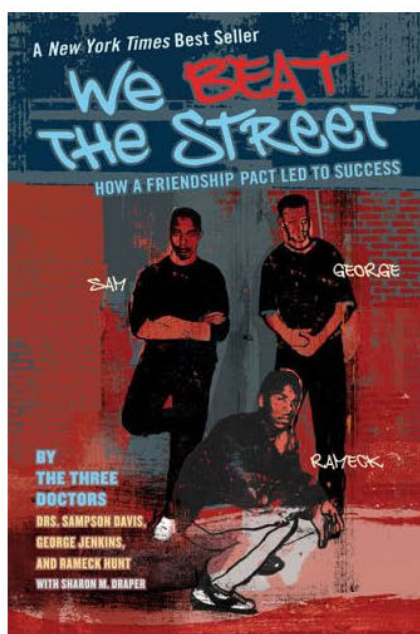


Reading ^{with} Relevance

Building INDEPENDENT READERS and THINKERS

A TEACHER'S GUIDE FOR

We Beat the Street



A autobiography by Drs. Sampson Davis, George Jenkins and Rameck Hunt with Sharon Draper

Recommended for:
Grade Levels
8th-10th

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!

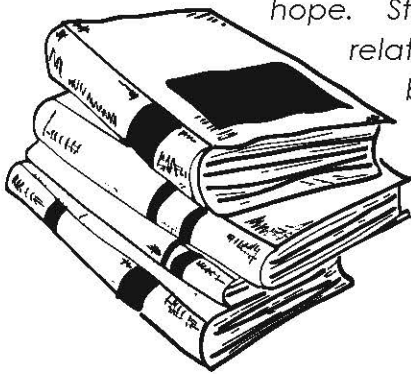
This teacher's guide includes:

- A facilitator's guide with tips and resources for implementing the curriculum.
- A map of Common Core Standards addressed through this program.
- Ten individual lesson plans, including vocabulary, discussion questions, journal prompts, extension activities, and all handouts.
- Two assessments 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 *We Beat the Street*

We Beat the Street traces the true-life story of three friends—Sam, George, and Rameck—coming of age in Newark, New Jersey. The book demonstrates the power of friendship by showing how these young men surmount the incredible obstacles they face as a team, supporting one another to earn their college and medical degrees. We chose this novel for its insightful attention to some powerful social and emotional themes: education, poverty, social inequality, violence, perseverance, and hope. Students will find themselves

relating to and being inspired by the three doctors' story; this curriculum will help students build connections between the young men's experiences and their own.



Session 7

pages 121-136



Vocabulary

brash (pg. 121): adj., harsh or bold

earnestly (pg. 123): adv., with honesty

vigorously (pg. 124): adv., with great enthusiasm

dynamo (pg. 130): n., a very energetic person

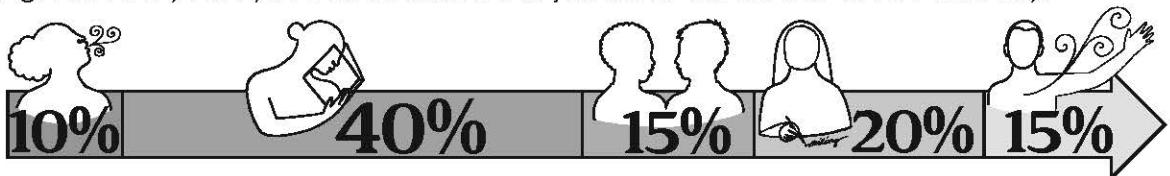
rigors (pg. 131): n., difficulties

Today's Theme

Today's theme is **believing in yourself**. Rameck, George, and Sampson are accepted into college and are attending pre-college classes at Seton Hall. They have overcome incredible obstacles, and they have gotten to college in part because they believed in themselves and supported each other. Talk with your students about how important it is to believe that they, too, can achieve their dreams. Have them think about where Rameck, George, and Sampson came from. Remind them that you believe in them because you know that they can achieve anything they put their minds to!

Session 6 Recap

Rameck's mother warns him to stay away from his friends because they are bad influences. Rameck ignores his mother's advice, and ends up with friends who sell crack. His friends badly beat up an addict when the man does drugs near a school they told him to avoid. Rameck is taken to jail, and his mom won't pick him up, so he spends four days in a juvenile detention center. During the summer, Sampson and his friends decide to rob a drug dealer for easy cash, but he is caught and goes to jail. His lawyer is able to get the charges lessened, and he is ultimately given two-years probation instead of jail time. His friends aren't as lucky.



During Reading

remediation and preparation program (pg. 128): Remedial classes are for students who need extra help to get to the level they need to be at for “regular” college classes.

boot camp (pg. 130): Boot camp is the initial military training for new recruits. It is known for being very difficult and strict.

pulmonary specialist (pg. 134): a doctor who focuses on the lungs

Discussion Questions

- How would you feel if you were George, Rameck, or Sampson waiting to hear if you had been accepted to college?
- How do they feel when they find out they all got into college?
- What are the dorms like?
- Why does Carla say they already ARE doctors? What does it take to be a doctor?
- What courses do they have to take in their summer program? Which of these classes sound most interesting to you?
- What do they like about Carla?
- What do the other students think a Doctor “should look like”? What do you think?
- What does Dr. Blackman mean when he says that health care in America is a “dual system”? What are the consequences of that?

Journal Prompt

PRIVILEGE

- When Sampson, George, and Rameck begin medical school, they begin to see the privileges that other students bring to the program. Many of their peers have been on a college track their entire lives, while the three young men have catching up to do in remedial courses.

What differences do the three young men see between themselves and their peers?

- » What do you think it felt like to realize the privileges that others have?
- » How would you have felt in their shoes?
- » Have you ever experienced this feeling? What made you feel this way?

LOOKING RIGHT

- The class debates what a doctor “should” look like: whether she or he should wear “nice” clothes or “ghetto” clothes.

What do you think a doctor “should” look like?

- » Do you agree that a doctor should wear “nice” clothing?
- » What would you think if your doctor was wearing baggy jeans?
- » Why do you think we have certain expectations about how a doctor “should” look? Who do those expectations favor?

Checkpoint

- **Student writing should include details that describe actions, thoughts, and feelings.**
 - » Students should convey a clear understanding of the character, both through describing their actions and their internal state.
 - » For example, “When the character said _____ she seemed to be feeling _____.”

Extension Activity

George, Sampson, and Rameck make a pact together to help support each other through high school and on into college—their mutual support has helped them achieve something very few others from their neighborhood achieve. Have students draw up a pact that they will share with a close friend, family member, or teacher. Have them choose someone they think will hold them accountable. What promises will they make to someone else to be sure they can succeed through high school and go on to college? What barriers do they face and how can they overcome these barriers? With someone holding them accountable, they have more support to reach their goals!

Materials:

- » Make a Pact Handout

Name: _____

THE PACT

George, Sampson, and Rameck make a pact to support each other through high school and on into college—their mutual support helped them achieve something very few others from their neighborhood achieve. Draw up your own pact that you will share with a close friend, family member, or teacher. Choose someone who will hold you accountable. What promises will you make to someone else to be sure you can succeed through high school and go on to college? What barriers do you face and how can you overcome them? With someone holding you accountable, you have even more support to reach your goals!

Make a Pact

Appendix

Additional Activities

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Essay Word Bank | 64 |
| Final Essay Outline | 65 |
| Six Traits Writing Rubric | 66 |
| Editing Tool | 67 |
| Linking to Culture: <i>Expository Reading</i> | 68 |
| Letter to the Author | 70 |
| Real Life Connector | 71 |
| Counting My Assets | 72 |
| My Memoir | 73 |
| Imagine the Movie | 74 |
| Answer Key | 75 |
| Student Evaluation | 76 |
| Teacher Reflection | 78 |
| About Us | 79 |



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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Emeryville, CA 94608

If your students liked *We Beat the Street*...

...they might love some of our other book selections! We suggest that you check out *Street Life: Poverty, Gangs and a Ph.D.* or *The House on Mango Street*. Please visit our website today to browse our full selection of socially and emotionally rich novel-based curricula!