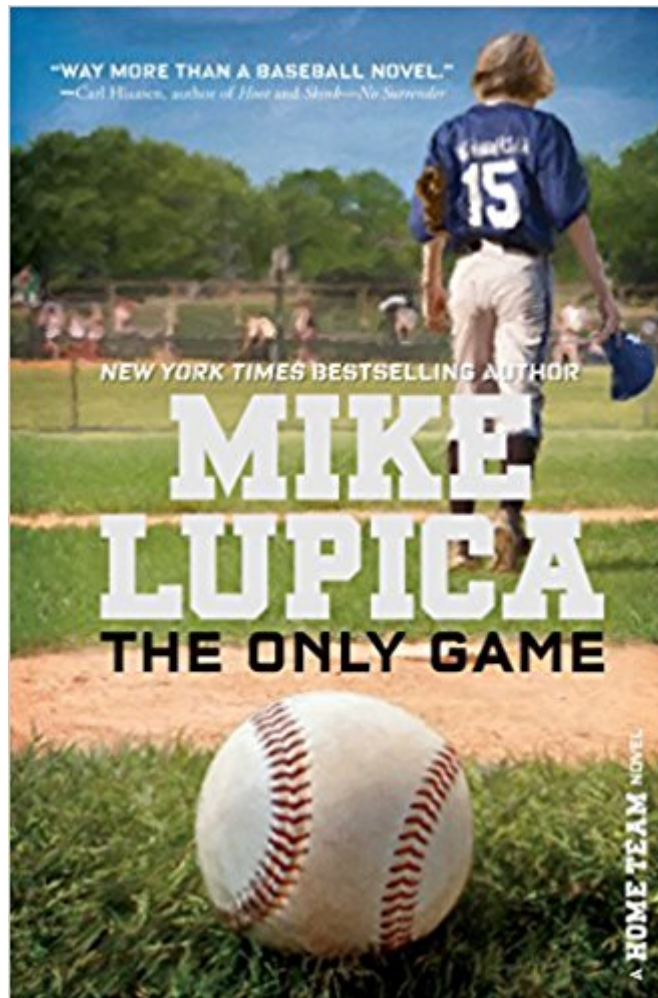




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The Only Game (Home Team)



Synopsis

Can a young baseball star maintain his love of the game after the loss of his brother? Find out in this start to the Home Team series about a small town with high hopes, from New York Times bestselling author and sportswriting legend Mike Lupica. Jack Callahan is the star of his baseball team and seventh grade is supposed to be his year. Undefeated season. Records shattered. Little League World Series. The works. That is, until he up and quits. Jack's best friend Gus can't understand how Jack could leave a game that means more to them than anything else. But Jack is done. It's a year of change. Jack's brother has passed away, and though his family and friends and the whole town of Walton thinks baseball is just the thing he needs to move on, Jack feels it's anything but. In comes Cassie Bennett, star softball player, and the only person who seems to think Jack shouldn't play if he doesn't want to. As Jack and Cassie's friendship deepens, their circle expands to include Teddy, a guy who's been bullied because of his weight. Time spent with these new friends unlocks something within Jack, and with their help and the support of his family and his old friends, Jack discovers sometimes it's more than just the love of the game that keeps us moving forward—and he might just be able to find his way back to The Only Game, after all.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 0790 (What's this?)

Series: Home Team

Paperback: 336 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 44 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #17,815 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #20 in Books > Children's Books > Sports & Outdoors > Baseball #25 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Death & Dying #499 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Friendship

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Customer Reviews

Gr 4-6 • Much to his parents' surprise, Jack Callahan decides to quit baseball, even though he's the best player on his team. His best friend, Gus, doesn't understand what is going on with Jack either. Jack just hasn't been the same since his older brother was killed in an accident. He doesn't stray far from the game though. Instead he finds himself working with star softball player Cassie Bennett and extends his friendship to a boy named Teddy who is picked on for his weight. His time with these two kids eventually leads Jack back to playing baseball but also helps him understand the value of friendship and helping others. Though conversations are stiff at times, Keith Nobbs's ability to express characters' feelings will make listeners care about the characters. Steeped in details about baseball, this is more for the true fan who doesn't mind play-by-play action. VERDICT Best for baseball fans, this novel will also be enjoyed by those that appreciate stories about the importance of friendship. • Karen Alexander, Lake Fenton High School, Linden, MI --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

“The Only Game is way more than a baseball novel. It's a great story about fighting back after tragedy, and finding that place in your heart where courage comes from. This is absolutely Lupica's best book.” (Carl Hiaasen, author of HOOT and SKINK) “No Surrender” “This is a page-turning and moving story that boys, girls, sports fans, and every kid will love to read.” (Alex Morgan, US women's soccer player and Olympic gold-medalist) “I like life and I love baseball. Mike Lupica has written a powerful book about both. The Only Game is a moving story about love, loss, guilt and the power of trust and friendship that heals.” (Patricia MacLachlan, author of Newbery Award winner Sarah Plain and Tall.) “Lupica lays the foundation for a great sports series where friendship carries the characters through tribulations...this is more than a baseball book and will appeal to a wide variety of readers. A must-buy.” (School Library Journal December 2014) “a winner of a sports novel” (Kirkus Reviews December 2014) “A natural choice for Matt Christopher and Tim Green fans.” (Booklist December 2014) “a heartfelt story” (BCCB April 2015)

There are few perfect games, and fewer perfect people, but Mike Lupica's writing is the perfect place for them all to come together. His blend of human strengths and weaknesses, wrapped up in a tale from the baseball diamond, provides reality with a big dose of excitement. The three main

characters in The Only Game all have hopes and dreams, but they need each other to ever have a chance at them. As they work to take on whatever life can throw their way, they learn that wins and losses are all a part of the real world. And that friendship and teamwork are the true victories. An excellent read for the middle school mind - no matter how old!

My 10 year old son and I read this together. He's not a fan of reading, but he loves baseball so he really enjoyed this book! We've already pre-ordered the next one in the series, and are excited that the same characters seem to be in the next story as well. Looking forward to reading it together!

Excellence!

My two boys ages 8 and 11 both really liked this book. Took the older one (a sometimes reluctant reader) a couple chapters to get hooked, but once he did he couldn't put it down. Both boys have quite a bit of baseball knowledge and experience so I think that helped them get into this book. Note- I think this book is most appropriate for 4th -7th grade. My 8 year old is an advanced reader.

I read this book aloud to my third grade class. They absolutely loved it! At the end, they wanted to know if there was a sequel telling about the teams games during the Little League World Series. I would definitely recommend this book to anyone who has kids involved in sports. It not only was a book about baseball, but was also about life issues, friendship, and forgiveness.

First I wondered about a young fellow reading about a lost brother. But then I found out it was a good lesson for a child to realize how to deal with his lost brother. I'm ordering this book to give to my 12 year old grandson that loves baseball.

Loved it it was the best book I ever read I recommend this to everyone please please please please please please read this book

Great book for all ages! A sweet story for boys and girls who play baseball or softball. You know the storyline, so well done and touching. Lupica surprised me since I only know him from NY Daily News. Excellent writer. I would put this book in every kid's hand. Enjoy!

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