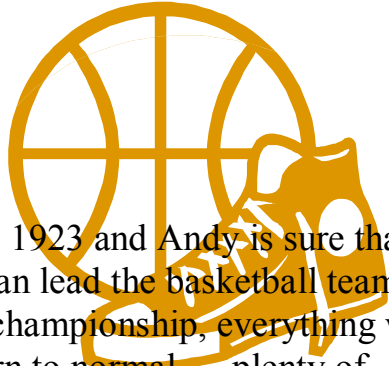


Throwing Stones

by Kristi Collier

Educators Guide



“It’s 1923 and Andy is sure that if he can lead the basketball team to the championship, everything will return to normal. ... plenty of drama. Literary sports fans will be right at home.”

--Kirkus Reviews

About the Book

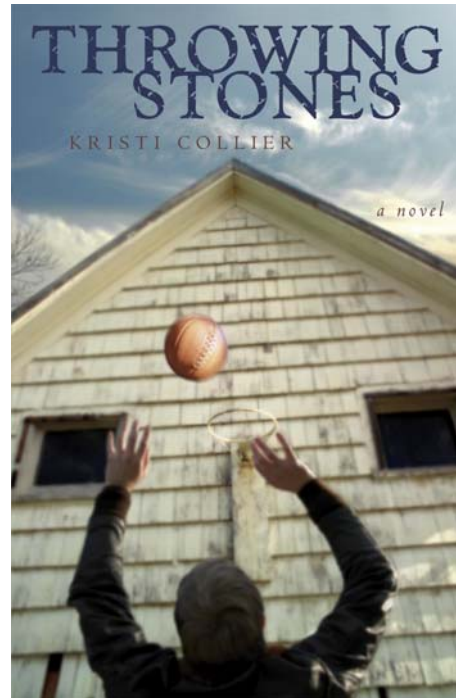
“Good thing he’s only a freshman, eh, Henry?” The doctor helped me to my feet.

Dad just nodded and escorted me to the car.

“You could have been killed,” was all he said during the long, jolting ride home.

Andy Soaring is the best basketball player in Pierre, Indiana. He ought to be, he’s just carrying on the tradition started by his older brother, Pete. When Pete died in WWI, all the hopes and dreams of a state basketball championship transferred to Andy’s shoulders.

In 1923, changes were coming to America. The War to End All Wars was over, and people wanted to celebrate. Prohibition gave rise to bootleggers and moonshine; the radio and the automobile made the world smaller. The world got richer while farmers got poorer. But basketball remained the same; basketball – Andy’s last chance to restore his family.



Jacket photo composite and design by Amelia May Anderson
Jacket photo background © Jupiterimages

Questions for Discussion

Family Relationships

- Andy has a reserved relationship with his family, in part because there are certain things they just don’t talk about. How can lack of communication injure a relationship?
- Everyone in the Soaring family deals with the grief of Pete’s death differently. What are some ways that you’ve seen people grieve?

Sports

- The town of Pierre, Indiana is obsessed about basketball. Does the town where you live become fanatic about a certain team or sport?
- Andy thinks that if he becomes a basketball star, everything will be all right. Do you think it’s possible for success in a sport to fix a problem?
- When Andy is no longer the star of the team, he tries to spread rumors about his rival. Why do people often bad-mouth their competition?

Questions for Discussion

Society and Culture

- In 1920, Prohibition, which made alcohol illegal, went into effect. How did Prohibition benefit society? How did it hurt society?
- Are there laws in place today that you think are especially positive? Are there any laws that you think do more harm than good?
- How was day-to-day life in the 1920's different from life today? How was it similar?

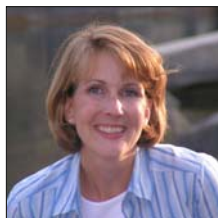
Character and Conscience

- Andy's best friend, Ham, could be considered a "bad influence." How does Ham influence Andy in a negative way? How does he influence him in a positive way?
- Jealousy makes Andy say and do things that he might not otherwise say or do. How have you seen someone negatively impacted by jealousy?
- Several of the characters in *Throwing Stones* act one way in public, but another way in private. How have you experienced hypocritical behavior?

Comprehension

- How did Pete's death in the war impact Andy?
- Andy thought of Mrs. Mortimer's behavior as "crazy." How was Mrs. Mortimer one of the most honest characters in *Throwing Stones*?
- Why are the 1920's often referred to as "the Roaring Twenties?"
- What did Andy decide about Bennie, and about each of their places on the basketball team, by the end of the book?

About the Author



Kristi grew up in Richmond, Indiana, right in the heart of basketball country.

Even though she was cut from her sixth grade basketball team, she remained an avid fan, rooting her high school team to three state tournaments.

Kristi started writing in fifth grade, but in those days it was more of a hobby than a viable occupation. Concerned about her ability to make a living as a writer, she studied journalism at Indiana University, and then went on to receive her Master's degree in mental health counseling. She worked as a counselor in a variety of venues, all the while continuing to work on her dream to write fiction for young readers.

In addition to spending most of her days in front of the computer, writing stories, Kristi currently teaches two writing courses for the Institute of Children's Literature. She also keeps her hand in counseling, working one day a week for a mental health hospital.

Internet Resources

- www.hoopshall.com – Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame.
- www.hickoryhusker.com -- everything you ever wanted to know about Indiana basketball.
- www.collierbooks.com – get a free trading card (!), read an author Q&A, learn how to make a crystal radio set, link to Kristi's blog and more at the author's official website.