Dear Gordon Korman,

I have never really wondered why bullies pick on people who have never done anything to them. I have never thought about why someone would be mean to someone else just because they look like a weak target. Your book, Schooled, made me wonder why anyone would do such a thing. It just doesn't seem fair to me now. Before I read your book, I would walk right by someone who was being shoved around for what seemed like no reason. I would let the bully do whatever they wanted. Now when I see someone being mistreated, I remember your book and speak up for what I feel is right.

One time was when I was walking down the street from my house to a park nearby and I noticed a kid shoving another kid around. He was a big kid and the other person didn't seem like he could do anything about it. If I hadn't read your book I don't think I would've stopped to help him at all. In your book Capricorn (Cap) Anderson gets bullied many times by Zach Powers and hardly anybody does anything about it. Schooled inspired me to help the kid. I had read that Cap got badly injured and I didn’t want something like that to happen. They were on the far side of the park, so I had to run to get to them. I offered him a hand and helped him up, trying to separate him from the other guy.

While reading your book, I started wondering that if someone was going to bully, shouldn't they pick on someone their own size? I have noticed that that type of thing doesn't happen often. When people bully they pick someone who is weak so they can have an easy time making fun of them. But sometimes the person they choose hasn't done anything wrong. I have seen so many people get bullied for no reason. In Schooled, Cap hasn't done anything to the other eighth graders and yet they still treat him like he's a toy created for them to play with.

I can remember many times before I read your book when I would see someone being treated unfairly. There were so many times I could have helped out to prevent bullying back when I was in pre-K, kindergarten, first grade, and second grade. I was much younger then but I still remember it well. But instead of helping when I could I just thought something like too bad for them without bothering to do anything. Thanks to Schooled, it is different now. If I see anyone being bullied, your book reminds me that the kind thing to do would be to help. With help, bullying can be less bad and less painful. In it, Cap nearly gets bullied to death. It showed me that without help, victims can have horrible things done to them.

One time I walked right passed bullying before I read your book, it was during recess when I was in preschool. Some of the bigger kids were punching a smaller, younger kid and laughing at him. I saw it happening and thought something like I'm glad that's not me! Then, without helping, got out of there as fast as I could so the bigger kids wouldn't notice me. Another time was when I was in first grade. I was at recess again and I was walking past the monkey bars when I saw someone getting shoved down by a bigger kid. I had no idea why and it was probably for no reason. But I didn't help. Like I did before I walked away without helping at all.

I feel that my perspective has changed because you have shown me what can happen if bullies are not stood up to. If I had read your book back then and understood what it meant to me, I might have helped those kids being bullied. I could have helped stop bullying much more than I did. Thank you for writing Schooled. It is a book that has greatly impacted my life and how I think about the world. If it wasn’t for your book I don’t know if my view would have changed about bullying. You have given me wings and now I can fly.

Sincerely,

Galen Yane