

Look Both Ways: A Tale Told in Ten Blocks



By

Jason Reynolds

A Novel Study
by Nat Reed

Look Both Ways

By Jason Reynolds



Table of Contents

Suggestions and Expectations	3
List of Skills	4
Synopsis / Author Biography	5
Student Checklist	6
Reproducible Student Booklet	7
Answer Key	78

About the author: Nat Reed was a member of the teaching profession for more than 35 years. He was a full-time instructor at Trent University in the Teacher Education Program for nine years. For more information on his work and literature, visit novelstudies.org.

Copyright © 2020 Nat Reed
Revisions Completed in 2025
All rights reserved by author.
Permission to copy for single classroom use only.
Electronic distribution limited to single classroom use only.
Not for public display.

Look Both Ways

By Jason Reynolds



Suggestions and Expectations

This curriculum unit can be used in a variety of ways. Each chapter of the novel study focuses on one chapter of **Look Both Ways** and is comprised of the following activities:

1. Before You Read
2. Vocabulary Building
3. Comprehension Questions
4. Language and Extension Activities

A portfolio cover (page 7) as well as a Checklist (page 6) are included so that students may track their completed work.

Every activity need not be completed by all students.

Links with the Common Core Standards (U.S.)

Many of the activities included in this curriculum unit are supported by the Common Core Standards. For instance the *Reading Standards for Literature, Grade 5*, makes reference to:

- a) determining the meaning of words and phrases. . . including figurative language;
- b) explaining how a series of chapters fits together to provide the overall structure;
- c) compare and contrast two characters;
- d) determine how characters ... respond to challenges;
- e) drawing inferences from the text;
- f) determining a theme of a story . . . **and many others.**

Themes which may be taught in conjunction with the novel include the importance of friendship and loyalty, personal growth, the importance of community, courage,

Look Both Ways

By Jason Reynolds

List of Skills

Vocabulary Development

1. Locating descriptive words/phrases
2. Listing synonyms/homophones
3. Identifying/creating *alliteration*
4. Use of capitals and punctuation
5. Identifying syllables
6. Identify *personification*.
7. Identify *anagrams*
8. Listing compound words
9. Identifying parts of speech
10. Identify/create *similes*
11. Identification of root words

Setting Activities

1. Summarize the details of a setting

Plot Activities

1. Complete a *time line* of events
2. Identify conflict in the story
3. Complete Five W's Chart
4. Identify *cliffhangers*
5. Identify the climax of the novel.
6. Complete a Story Pyramid

Character Activities

1. Determine character traits
2. Identify the protagonist
3. Relating personal experiences
4. Compare characters

Creative and Critical Thinking

1. Research
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Participate in a talk show
4. Conduct an interview
5. Create a poem
6. Write a description of personal feelings
7. Write a book review
8. Complete an Observation Chart
9. Complete a KWS Chart
10. Create a friendly letter.

Art Activities

1. A Storyboard
2. Create a collage
3. Design a cover for the novel
4. Create a comic strip

Look Both Ways

By Jason Reynolds

Synopsis

This story was going to begin like all the best stories. With a school bus falling from the sky. But no one saw it happen. They were all too busy—

Talking about boogers.
Stealing pocket change.
Skateboarding.
Wiping out.
Braving up.
Executing complicated handshakes.
Planning an escape.
Making jokes.
Lotioning up.
Finding comfort.
But mostly, too busy walking home.

Jason Reynolds conjures ten tales (one per block) about what happens after the dismissal bell rings, and brilliantly weaves them into one wickedly funny, piercingly poignant look at the detours we face on the walk home, and in life. [Courtesy of the publisher]

Author Biography

Jason Reynolds

Jason Reynolds is a #1 *New York Times* bestselling author, a Newbery Award Honoree, a Printz Award Honoree, a two-time National Book Award finalist, a Kirkus Award winner, a two-time Walter Dean Myers Award winner, an NAACP Image Award Winner, and the recipient of multiple Coretta Scott King honors. Reynolds is also the 2020–2021 National Ambassador for Young People’s Literature. His many books include *When I Was the Greatest*, *The Boy in the Black Suit*, *All American Boys* (cowritten with Brendan Kiely), *As Brave as You*, *For Every One*, the Track series (*Ghost*, *Patina*, *Sunny*, and *Lu*), *Look Both Ways*, and *Long Way Down*, which received a Newbery Honor, a Printz Honor, and a Coretta Scott King Honor. He lives in Washington, DC. You can find his ramblings at JasonWritesBooks.com. [Courtesy of the publisher]



Look Both Ways



By Jason Reynolds

Name:

Look Both Ways

By Jason Reynolds

Chapter 1 – Water Booger Bears



Before you read the chapter:

The **protagonist** in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. The first chapter introduces us to two principal characters, Jasmine Jordan and Terrance Jumper (TJ). Think back on some of your favorite characters from past novels you have read or movies you’ve seen. Who would you say is your *favorite* character ever? Why did you select this character?



Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

confident	concentration	sincere	corridor
hypothesis	equation	exotic	fidget

1. The nurse told Ralphie that running in the hospital _____ wasn't allowed.
2. “What _____ did you come up with for that experiment?” Dr. Jones asked.
3. My uncle purchased an _____ parrot from a company in Peru.
4. After only a few minutes, Henrietta began to _____ restlessly.
5. Mrs. Leonard gave a most _____ apology for her puppy's actions.
6. “I am _____ that this plane will get off the ground,” the pilot said assuredly.
7. In order to succeed you are going to give this task all of your _____.
8. The mathematical _____ was so complex that even Einstein couldn't understand it.

Questions



1. Describe the **setting** of the story at the beginning of Chapter One.

2. What is unusual about the opening paragraph of this novel. Why do you think the author decided to start the story out in this way?

3. We learn that Jasmine has a disease called **sickle cell anemia**. Using resources in your school library or on the Internet, research two facts about this disease that are not recorded in the novel.

1	
2	

4. What is your impression of Jasmine and Tj to this point in the story?

Jasmine	
TJ	

5. Which of these characters would you rather have as a best friend? Why?

6. Jasmine and TJ had been best friends for _____ years.

7. What disgusting thing had Jasmine once paid TJ a dollar to do?

8. According to TJ, what did boogers consist of? What did he then conclude from this?

9. In what particular area did Jasmine consider TJ to be talented?

10. Other than Jasmine's illness, what other stressful event had happened in her family?

11. Describe how many of the other students reacted when Jasmine returned to school after being absent for a month.

12. What do you think Jasmine means when she says about TJ, "... his jokes were always funny even though she knew they were almost never jokes"?

13. It would appear that Ms. Macy is TJ's stepmother. What seems to be TJ's impression of his *old* mother?

Language Activities



A. Tardigrades

Tardigrades (water bears) are said to be one of the most fascinating creatures on earth. Some even suggest that they are one animal that can actually survive in space. Using resources in your school library or the Internet, research three fascinating facts about the tardigrade and record them below.



1	
2	
3	

B. Many authors enjoy using **alliteration** - a literary device where the author repeats the same sound at the beginning of several words. Here's one such example: from Chapter One: ...*just human hands and love.*



Using your imagination, create your own examples of **alliteration** from the following topics. Each example must contain a minimum of three words.

The squeal of tires.	
The flight of a butterfly.	
Your choice.	

C. Anagrams

An **anagram** is a word that is formed by changing the order of the letters of another word. For example, the letters in the word **WAS** can also form the word **SAW**. Follow these directions to form the anagrams:



a) read the clue in the right-hand column.

b) Using the word in the left-hand column move the letters around in any order, but you must use all the letters. All of the words in the left-hand column can be found in the first chapter of **Look Both Ways**.

Word	Anagram	Clue
never		A person's steadiness or courage.
dealing		Placed in a straight row.
smear		Female horses.
boogers		Peanuts.
dust		A large-headed piece of metal.
portal		Keep watch over an area.
aliens		Containing salt.

Now find two additional words from the first chapter which have interesting anagrams to see if you can stump a classmate.

Word	Anagram	Clue

D. Next to each pair of words indicate whether each is an example of a Synonym (S), Antonym (A), or Homophone (H).

1	thaw - freeze		6	community - neighborhood	
2	pretend - imagine		7	nervous - composed	
3	friend - foe		8	eight - ate	
4	beat - beet		9	crevice - abyss	
5	annoy - appease		10	bare - bear	

E. A Quatrain Poem Celebrates Courage.

The **quatrain** is a popular form of rhymed verse. It is a poem of four lines, is usually light and can be humorous. The following quatrain is the first four lines of the famous poem, **Boogers**, written by the renowned poet, Atrocious Halitosis.

*Boogers is sure fun to have
Though some folk think they're gross.
But me I think they'd such a treat,
When spread upon my toast.*



Various rhyming schemes make up a quatrain poem. As you can see, the above four lines have a rhyming scheme of **A - B - C - B**. Other rhyming schemes include: ABAB, AAAA, AABA, ABBA, ABBA, and AAAB.

Your task is to write your own quatrain poem. You may choose a rhyming scheme that fits with your own personal creation. The theme should have something to do with the themes established in the first chapter of our novel.

The Quatrain Poem

Now create your own Quatrain Poem. Your poem must follow the format of a quatrain poem described above (and must rhyme).

Title: _____

F. 5 Ws and an H.

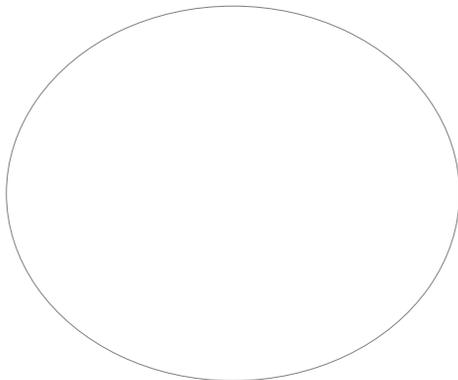
Choose an event from this section that you thought was really important and/or exciting. Using facts that you gleaned from reading about this event, fill in the balloons below, summarizing what you learned.



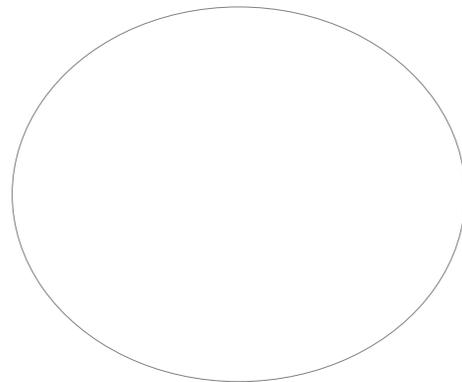
WHO?



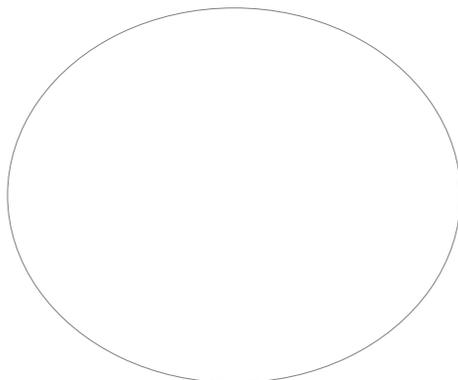
WHAT?



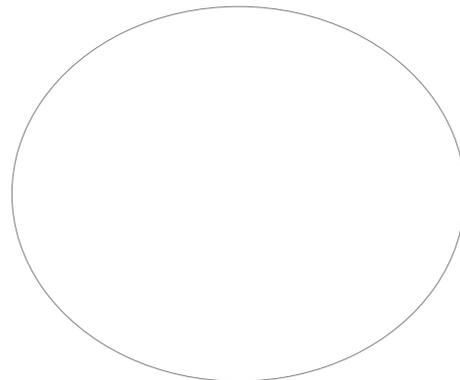
WHEN?



WHERE?



WHY?



HOW?