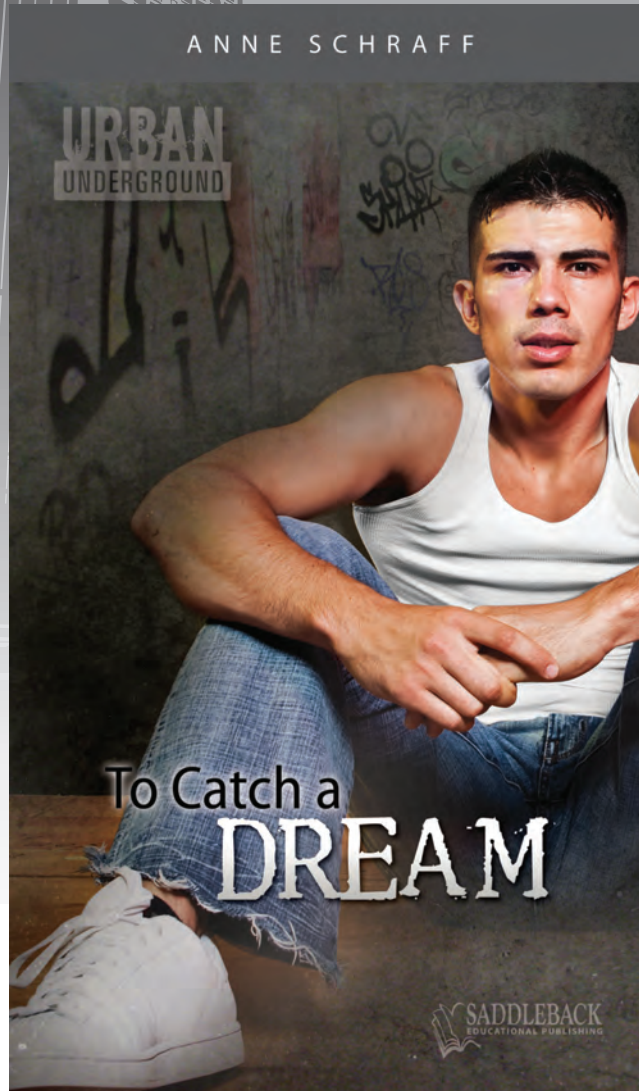


# URBAN UNDERGROUND



# TEACHER'S RESOURCE GUIDE

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# To the Educator

Written for young adults, the Urban Underground series confronts issues that are of great importance to teens, such as friendship, loyalty, drugs, gangs, abuse, urban blight, bullies, and self-esteem to name a few. More than entertainment, these books can be a powerful learning and coping tool when a struggling reader connects with credible characters and a compelling storyline. The highly readable style and mature topics will appeal to young adult readers of both sexes and encourage them to finish each novel. Paperback books look and feel like a trade edition and are complete in just under 200 pages.

This teacher's guide provides ideas and reproducible worksheets to support the book and extend students' reading skills. The key at the end of this guide provides answers and example responses.

## Different Ways to Present the Book

Students who are more confident may be encouraged to read the book on their own after reading one or two chapters as a class. If your students are familiar with the Urban Underground series, you might begin by having them review what they already know about various characters. The summaries on the back cover are a great starting point.

Although most activities are designed for use after reading the book, some are for pre-reading, and a few activities may be used during the reading. These activities were designed for a variety of teaching styles. You can distribute all of the activities at once or pick-and-choose the skills you want to reinforce.

## How to Build Connections

Each book gives more insight into the teen characters. Since some characters appear in subsequent stories, you may wish to create character webs and have students continue to add to them as you read the series together.

The Urban Underground series is set in a fictional city. If your students live in an urban area, you may ask them to note any similarities to their own lives as they read the novels.

# Reading Strategies

The activities in this Teacher's Resource Guide focus on giving struggling readers the tools to construct, extend, and examine the meaning of text. Included are essential elements in reading literacy as identified by the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

## Vocabulary

Vocabulary skills include decoding words, using words correctly, understanding meanings, and extending the actual amount of words the students know. Increased competency with vocabulary increases fluency when reading both silently and aloud—as students decode or recognize words more easily, they will be able to determine and extend the meaning of entire passages more easily as well.

## Initial Understanding

Initial understanding of text is the initial impression of what was read. Skills include identifying details and facts from text read, and recognizing aspects of literal text, such as sequence of events or main ideas. Without initial understanding, no reader would be able to comprehend the text on a higher level.

## Developing Interpretation

Developing interpretation goes beyond the initial impression to develop a more complete understanding of what was read. The reader must distinguish between and compare separate concepts in a text to extend its meaning. Examples of interpreting skills include differentiating facts from opinions, making comparisons, summarizing, and identifying cause-effect relationships.

## Personal Reflection and Response

Personal reflection and response requires readers to relate topics to their own experience. As students connect their own experiences with text, information becomes clearer. Having internalized ideas, readers can much more easily express their responses.

## Demonstrating a Critical Stance

Demonstrating a critical stance requires readers to detach themselves from the text in order to consider and evaluate it. A critical response may include identifying the intended audience and critiquing the text.

**BUILDING BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE | My Predictions**

**DIRECTIONS:** Look at the cover of the book *To Catch a Dream*. Read the title and look at the image. Then read the following excerpt. When you are finished, make five predictions about what will happen in the book.

Mr. Ruiz was at peace with the way the world was set up. When Abel was about ten, he explained his view of life to the boy.

“You see this photograph of a pyramid, *mi hijo*?” he asked. “Do you see how little room there is at the top? This is where the smart and rich are. Now look at the great space at the bottom. That is for the rest of us. There are many more of us than there are of them. But that’s all right. We survive.”

At times, Abel was not satisfied with the image of the pyramid and what it signified. He wanted more. He was willing to struggle for more. Even at school he studied much harder than most kids. His teachers called him an overachiever.

Prediction #1: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Prediction #2: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Prediction #3: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Prediction #4: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Prediction #5: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS:** After reading *To Catch a Dream*, revisit your predictions. Were any of your predictions correct? Put a star next to the ones that happened in the book.

## VOCABULARY | Glossary

**DIRECTIONS:** Below is a list of vocabulary words from *To Catch a Dream*. For your ease, they are organized in the order they appear in the book. Review the words before, during, and after reading the story. Create your own Urban Underground Dictionary by adding other difficult words from the story to the list below.

- demeaned** (dih-meend)—lowered in dignity, honor, or standing
- overachiever** (oh-ver-uh-cheev-ur)—a person who performs better or achieves more than expected
- frugal** (froo-guhl)—economical in spending and good at saving; not wasteful
- convenient** (kuhn-veen-yuhnt)—useful or easy to use or get to
- complicated** (kom-pli-key-tid)—difficult to analyze, understand, or explain
- favoritism** (fey-ver-i-tiz-uhm)—unfairly treating one person or group better than others
- mediocre** (mee-dee-oh-ker)—neither good nor bad; average; ordinary
- amiable** (ey-mee-uh-buhl)—agreeable
- menial** (mee-nee-uhl)—lowly and sometimes degrading
- patronizingly** (pey-truh-nahy-zing-lee)—in a haughty or condescending manner
- obesity** (oh-bee-si-tee)—the condition of being very fat or overweight
- contradicted** (kon-truh-dikt-uhd)—denied or said the opposite of; belied or went against
- indignantly** (in-dig-nuhnt-lee)—in an angry manner
- courteous** (kur-tee-uhs)—having or showing good manners; polite
- inept** (in-ept)—without skill or ability to accomplish a task
- disconcerted** (dis-kuhn-sur-tid)—upset or confused
- enthusiasm** (en-thoo-zee-az-uhm)—lively interest
- belligerent** (buh-lij-er-uhnt)—of warlike character; aggressively hostile
- pinnacle** (pin-uh-kuhl)—the highest point, as of success, power, fame, etc.
- incompetence** (in-kom-pi-tuhns)—the quality, state, or fact of lacking qualities needed to do something well
- sacrifices** (sak-ruh-fahys-iz)—gives something up in order to help another person or situation
- embroiled** (em-broild)—involved or caught up in conflict or difficulties
- cynical** (sin-i-kuhl)—non-believing or doubtful
- reliable** (ri-lahy-uh-buhl)—able to be trusted; dependable
- humiliated** (hyoo-mil-ee-yet-ed)—caused, or was made to feel, shame due to a loss of pride or self-respect
- underestimated** (uhn-der-es-tuh-meyt-ed)—placed too low a value on
- sarcasm** (sahr-kaz-uhm)—the use of bitter or mocking words
- harrowing** (har-oh-ing)—extremely disturbing or distressing
- hysterical** (hi-ster-i-kuhl)—uncontrollably emotional

## VOCABULARY | Pick the Definition

**DIRECTIONS:** Read each vocabulary word from the book *To Catch a Dream* below. Read the definition choices for each word. Then pick the one that best defines the word.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>1. Cynical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. the use of bitter or mocking words</li> <li>B. denied or said the opposite of; belied or went against</li> <li>C. non-believing or doubtful</li> <li>D. extremely disturbing or distressing</li> </ul>                         | <p>4. Pinnacle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. the highest point, as of success, power, fame, etc.</li> <li>B. involved or caught up in conflict or difficulties</li> <li>C. agreeable</li> <li>D. a person who performs better or achieves more than expected</li> </ul> |
| <p>2. Indignantly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. difficult to analyze, understand, or explain</li> <li>B. in an angry manner</li> <li>C. having or showing good manners; polite</li> <li>D. without skill or ability to accomplish a task</li> </ul>                        | <p>5. Amiable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. having or showing good manners; polite</li> <li>B. in an angry manner</li> <li>C. agreeable</li> <li>D. neither good nor bad; average; ordinary</li> </ul>  |
| <p>3. Frugal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. able to be trusted; dependable</li> <li>B. lowly and sometimes degrading</li> <li>C. a person who performs better or achieves more than expected</li> <li>D. economical in spending and good at saving; not wasteful</li> </ul> | <p>6. Harrowing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. uncontrollably emotional</li> <li>B. extremely disturbing or distressing</li> <li>C. lowered in dignity, honor, or standing</li> <li>D. in a haughty or condescending manner</li> </ul>                                   |

## Use It in a Sentence

**DIRECTIONS:** Pick four vocabulary words from the activity above. Use them in sentences below. Make sure you show your understanding of each word's meaning in its sentence.

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