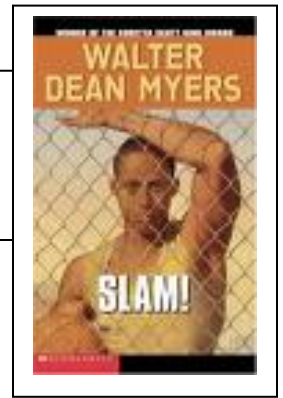




9th Grade

Slam by Walter Dean Myers



Author Bio:

I was born on a Thursday, the 12th of August, 1937, in Martinsburg, West Virginia. My name at birth was Walter Milton Myers. For some strange reason, I was given to a man named Herbert Dean who lived in Harlem. I consider it strange because I don't know why I was given away. I was raised in Harlem by Herbert and his wife, Florence. Herbert was African American. Florence was German and Native American and wonderful and loved me very much. As a child my life centered around the neighborhood and the church. The neighborhood protected me and the church guided me. I resisted as much as I could.

I was smart (all kids are smart) but didn't do that well in school. I dropped out of high school (although now Stuyvesant High claims me as a graduate) and joined the army on my 17th birthday. Basketball has always been a passion of mine. Sometimes at night I lie in bed thinking about games I've played. Sometimes I think about what would have happened if I had gone into the NBA (I was never good enough) or college ball. Anyway.... I wrote well in high school and a teacher (bless her!) recognized this and also knew I was going to drop out. She advised me to keep on writing no matter what happened to me. "It's what you do," she said. I didn't know exactly what that meant but, years later, working on a construction job in New York, I remembered her words. I began writing at night and eventually began writing about the most difficult period of my own life, the teen years. That's what I do. <http://www.walterdeanmyers.net/bio.html>

Novel Synopsis:

Myers uses contemporary urban black locutions (Ebonics) to relay his narrator's view of the mean streets of Harlem, as well as describe some heart-thumping hoop action in a novel that, like most good sports stories, is about more than just sports. "I can hoop," says Slam. "Case closed.... You can take my game to the bank and wait around for interest." Grandiose fantasies of his future as a millionaire NBA star? Or maybe a millionaire movie producer? are about all that he has on his mind, even though he is on his way to flunking out of the magnet high school he just transferred to, his grandmother is dying, his father is out of work and hitting the bottle again and his oldest friend appears to be dealing crack. Only when he is playing basketball does Slam know what moves to make and how to relate to the people around him. The rest of the time he stumbles, alienating his mother, girlfriend, teachers, even his coach and teammates. But, as the plain-speaking assistant coach tells him, "Everybody is in the game off the court," and Slam finally realizes that it's his attitude, not other people that holds him back.

Enduring truths, winningly presented.

Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

