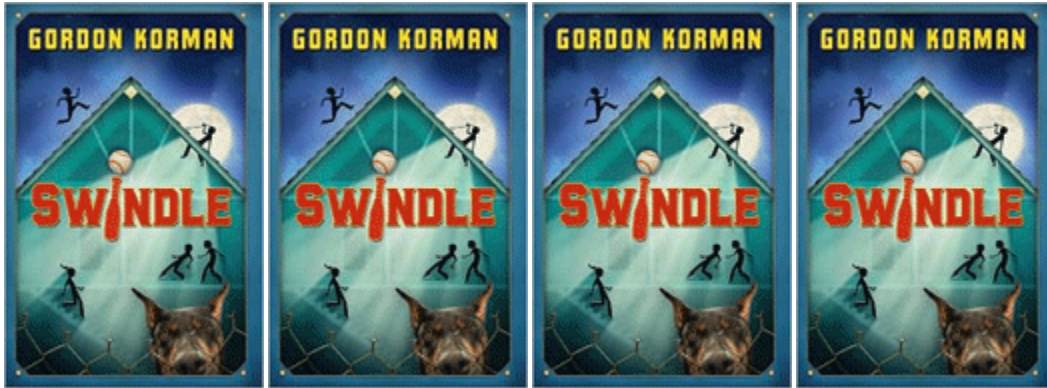


March 2010
DCPS Superintendent's Book of the Month
Grades 6-8
Swindle, by Gordon Korman



- **Summary**

When Griffin Bing and his pal Ben discover an old Babe Ruth baseball card in a home about to be demolished, Griffin—aware that his dad's lack of success as an inventor is causing increasing stress at home—dreams of selling it for thousands and using his share to keep the family financially afloat. The boys are somewhat deflated when they present the card to collectibles dealer S. Wendell Palomino and he suggests that it is a reproduction and buys it for just \$120. They soon discover that the sleazy dealer plans to auction off the card, which is actually an extremely rare misprint, and that it is expected to sell for well over a million dollars. Outraged at having been taken advantage of, Griffin plans to steal the valuable card back from Palomino—or "Swindle," as he now calls him—but doing so is no mean feat. Among the obstacles the boys face are a large fence, a high-tech security system, and a ferocious guard dog. Clearly, special skills are needed, so they recruit a ragtag crew of oddball accomplices including an expert climber, an electronics whiz, an aspiring actor, and an animal lover who claims to be able to put even the most hardened, snarling canines in touch with their cuddly inner puppies. This kids-versus-adults-themed story is pure plot-driven fun from top to bottom.

- **Character Trait for March - Honesty**

Uprightness and fairness, truthfulness, sincerity, frankness, freedom from deceit or fraud, integrity, trustworthiness, and sincerity.

Children exhibit honesty when they: tell the truth, even when it is difficult, do not omit information that may be important, do not mislead people for personal benefit, and face up to their mistakes, even when they might have to face consequences for their actions.

• Questions



1. Choose one of the main characters in the novel, and discuss what motivates him/her to do something dishonest. Use evidence from the story, to explain whether or not that character's actions were justified.



2. Explain another way Griffin could have retrieved the card without being dishonest. How could he have avoided this entire situation all together?



3. In what ways did S. Wendall Palomino show his dishonesty toward others?



4. Explain how money affects the integrity of Griffin, Ben, and Palomino throughout the novel. Use details to support your answer.



5. Read the following quote: "Not by stealing, not by lying about it"(page 227). What do you think Griffin meant by this? What does it reveal about his honesty?

• Check out these or other websites and discover even more...

❖ Author Website

www.gordonkorman.com

❖ Interview with Gordon Korman about writing and his books.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u65rfDZ-rIE>