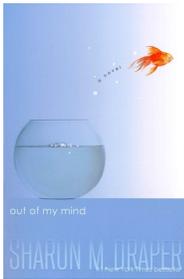


# Books by the Stack



## **Out of My Mind by Sharon M. Draper**

Melody is not like most people. She cannot walk or talk, but she has a photographic memory; she can remember every detail of everything she has ever experienced. She is smarter than most of the adults who try to diagnose her and smarter than her classmates in her integrated classroom. But Melody refuses to be defined by cerebral palsy. And she's determined to let everyone know it...somehow.

**Why you'll like it:** Courageous, uplifting, funny

**About the Author:** Sharon M. Draper was born in Cleveland, Ohio on August 21, 1952. She taught high school English for twenty-five years and received numerous honors including Ohio Teacher of the Year and the NCNW Excellence in Teaching Award. She has also written numerous books including *Romiette and Julio*, *Darkness before Dawn*, *Double Dutch*, and the Ziggy and the Black Dinosaurs series. She is a five-time winner of the Coretta Scott King Literary Award for *Copper Sun*, *Forged by Fire*, *Tears of a Tiger*, *The Battle of Jericho*, and *November Blues*. Her title *Out of My Mind* made The New York Times Best Seller List. (Bowker Author Biography)

### **Questions for Discussion**

1. The novel opens with a powerful discussion of the power of words and language. How does this textual choice help capture the reader's attention?
2. In a world that doesn't work for her, what seems to cause the biggest frustrations for Melody?
3. How do Melody's parents learn to communicate with her and help her to overcome everyday problems? Why are those efforts sometimes a complete failure?
4. How does Melody feel about school? How does she fit in with her classmates and what makes her different from the rest of the children H-5?
5. Describe what role Mrs. V. plays in Melody's development. Why is she a necessary addition to Melody's life?
6. What is significant about the story of Ollie the fish? How does Ollie's life mirror Melody's? Describe Melody's feelings when she is unable to tell her mother what really happened.
7. Describe how the introduction of Penny as a character changes the family dynamics.
8. How does the inclusion program change Melody's school experiences? What are the positive and negative results of the inclusion program?
9. What does Melody learn about friendship during the trip to the aquarium?
10. How does Melody's computer change her life, her outlook on life, and her potential? Why does she name her computer Elvira?
11. Why does Melody decide to enter the quiz team competition? What obstacles must she face and overcome just to get on the team?
12. What does Melody learn about friendship and the relationships of children working together as she

practices and competes with the quiz team? What does she learn about herself?

**13.** Describe Melody's feelings before the trip to the airport, while she was there, and after she gets home. How would you have coped with the same situation?

**14.** Describe Melody's extreme range of emotions as she tries to tell her mother that Penny is behind the car. How did the scene make you feel?

**15.** Discuss the scene in which Melody confront the kids on the quiz team? What is satisfying about how she handles the situation? What else might Melody have done?

**16.** Why is the first page repeated at the end of the book? How has Melody changed, both personally and socially, from the beginning of the book to end?

*(Questions provide by the publisher)*



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