

Schooled

By Gordon Korman



SAMPLE PAGES
Informational Texts
with Answer Keys

from
A Novel Teaching Pack
by Margaret Whisnant

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Table of Contents

Informational Texts with Questions

| | |
|--|-------|
| Gordon Korman, Author | 1-4 |
| The American Search for Utopia | 5-10 |
| The Hippies | 11-16 |
| Life on a 60s Rural Commune. | 17-21 |

Answer Keys with CCSS Alignments

| | |
|------------------------------|-------|
| Informational Texts. | 22-23 |
|------------------------------|-------|

Gordon Korman, Author

By Margaret Whisnant

"Maybe the answer to all the world's problems is: keep on laughing!"
Gordon Korman

Gordon Korman wrote his first book when he was 12 years old, but not on purpose. He was simply completing an assignment given to him by Mr. Hamilton, his track and field coach.

All of this took place at German Mills Public Schools, near Toronto, Canada. Gordon's coach learned quite unexpectedly that he was also the school's new 7th grade English teacher. With no experience as a writing instructor, Mr. Hamilton gave his students a straight-forward assignment. "Work on whatever you want for the rest of the year." Young Gordon dutifully obliged by writing *This Can't Be Happening at MacDonald Hall*. At the time, he served as class Scholastic Arrow Book Club monitor, so he decided to mail his manuscript to the company. Almost two years later in 1978, Scholastic published his story, and Gordon dedicated his first book to Mr. Hamilton. By the time he graduated from high school, he had written and published five books.

Since then, he has penned approximately 70 books for children and young adults. Some are individual stories and some are parts of a series. *The Monday Night Football Club* series was adapted for TV and became *The Jersey*, which ran on the Disney Channel for four years from January 1999 to March 2004. Gordon's fans have bought 25 million copies of his books, making him a *New York Times* best-selling author.

Sometimes during one of his school speaking tours Mr. Korman will be asked how much money he makes. "I earn less than Shaquille O'Neal," he explains, "but more than the French-fry-box unfolder at the local Drive-Thru. I'm in that gray area." When a youngster brings up the topic of his most embarrassing moment, Gordon tells the story of the awards dinner he attended when he was 17. He had been named the most promising young writer in Canada. "I wasn't used to wearing ties back then. . ." he says. "I stood up when my name was called. Then I sat back down again—dipping my tie right into the gravy! But don't worry, there were only four hundred and fifty people watching."

Gordon was born October 23, 1963 in Montreal, Quebec in Canada, but he grew up in Thornhill, Ontario. Then he moved to New York City to attend New York University. He graduated in 1985 with a degree in Dramatic and Visual Writing and a minor in Motion Picture and Television. He still hasn't written a screenplay, although he admits that he would like to do that. In the meantime, his books have won numerous awards, including six from the American Library Association. They have been translated into French, Swedish, Norwegian, and Cantonese—a Chinese language. He now lives in Great Neck, Long Island, New York, with his wife and three children.

Mr. Korman's personal experiences have inspired some of his books. His nicknames are one example. His were ordinary, like "Gord-o" and "Gordie," until he hit sixth grade and he became the "G-Man." His cool FBI agent moniker was the reason he wrote *The Sixth Grade Nickname Game*. The main character of *Don't Care High* is largely based on his Canadian school days with a bit of New York mixed in. With the exception of *The Island*, a

Gordon Korman, Author

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Refer to the article about **Schooled** author Gordon Korman to answer the following questions. When a **letter** designates the correct answer, write it in the blank provided. When a short answer is required, use the space after the question to enter your response. Write in complete sentences.

_____ 1. What circumstances led Gordon Korman to write his first book at the age of 12?

_____ 2. What facts prove that self-discipline is one of the reasons that Gordon Korman is a successful author?

- (A) He has been writing books since he was in the seventh grade.
- (B) Many of his ideas for stories come from his personal experiences.
- (C) Mr. Korman works four to six months to write a book, and he has approximately 70 published works.
- (D) His sales have earned him a spot on the *New York Times* best-seller list.

_____ 3. What is it that Gordon Korman would like to do, but hasn't yet done?

_____ 4. Where is Cantonese spoken?

- (A) Spain
- (B) China
- (C) Sweden
- (D) Canada

_____ 5. Gordon Korman's sixth-grade nickname was "G-man," a slang term for

- (A) an FBI agent.
- (B) an astronaut.
- (C) an outlaw.
- (D) a spy.

_____ 6. A synonym for **moniker** (paragraph 5, sentence 4) is

- (A) connection.
- (B) disguise.
- (C) nickname.
- (D) reputation.

The Hippies

By Margaret Whisnant

The most important kind of freedom is to be what you really are.
Jim Morrison 1943-1971 (American singer-songwriter and poet. Lead singer **The Doors**)



Do you enjoy wearing jeans because they suit your personality? Does your favorite music express your thoughts and feelings? Are you passionate about recycling, going green, and just being yourself?

If you answered “yes” to any of the above questions, thank a hippie! Half a century ago such things were not common practices of everyday life. Then the hippies went out in search of a new Utopia in the 1960s and changed things.

They began as an assorted group of young people, especially college students, who grew up in the affluent, booming economy of the 1950s. However, they were not satisfied with the world their parents had built. They objected to its demand for conformity, the acceptance of inequality, and the emphasis on money and possessions. They were worried about the blatant disregard for the Earth’s resources that seemed to escape everyone’s attention. They loudly opposed nuclear weapons and military conflict. Their bold public protests of the Vietnam War and outrageous refusal to be drafted into military service were totally shocking. Main stream society reacted to their free-spirited message of peace and love with both indignation and delight. Before it was over, their influence had spread through the U.S, into Canada, over part of Europe, and eventually around the world.

The hippie movement has roots in New York City’s Greenwich Village where groups of authors who refused to follow the rules and be like everyone else came together in the 50s. They were called the Beat Generation, or “beatniks,” because they were “tired” and “beaten down” for their beliefs. People said they were “hip” because they followed the latest ideas and styles. In the late 1950s, large numbers of beatniks began moving to California, and the spark that ignited the hippie revolution began to flicker. The city of Berkeley was a popular gathering place, but the Haight-Ashbury district of San Francisco soon became the hot spot.

Informational Texts Answer Keys

Informational Text1

Gordon Korman, Author

1. His track and field coach suddenly found himself assigned to teach 7th grade English, He had no experience as a writing teacher, so he told his students to work on whatever they wanted for the rest of the year. Gordon completed his assignment by writing *This Can't Be Happening at MacDonald Hall*. (CCSS RI 6.1, 7.1, 8.1)
2. C (CCSS RI 6.1, 7.1, 8.1)
3. He would still like to write a screenplay. (CCSS RI 6.1, 7.1, 8.1)
4. B (CCSS RI 6.1, 7.1, 8.1)
5. A (CCSS RI 6.1, 7.1, 8.1)
6. C (CCSS L. 6.4, 7.4, 8.4)
7. D ((CCSS RI 6.1, 7.1, 8.1)
8. A (CCSS L. 6.5, 7.5, 8.5)
9. B (CCSS RI. 6.5, 7.5, 8.5)
10. A (CCSS RI 6.1, 7.1, 8.1)

Informational Text 2

The American Search for Utopia

1. C (CCSS RI 6.2, 7.2, 8.2)
2. C (CCSS RI. 6.2, 7.2, 8.2)
3. B (CCSS RI. 6.6, 7.3, 8.3)
4. The name *Mayflower* comes to mind. The paragraph next to the illustration states that the Pilgrims were the first utopian group to come to America. Their ship, the *Mayflower*, is an important part of their familiar story, so the reader can logically infer that the ship in the picture is the *Mayflower*.
5. Sir Thomas coined the word because he needed a name for the mythical island he wrote about. He based the name on the Greek word *outopos*, meaning "no place." Some say the word might be a pun of the sound-alike Greek word *eutopos*, which means "good place." (CCSS RI 6.3, 7.3, 8.3)
6. B (CCSS RI. 6.4, 7.4, 8.4)
7. A (CCSS RI. 6.1, 7.1, 8.1)
8. The perfect town with a perfect population that he tried to create using his ideas fell into disharmony and dissolved within three years. The fact that Owen went back to England indicates that he had no hope of saving or reviving his project. (CCSS RI. 6.1, 7.1, 81.)
9. 6
1
2
7
4
5
3 (CCSS RI. 6.5, 7.5, 8.5)
10. C (CCSS RI. 6.4, 7.4, 8.4)

Writing Challenge: CCSS RI. 6.3, 7.3, 8.3 RI. 6.8, 7.8, 8.8
W. 6.1, 7.1, 8.1 W. 6.2, 7.2, 8.2 W. 6.3, 7.3, 8.3)