

Reading ^{with} Relevance

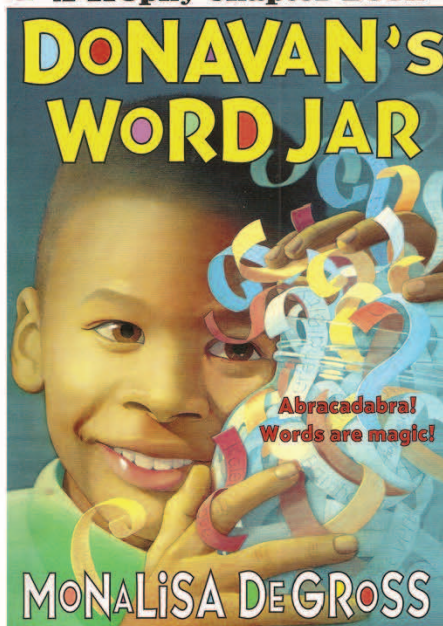
Building INDEPENDENT READERS and THINKERS

A TEACHER'S GUIDE FOR

Donavan's Word Jar

A Trophy Chapter Book

A novel by Monalisa DeGross



Recommended for:
Grade Levels
2nd-3rd


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!

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.
- Seven individual lesson plans, including vocabulary, discussion questions, journal prompts, extension activities, and all handouts.
- An assessment to monitor student progress.
- Regular checkpoints to help teachers assess their students' progress on ELA standards.
- A culminating essay-building unit.
- An appendix with additional teaching resources and activities to continue exploring this novel.



Why *Donavan's Word Jar*

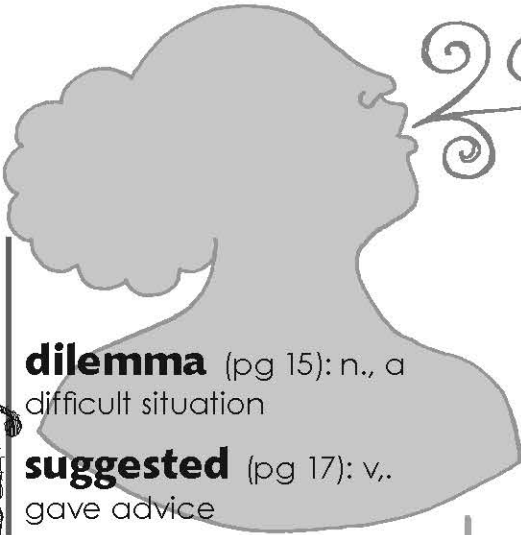
Donavan's Word Jar is the story of a young African-American boy, Donavan, on a search to solve his dilemma - he has too many words to fit in his word jar collection! We chose this novel for its powerful

attention to some rich social and emotional themes: perseverance, family, empathy, education, and kindness. Students will find themselves relating to and being inspired by Donavan's search for a solution; this curriculum will help students build connections between Donavan's life story and their own lives.



Session 2

pages 15-23



Vocabulary

dilemma (pg 15): n., a difficult situation

suggested (pg 17): v., gave advice

solution (pg 17): n., an answer to a problem

advice (pg. 18) n., a helpful piece of information

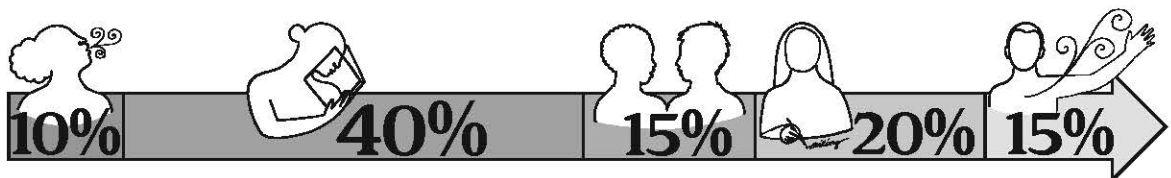
definitive (pg. 19) adj., certain

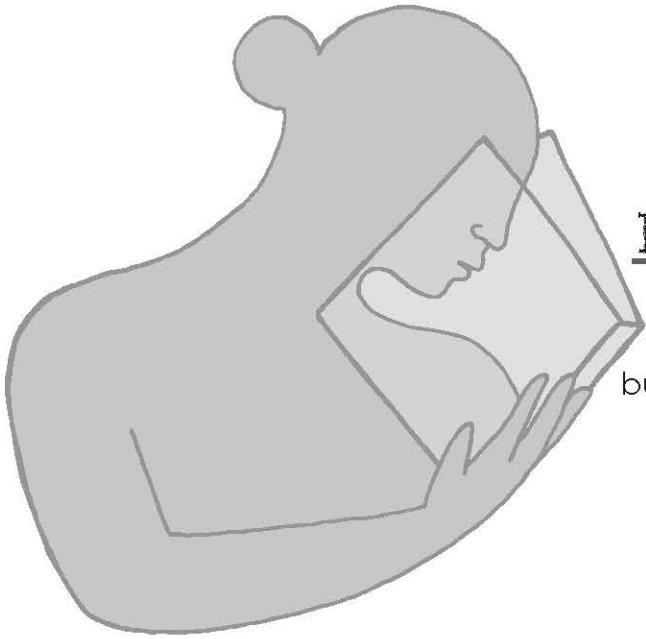
Today's Theme

Today's theme is **problem-solving**. Donovan has a problem with too many words in his jar, so he goes to people he trusts for advice. Have students think about how they problem-solve. Do they brainstorm a list of ideas? Do they think quietly about it? Do they ask other people? Have them consider the people in their lives who they can trust to help with problems.

Session 1 Recap

Donavan, the main character, is in Mrs. Panky's 3rd-grade class. While other students in the class collect objects such as stamps and marbles, Donovan is unique because he likes to collect words. The word collection started one morning at breakfast when Donovan noticed an interesting word on the back of the cereal box – "nutrition." Donovan liked the way it sounded, so he began to take notice of new words around him in everyday life. For every new word, Donovan writes it down on a strip of paper and puts it in his jar. Donovan keeps this jar in his room, up high so his little sister Nikki will not reach it, and it becomes a prized possession.





During Reading

workshop (pg 20): refers to a wood workshop where Donovan's father is able to build crafts

A stylized, grey-toned illustration of two people's heads in profile, facing each other as if in conversation. Between their heads is a speech bubble containing a large question mark.

Discussion Questions

- What is Donovan's problem?
- What are the solutions people suggest to Donovan?
- Do you think these are good suggestions? Which one do you think is the best?
- How does Donovan feel about these "solutions"?
- If you were Donovan, what would you do?

PROBLEM-SOLVING

- Donovan has a problem: too many words to fit in the jar. Think about a problem you've had in your life. How did you solve it?

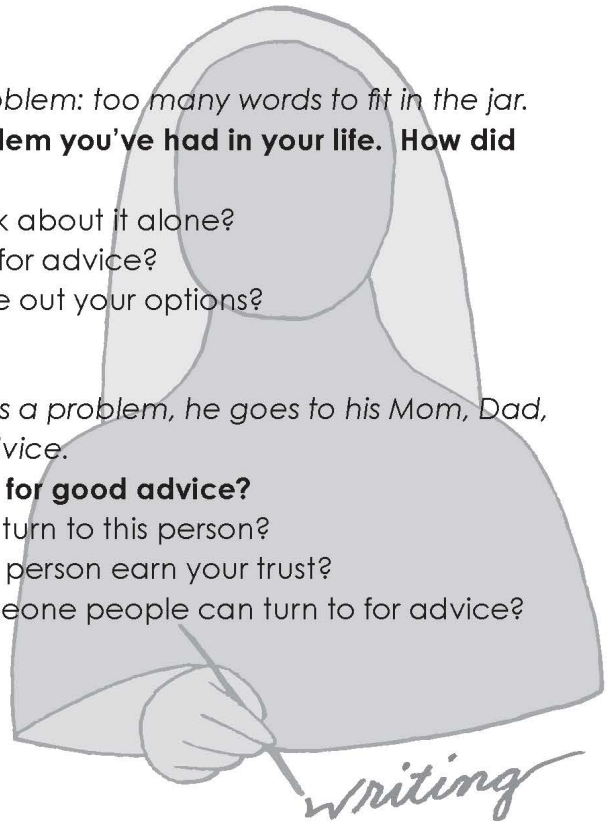
- » Did you think about it alone?
- » Did you ask for advice?
- » Did you write out your options?

ADVICE

- When Donovan has a problem, he goes to his Mom, Dad, and teacher for advice.

Who do you turn to for good advice?

- » Why do you turn to this person?
- » How did this person earn your trust?
- » Are you someone people can turn to for advice?



Extension Activity

Donovan's word jar is very special to him. Today's activity allows your students to think about what item is equally special to them in their lives. Help your students complete the "Special to Me" handout.

Materials:

- » Special to Me Handout

Name: _____

Name of Special Item

Drawing of My Special Item

What makes this special to me is . . .



Donavan's word jar is very special to him. Everyone has something that is special to them! Write about something that is special to you, and explain why it is so special.

Special to Me

Appendix

Additional Activities

Contents

Words Can Help.....	48
Venn Diagram	49
My Own Dictionary	50
Real Life Connector	51
Connections: <i>Feelings</i>.....	52
Donavan's Word Jar Standards Quiz	53
Vocabulary Match	54
Answer Key	55
Student Evaluation	56
Teacher Reflection.....	58
About Us.....	59



About Us

MOVING FORWARD[™]

I N S T I T U T E

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 *Donavan's Word Jar*

...they might love some of our other book selections! We suggest that you check out Keena Ford and the Second-Grade Mix-Up. Please visit our website today to browse our full selection of socially and emotionally rich novel-based curricula!