

## ***Firegirl Reader's Guide***

1. Tom is a pretty quiet kid. The only person he really talks to is his friend Jeff, who doesn't seem to listen to him anyway. Tom's mom tells him he needs to "get out there." What do you think that means? What are some ways you "get out there"? Name some things Tom could do.
2. It's obvious that Tom has a crush on Courtney—he daydreams about saving her life everyday. Why do you think Tom imagines he's a superhero? What do you think of his "little powers", like being able to skip really fast or having an indestructible finger? If you could choose a super power, what would it be and why?
3. Mrs. Tracy decides to hold elections for Tom's class and allow everyone to vote. Do you like this idea? Would you run for class president? How would you campaign and what would you say in your speech?
4. When Jessica Feeney arrives in Tom's class, all the students are speechless. Some are even disgusted. Why would they act that way? What do you think makes them afraid? How would you act if you had to meet Jessica?
5. While all the other students talk about Jessica behind her back, Tom feels awful about it. He wants to tell them to stop, but he can't. What makes it so hard for Tom to tell them to stop talking about Jessica? Why do you think he cares? Would you tell your fellow students to stop talking about someone? What would you say?
6. At St. Catherine's, some of the students give Jessica a hard time. Jeff doesn't hold her hand, and some kids say mean things about her behind her back. Why do you think Jessica still wants to go to school with other kids? Do you think she's a stronger person because of it? If you were Jessica, would you go to St. Catherine's?
7. Tom hardly ever talks to anyone besides Jeff, even his parents. But the few times he goes to Jessica's house, he starts to tell her things he's never told anyone else. Why is he able to open up to Jessica? How do you think she understands him? In what ways are Jessica and Tom alike?
8. Jeff complains to Tom about his parent's divorce, because his dad doesn't seem to want to see him and his mom is too busy working. Name some of Jeff's actions that show he's angry at his parents. What are some better ways for him to deal with the divorce? What do

you do when you're angry? Do you know of a friend whose parents are divorced? What effect has this had on how your friend deals with his or her parents? Would you be angry if you were in Jeff's place?

9. Although Jessica was only in Tom's life for a few weeks, she made a big impact on his life. After she leaves, Tom feels like a completely new person. How do you think meeting Jessica changed Tom's view on life? What do you think happened to Tom? Has there been a person in your life who has changed you the same way?