

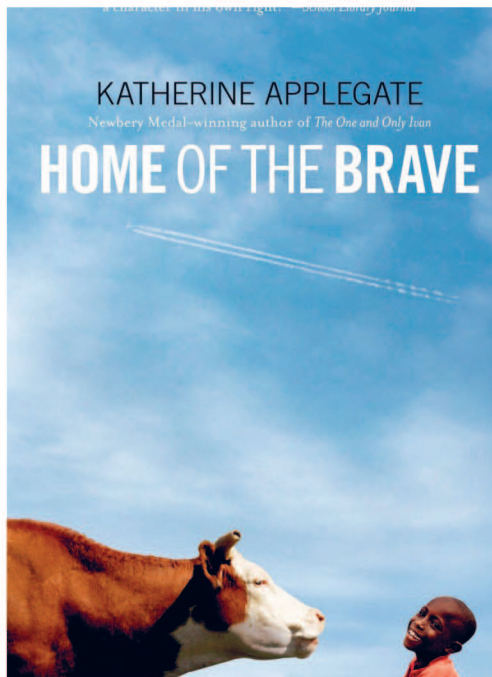
# Reading <sup>with</sup> Relevance

Building INDEPENDENT READERS and THINKERS

A TEACHER'S GUIDE FOR

## Home of the Brave

A novel by Katherine Applegate

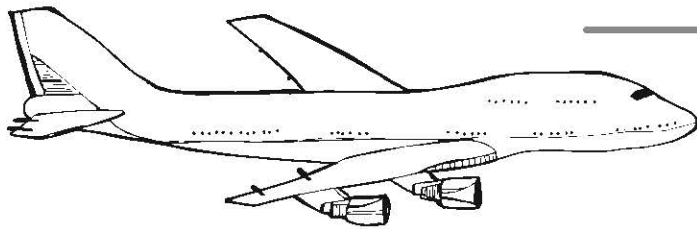


Recommended for:  
Grade Levels  
4th-6th

# 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 *Home of the Brave*

*Home of the Brave* tells the story of a very brave and optimistic eleven-year-old named Kek, who uses poetry to narrate his experience fleeing war-torn Sudan and settling into a very new and previously unimaginable life in the United States. We chose this novel for its thoughtful attention to some powerful social and emotional themes: culture, immigration, loss, perseverance, family, and resilience. Students will find themselves relating to and being inspired by Kek's journey; this curriculum will help students build connections between Kek's experiences 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.
- Eleven 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 2

pages 23-50



## Vocabulary

**optimist** (pg. 27): n., someone who sees the positive side of every situation

**herders** (pg. 29): n., people who take care of flocks of animals

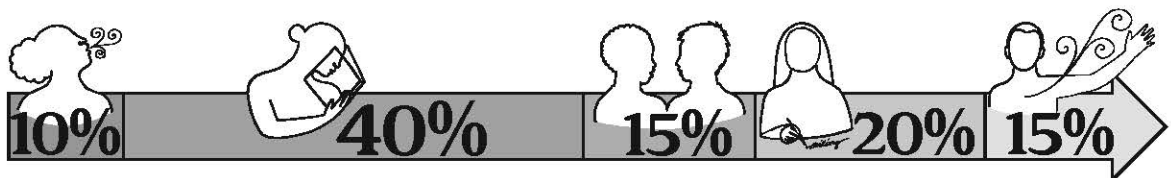
**dune** (pg. 34): n., a hill of sand

## Today's Theme

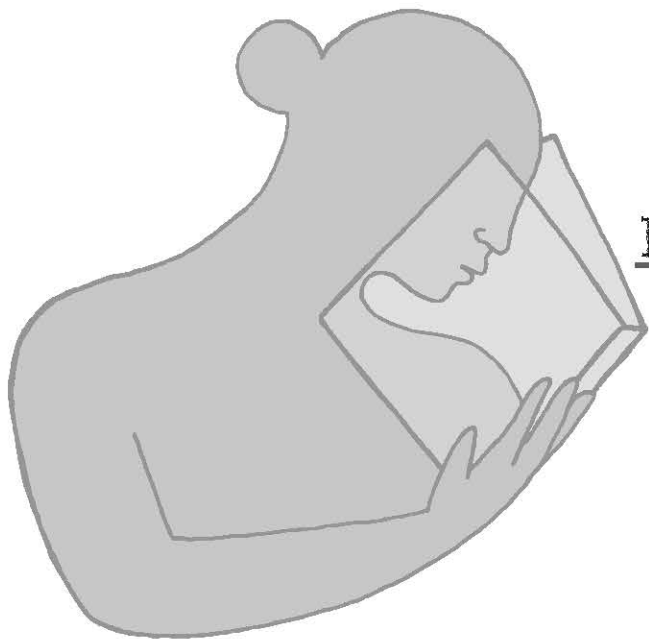
Today's theme is **memory**. Kek spends much of today's reading recounting memories of his father, brother, and mother. We learn more about Kek's home and culture in this session, as well as what his family was like. You can talk to students about how memories can sometimes be painful, even if the memory is a happy one. Have students brainstorm ways to comfort themselves when painful memories arise. What advice might they have for Kek?

## Session 1 Recap

Kek arrives in Minnesota with Dave, a man who helps refugees. Kek experiences snow for the first time and starts to adjust to a new language and culture. He reunites with his aunt and cousin, Ganwar, but feels sad because they are not his "truest" family, which is made up of his mother, father, and brother. We learn that his father and brother are dead, and his mother is missing. Kek hopes his mother will be with him soon.







### During Reading

**magic water pot** (pg. 33): Kek's description of a toilet

A stylized, grey-toned illustration of two people from the chest up, facing each other in profile. A large question mark is positioned between them, suggesting a conversation or a question being asked.

## Discussion Questions

- What are some differences between Kek's home in Africa and his new home in Minnesota?
- What do we learn about Kek's father?
- What do you think is the meaning of the song Kek's father sings?
- What does Kek tell us about Lual, his brother?
- When Kek talks about the life he's left, how do you think the memories make him feel?
- What do Kek and Ganwar disagree about?
- What does Kek tell us about his mother?
- How do people respond when Kek talks about his mother?
- What is the "sleep story" Kek experiences?

HOPE

- Ganwar and Kek have a conversation about hope. Kek chooses to believe that his mother is still alive, but Ganwar believes that this kind of hope can hurt.

**What do you think about hope? Do you agree with Ganwar or with Kek?**

- » How does Kek's hope that his mother is alive help him cope with the losses he has experienced?
- » How might this hope hurt him?
- » Ganwar has let go of hopeful expectations. How does this serve him?
- » Write about a time when you hoped for something.

LOSS

- Both Kek and Ganwar have experienced so much loss. Ganwar lost his best friend, his father, cousin, and even the use of his hand.

**How do you think Kek and Ganwar each feel about the losses they've experienced in their lives?**

- » How do you think their memories about the things they've lost make them feel?
- » What would you suggest Kek do to cope with his feelings of grief and sadness?
- » Can you relate to Kek and Ganwar? Write about a loss you have experienced in your own life.



**Extension Activity**

Kek spends a lot of time remembering his family and his time at home. Even though some of these memories are painful, the act of remembering can be healing. Help students see the good in their lives by having them create lists of their favorite memories.

**Materials:**

- » Memories Handout

## Memories with my family:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Memories with my friends:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

## Memories at School:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

## Movie Memories

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

## Other Favorite Memories

## Traveling Memories

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

Kek spends a lot of time remembering his family and his time at home, and these memories help sustain him amid all of the new experiences he encounters. How do memories impact your life? What memories are most important to you? Complete the chart above listing your favorite memories.

## Memories

# 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!*

**Online:** [www.movingforwardinstitute.org](http://www.movingforwardinstitute.org)  
**By Email:** [info@movingforwardinstitute.org](mailto:info@movingforwardinstitute.org)  
**By Phone:** 510-658-4475  
**By Mail:** 1425 Park Ave  
Emeryville, CA 94608

### If your students liked *Home of the Brave* . . .

*...they might love some of our other book selections! We suggest that you check out *Walk Two Moons*, *Inside Out & Back Again*, or *Bud, Not Buddy*. Please visit our website today to browse our full selection of socially and emotionally rich novel-based curricula!*