Her personality is sunshine.

**Directions:** Each of the following lines is taken from *Schooled* by Gordon Korman. Complete the chart to explain and analyze the comparison the author is using. Describe the objects or ideas being compared. Then, tell how you interpret the line.

Line	Simile or Metaphor	Things Being Compared	Interpretation
30. "He was tall and skinny as a rake"			
31. "He stood up, removed his psychedelic headband from that haystack of hair, and bowed solemnly."			
32. "But Cap is like a space traveler who just landed on Earth and left his guidebook."			
33. "It was hard enough for him to come out of total isolation at Garland without having to be dropped into the snake pit that was middle school."			

**Point of View**

**First Person** – the narrator is a character in the story that can only reveal personal thoughts and feelings and what he or she sees and is told by other characters, not the thoughts of other characters.

**Third-Person Objective** – the narrator is an outsider who can report only what he or she sees and hears. This narrator can tell us what is happening, but cannot tell us the thoughts of the characters.

**Third-Person Limited** – the narrator is an outsider who sees into the mind of one of the characters.

**Third-Person Omniscient** – the narrator is an all-knowing outsider who can enter the minds of more than one of the characters.

34. From which point of view is the story told? Please list two examples that “prove” the story is written from this point of view (pronouns used).

35. What are the advantages of having multiple characters take turns narrating the story? Why do you think the author did that?

**Essay Question**

36. Do you feel that Rain made the right decision keeping Cap isolated on Garland Farm and not allowing him access to the outside world? How would this decision have helped or hindered his ability to function in the outside world? Provide specific examples from the text to support your answer.