

Rising Fifth Grade Summer Reading  
Cambridge Academy  
2024-2025



Ungifted by Gordon Korman

*The word “gifted” had never been applied to a kid like Donovan Curtis. It’s usually more like “Don’t try this at home.” So when the troublemaker pulls a major prank at his middle school, he thinks he’s finally gone too far. But thanks to a mix-up by one of the administrators, instead of getting in trouble, Donovan is sent to the Academy of Scholastic Distinction (ASD), a special program for gifted and talented students.*

Assignment Guidelines:

- Students are required to read Ungifted by Gordon Korman. Parents are encouraged to read with, not for, their child and discuss. Taking turns reading pages is motivating for the reluctant reader.
- Students are required to answer the discussion questions with very little adult support.
- The responses should be the student’s work.
- Students should write the answers in complete and correct sentences.
- The assignment can be handwritten in cursive or typed in 14 font Comic Sans or Arial.
- The Cover Sheet should include the title, author, name, grade, and date. Please submit the assignment stapled and in a folder.

- Papers that are messy, bent, unorganized, hard to read, etc. will not be accepted.

### Ungifted By Gordon Korman

#### Book Discussion Questions:

1. Each chapter in Ungifted opens with the name of a character and his or her IQ. Why do you think the author chose to highlight each person's IQ? Is intelligence the most important part of a person?
2. Who were Donovan's two friends at Hardcastle Middle School? Do you think they were good friends? Why or why not?
3. What was Dr. Schultz's only rule? How does his ability or inability to follow it impact the events of the story?
4. Donovan's idea of the gifted students was that they were "brainiacs and goody goodies." What other stereotypes do you see at play in the story? How do these stereotypes get challenged through the book?
5. Chloe's hypothesis is that being gifted is not a gift because you don't have to pay for a gift. What do you think she means by that statement? Do you agree with her? How can gifts or talents make life challenging?
6. Consider the two schools in the book: the Academy for Scholastic Distinction and Hardcastle Middle School. In what ways are they similar or different?
7. Donovan remarks that "half of being gifted was just the fact that everybody expected you to be smart" (p. 48). Discuss the ways that expectations define characters in the book. How do expectations shape your life?

8. Discuss Noah's reasons for wanting to leave the Academy for Scholastic Distinction and his observations on life as a gifted kid in the chapter titled "Unfailing" (pgs. 100–109). Did it surprise you that he was so unhappy being so smart? What might this reveal about our perceptions of the lives of others?

***(questions taken from Wadsworth Public Library)***