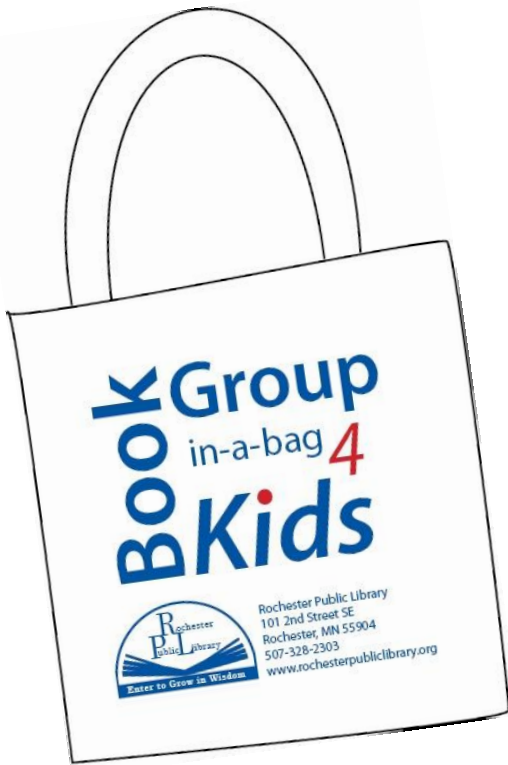


ROCHESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY BOOK GROUP IN-A-BAG 4 KIDS



THE BOY WHO SAVED BASEBALL

BY JOHN H. RITTER

Lexile level: 660L

[Sequels or prequels](#)

*The Desperado Who
Stole Baseball*

[If you liked this book
you might like:](#)

Heat

by Mike Lupica

**Satch and Me: A Baseball
Card Adventure**

by Dan Gutman

Website:

<http://www.johnhritter.com/TBWSB-homepage.html>

1. What did you enjoy about this book?
2. The central action in this story revolves around a decision: Will a developer be allowed to bulldoze and build new homes over the 100-year-old baseball stadium that is the center of Dillontown's identity? List the ways this might be good for the town and the ways it might destroy it. Describe some examples you have seen of "urban sprawl" or "country crawl." What are the benefits of large housing developments and what are their drawbacks?
3. John H. Ritter uses some made-up words to make the language in his story more vivid. Some examples are "woolbacious," "dreamsketcher," "scandalize and shambalize," "yard-dog jitters," "tiskied his horse," "turtlenecked a peek," and "graggely." He even combines Spanish and English for some of them: "cyber-vato desperado" and "Tompadre." Try putting these expressions into more ordinary terms. Notice how you need several words to catch the whole sense of most of them. Have fun making some super-descriptive new words of your own by combining two existing words.
4. "The stranger rode in from the east." Tom thinks this line from the Death and Doom Prophecy may be talking about Cruz de la Cruz. What are the other predictions of the Death and Doom Prophecy? How do they come true and to what actions and people do they seem to refer? Do you believe in prophecies—the daily newspaper astrology forecast, for instance? How might people's reactions to prophecies work to make the prophecies come true?
4. Why does Cruz choose to disappear the night before the big game? What effect does his leaving have on the team? The outcome of the game? Dante Del Gato also walked away from his team at a crucial moment: he quit baseball because he believed he had learned how to bat perfectly. Do you think that individual super-achievement destroys the sport, as he is convinced?

These questions were prepared by Patty Campbell, a critic, librarian, writer, editor, and teacher in the field of young adult literature, and winner of the Grolier Award from the American Library Association and the ALAN Award from the National Council of Teachers of English.