

Reading ^{with} Relevance

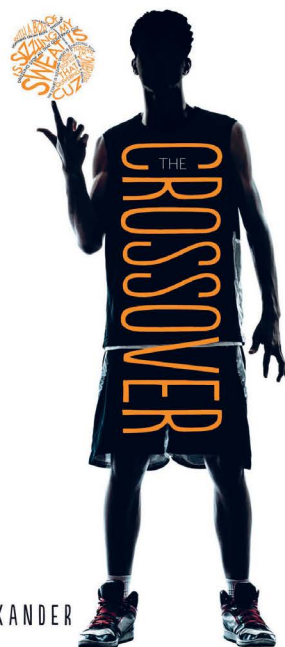
Building INDEPENDENT READERS and THINKERS

A TEACHER'S GUIDE FOR

The Crossover

A novel by Kwame Alexander

"BOLD! EXPLOSIVE! . . . I LOVE *THE CROSSOVER*. EVERYONE WILL." —NIKKI GIOVANNI

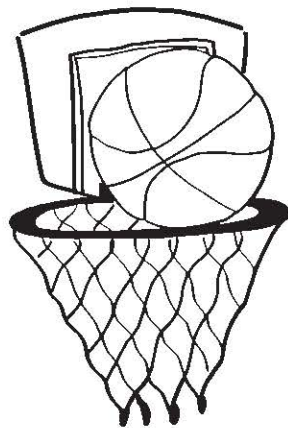


Recommended for:
Grade Levels
4th-6th

A tool to inspire change

This literacy curriculum is constructed around a content-rich novel that builds students' literacy skills and supports their character development and self-confidence. Students are motivated to read because they relate to the strong, diverse, and resilient characters featured in our selected novels and because each session gives them the opportunity to connect what they've read to their own lives.

Developed, field-tested, and refined in our own tutoring and mentoring programs, this Common Core Standards curriculum has inspired persistently low-performing students to engage with literature, make meaning in their lives, and improve their English language arts skills. Now, *Reading with Relevance* is available to help you dig deep into the social, emotional, and academic needs of your students, whether in your classroom, after-school program, or youth development agency!



Why The Crossover?

This novel tells the story of Josh Bell, a fierce basketball player and studious seventh grader. Josh works hard on the court to bring his team to a championship victory, all while dealing with family drama off the court. We chose this book for its distinctive voice, relatable characters, and deft exploration of important social and emotional themes like family, jealousy, health, and loss. This curriculum will inspire students to build connections between Josh's transformative story and their own.

This teacher's guide includes:

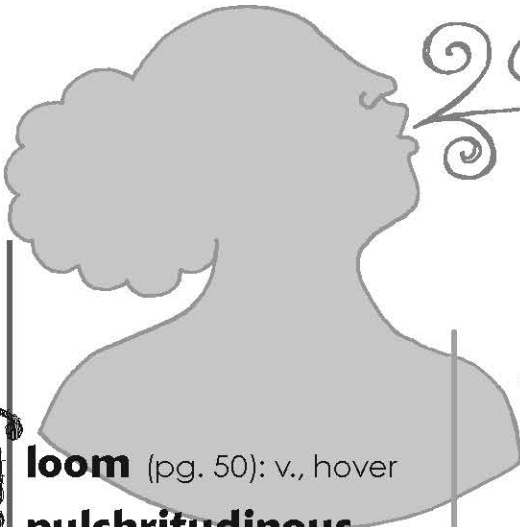
- A facilitator's guide with tips and resources for implementing the curriculum.
- A map of Common Core Standards addressed through this program.
- Nine individual lesson plans, including vocabulary, discussion questions, journal prompts, extension activities, and all handouts.
- Two assessments to monitor student progress throughout the program.
- Regular checkpoints to help teachers assess their students' progress on ELA standards.
- A culminating essay-writing unit.
- An appendix with additional teaching resources and activities to continue exploring this novel.

Session 3

pages 50-85



Vocabulary



loom (pg. 50): v., hover

pulchritudinous

(pg. 54): adj., very beautiful, attractive

oozing (pg. 67): adj., filled with and overflowing

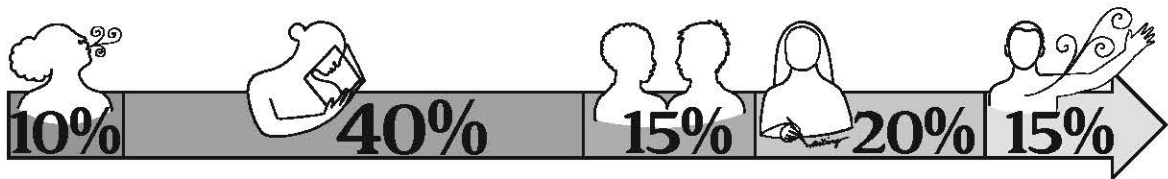
mock (pg. 69): v., to tease

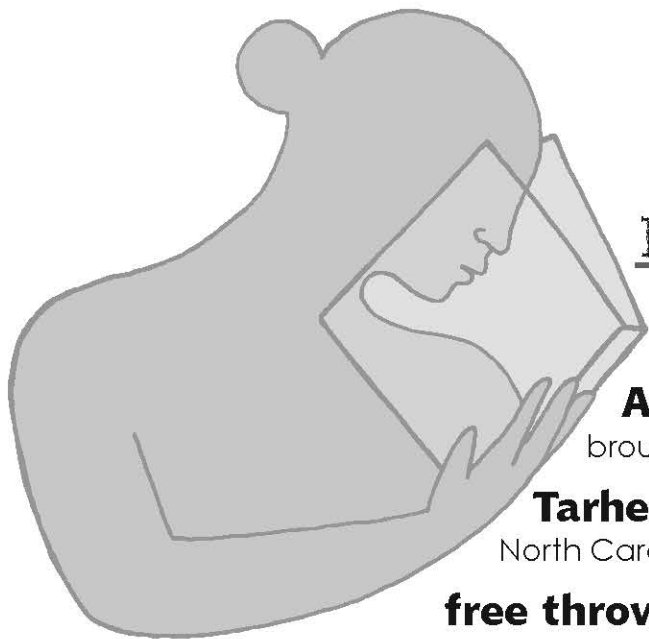
Today's Theme

The theme for today's session is **work ethic**. Josh's father has instilled a strong work ethic in both his boys. Josh is dedicated to working hard at basketball to improve his game, and he also works hard at school. Basketball Rule #2 is, "Work smart, live smarter; play hard, practice harder." Basketball Rules #2 and #3 are about working hard and not allowing other's expectations to define or distract. What does it mean to "work smart"? What can we learn from Josh's work ethic? You can talk with your students about their own work ethic: how might they improve? How can other people's expectations of them work for or against their goals?

Session 2 Recap

In the previous session, Josh and JB play and win a basketball game. JB, who we learn likes to bet, places a bet with Josh. Josh loses the bet and has to let JB cut off one of his dreads. JB cuts off more than he is supposed to, and Josh ends up having to cut off all of his hair. Josh also reveals that his mother and father argue frequently about his dad's eating habits. At the end of the session, the twins discover that Chuck had patellar tendinitis, and they wonder why he never had surgery.





During Reading

waxing poetic (pg. 54): to become talkative in a poetic way

Apollo 17 (pg. 56): the space shuttle that brought the first humans to the moon

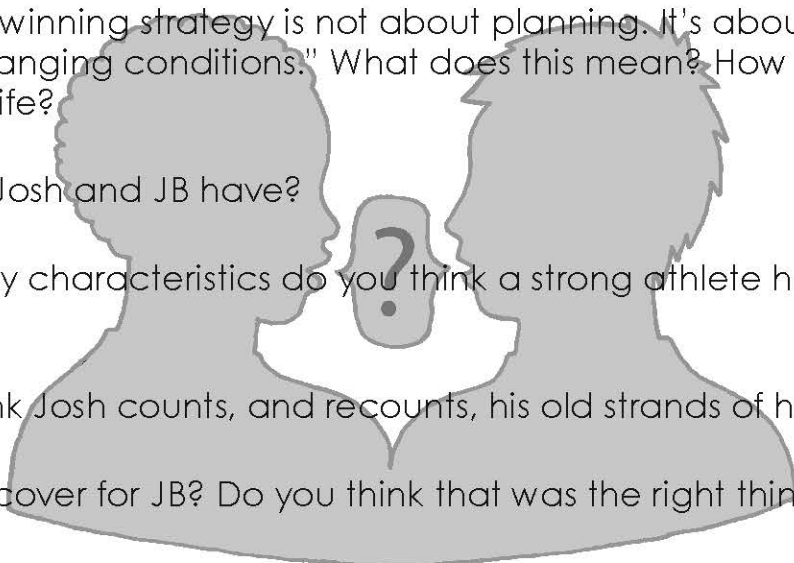
Tarheel Lover (pg. 59): a fan of the University of North Carolina's basketball team

free throws (pg. 70): Shots players make when they are fouled in the act of shooting. Free throws can potentially win or lose a game.

hypertension (pg. 74): high blood pressure, a condition which can be genetic and fatal if left untreated

Discussion Questions

- What tradition does the Bell family have on Sundays? What traditions do you and your family have?
- Coach says, "A winning strategy is not about planning. It's about quick responses to changing conditions." What does this mean? How does it apply to Josh's life?
- What goals do Josh and JB have?
- What personality characteristics do you think a strong athlete has to have?
- Why do you think Josh counts, and recounts, his old strands of hair?
- Why does Josh cover for JB? Do you think that was the right thing to do?
- How do you think Josh feels about taking the fall? What would you have done in JB's position?



Journal Prompt

WORK ETHIC

- Josh is focused on basketball, and works hard to be the best player possible. This means putting in extra hours practicing and thinking about basketball even when he is not playing.

How would you describe your work ethic?

- » How do you think you can improve your work ethic?
- » Why is it important to have a strong work ethic? How does it help you achieve your goals?
- » Who helps to drive you to work hard?

CONNECTION

- Josh is incredibly close with his family. He shoots free throws with his father and brother every evening after dinner, and his mom is a loving and caring parent as well.

Who in your life do you have a strong connection with?

- » How does it feel to have this person in your life?
- » How is your connection similar to or different from Josh's?
- » How can you show this person your appreciation?

Checkpoint

- Students should start each journal entry by introducing the topic of their writing.
 - » Construct a clear topic sentence.
 - » For example, "Today, I am going to write about _____."

Extension Activity

Josh has some big goals and plans for his life, and he is willing to work hard at basketball and school to make his dreams come true. In this activity, students will use the "My Goals" handout to outline some of their own goals and actions.

Materials:

- » My Goals Handout

Name: _____

#1 Time frame:

By the end of this school year...

By the end of middle school...

By the time I graduate high school...

By the time I finish college...

Earning my dream job...

#2 My Goals:

#3 To achieve this goal I need to:

What challenges might you face on your way to reaching your goals? How will you overcome those challenges?

Who can support you in reaching these goals?

Use this handout to list some of your goals and dreams and think through how you might reach those goals. Dream big!

My Goals

Appendix

Additional Activities

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Get to Know MFI

Moving Forward Institute is a nonprofit publisher of social justice educational materials. The organization was created by the founders and staff of Moving Forward Education, a multi-generational tutoring and mentoring organization aimed at fostering academic and emotional success for underserved students in California. Since our founding in 2003, MFE has provided tutoring and mentoring services to thousands of students and has trained hundreds of young adults to enter careers in the educational field. This reading curriculum was developed by our leadership team and its advisory group, including credentialed teachers and college professors. This program has been successfully facilitated throughout California by achieving powerful and measurable results for students and schools. To learn more about our organization, or our research and data, please contact us today.

Our Purpose

At Moving Forward Institute, we know that students can be successful learners when their social and emotional needs are met.

We empower educators to meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of their students by using culturally-relevant and gender-responsive reading curricula.

Training and Professional Development Services

While lesson plans are designed to be easily facilitated by classroom teachers and after-school staff alike, our in-person training and professional development services will ensure fully effective implementation of the literacy curricula.

Additionally, we offer technical support, classroom observation, and program evaluation services to help your program be successful. Contact us for more information about these services!

Contact Us

Contact us today to learn more about how the Moving Forward Institute can support your students and staff!

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If your students liked *The Crossover*. . .

*...they might love some of our other book selections! We suggest that you check out *Camo Girl*, *One Crazy Summer*, or *Wonder*. Please visit our website today to browse our full selection of socially and emotionally rich novel-based curricula!*