



Lockdown

by Laurie R. King

A discussion guide

1. Before you read the book, did the cover, the title, and the description (“a school held hostage”) make *Lockdown* sound like a “school shooting” book? Now that you’ve read it, do you think *Lockdown* is a good title—or would its original name of *Career Day* have been more appropriate? What do you see as the book’s main theme: the shooting, or the school community?
2. The Bee Cuomo story involves either a supernatural element or a young boy’s delusions. Which do you think is the case? And although her disappearance can be said to trigger off the entire story—and certainly sets the groundwork for the state of the school when Career Day begins—it remains unsolved at the end. Did this bother you?
3. Did you figure out beforehand whodunnit—what was going to happen, and who was going to be responsible?
4. The story is made up of many points of view. Who do you see as its chief protagonist? How do you imagine the book would have been different if the author had stuck to just two or three voices to tell the story?
5. The question of identity permeates the book: Gordon and Tío, Brendan and Sofia—everyone is hiding something. Do the hidden identities drive the story more than those that are obvious?

6. The voices of the Guadalupe Middle School students feel slightly more mature than one expects from middle-school children. In a radio interview, Laurie said that this was deliberate, that adolescents think of themselves as older than they are perceived by adults.

Do you agree?

7. If you were going to recommend this book to a friend and were trying to describe it, what would you say? Is it a mystery? A literary thriller? Neither—or perhaps both?

8. What was the thing you liked most about *Lockdown*? Was there something in the book you'd change, or eliminate? Did all the POV's move the story forward, or were there some that seemed like digressions?

For more background and extras on *Lockdown*, see the book's web page, [here](https://laurierking.com/books/lockdown/overview/).

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