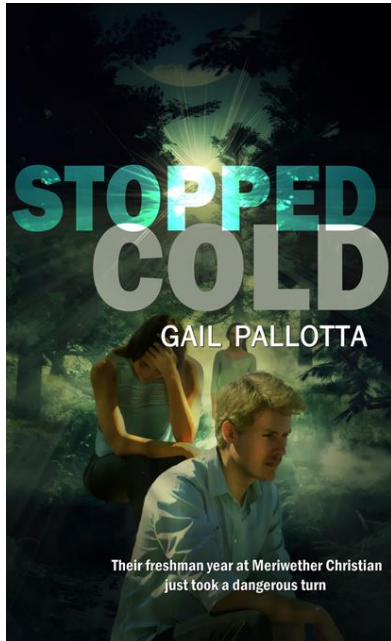


Discussion Questions



STOPPED COLD

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About the Book

Things aren't what they seem in peaceful Mistville, North Carolina.

Margaret McWhorter enjoys a laid-back Freshman year in high school swimming and hanging out with friends—until the day her brother, Sean, suffers a stroke from taking steroids. Now he's lying unconscious in a hospital.

Anger sets a fire for retribution inside her, and Margaret vows to make the criminals pay. Even the cop on the case can't stop her from investigating. Looking for justice, she convinces two friends, Jimmy and Emily to join her in a quest that takes them through a twisted, drug-filled sub-culture they discover deep in the woods behind the school. Time and again they walk a treacherous path, and come face-to-face with danger.

All the while Margaret really wants to cure Sean, heal the hate inside, and open her heart to love.

TITLE: Stopped Cold
Discussion:

Question 1: Tourists enjoy a peaceful atmosphere in Triville, North Carolina. Why doesn't that hold true for Margaret McWhorter, the heroine in Stopped Cold?

Answer 1: She's under so much pressure from her father to succeed in sports. She's stressed about her swimming times and whether or not she'll qualify for a competition, such as the state meet. She also relates to her brother's struggles as the quarterback for Meriwether Christian High School and worries that he can't live up to their father's expectations.

Question 2: What makes an emotional stinger better than a personality flaw, as far as Margaret's brother, Sean, is concerned?

Answer 2: He explains that an emotional stinger is a shortcoming that affects only the person who has it, such as Sean's concern over his inability to complete long passes. A personality flaw, such as a bad temper, can hurt others.

Question 3: Why did Sean take Winstrol V?

Answer 3: Sean took the steroid on the advice of his coach. He claimed the drug would make Sean stronger and enhance his performance.

Question 4: Why did Sean's father push him to perform?

Answer 4: Sean's grandfather had pushed him. Margaret's best friend, Emily, asked Margaret if her father taught Margaret and Sean the same thing his father taught him. Then Margaret remembered her grandfather constantly bragged on her dad's throwing arm. Her dad once said he believed the only thing his father liked about him was his ability to throw a pass. In Margaret's words, "Dad's father pushed him. Dad pushed us."

Question 5: Margaret wishes her dad would be more like her Sunday school teacher. Why?

Answer 5: Margaret's Sunday school teacher says we should love ourselves, because God created us in His image and gave us a special talent or talents to use for Him.

Question 6: What is Margaret's reaction at the hospital when she learns Sean's taken a steroid? What does she think about the drug dealers?

Answer 6: When Margaret's Mom asked why people took Winstrol V, the doctor explained that it made athletes grow stronger and practice longer. The conversation confused Margaret. None of what the doctor said made any sense to her. When they rolled Sean into the room and she saw him in a coma, she grew very angry at the drug dealers and wanted to make them pay for what they'd done.

Question 7: Why do you think Margaret hated the drug dealers?

Answer 7: They hurt Sean, and she loved him so much. They were close, and she was proud of him. She feared they'd taken away his ability to do great things later in life. Sean and Margaret shared not only a blood bond, but one of knowing what it felt like to try to live up to their dad's expectations, so she suffered a terrible loss.

Question 8: Margaret's Mom says, "People live their lives like beachcombers looking at a horizon not knowing what's on the other side." She was talking about faith. What does she mean?

Answer 8: She explains that we have limited vision. God is omniscient, but our vision has boundaries. She says, "That's where faith comes in."

Question 9: How did faith help Margaret?

Answer 9 Her mom's faith gave her something to hang onto. When Reverend Hopewell visited he quoted Scripture saying prayer offered in faith will make a sick person well. Then he added, "We know God can heal Sean." Margaret says a prayer right then for God to heal Sean. There's no change in Sean's condition, but Margaret says her faith needs to be stronger.

Question 10: Why do you think Margaret continued to pray after her prayer in the hospital failed?

Answer 10: She hoped with all her heart that healing Sean was God's will. If it were, she believed God could heal Sean as well as her hate for the drug dealers. Later, she stopped in the hospital chapel and sorted through her feelings remembering that Jesus cared enough about Sean and her to die for their sins. Then she said a prayer asking God to heal Sean, her, and her family. When she left she said, "There were answers, peace and hope in this room."

