

# SLAM!

Content Area: **English Language Arts**  
Course(s):  
Time Period: **1 marking period**  
Length: **Weeks**  
Status: **Published**

## Unit Overview

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In this unit, students will read Walter Dean Myers' coming of age basketball novel SLAM!. Students will participate in a variety of discussion and writing activities to further understanding of the novel's themes as well as its sociological implications and genre features. The reading will be supplemented with a viewing of the acclaimed documentary Hoop Dreams (1994). Students will engage in discussion of the film and a cumulative writing activity on the film and the book.

## Transfer

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Students will be able to independently use their learning to...

- read and appreciate a coming of age novels.
- watch documentaries more critically.
- understand the importance of setting and language in novels.
- have a broader cultural understanding of issues such as race, poverty, educational opportunity.

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For more information, read the following article by Grant Wiggins.

[http://www.authenticeducation.org/ae\\_bigideas/article.lasso?artid=60](http://www.authenticeducation.org/ae_bigideas/article.lasso?artid=60)

## Meaning

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## **Understandings**

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Students will understand that...

- the coming of age novel is specific genre with specific traits.
- different communities face specific challenges and obstacles.
- the pursuit of career in professional sports is extremely difficult, is fraught with obstacles, and has a low percentage of success.
- race is a important factor in a wide variety of societal institutions and outcomes.
- documentaries, while being non-fiction, still have a point of view and make choices which affect the viewer's perception of a story.

## **Essential Questions**

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Students will keep considering...

- What thought provoking questions will foster inquiry, meaning making and transfer?

## **Application of Knowledge and Skill**

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## **Students will know...**

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Students will know...

What facts and basic concepts should students know and be able to recall?

## **Students will be skilled at...**

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Students will be skilled at...

What discrete skills and processes should students be able to use?

## **Academic Vocabulary**

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Coming of age story / bildungsroman

first person narrator

reliable / unreliable narrator

dialect

setting

allusion

Harlem

charter / magnet school

crack / drug trade

documentary

scope

voice over

interviews

editing

## **Target 2**

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**SWBAT** to participate in discussion and writing activities in order to identify the role of character development in a narrative text.

#### Key Ideas and Details

#### Craft and Structure

LA.W.11-12.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes.
LA.SL.11-12.1.A	Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well reasoned exchange of ideas.
LA.SL.11-12.1.B	Collaborate with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and assessments (e.g., student developed rubrics), and establish individual roles as needed.
LA.SL.11-12.1.C	Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.
LA.SL.11-12.1.D	Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

### Target 1

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SWBAT participate in structured, collaborative discussions on the meaningful social themes in SLAM!

LA.RL.11-12.2	Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.
LA.RL.11-12.6	Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).
LA.RL.11-12.10a	By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above with scaffolding as needed.
LA.RL.11-12.10b	By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at grade level or above.

Comprehension and Collaboration

### Summative Assessment

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Students will write a final chapter, or "epilogue", to SLAM! in which they predict Greg's future and show an understanding of the character and themes established in the novel.

### Formative Assessment and Performance Opportunities

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Formative assessments will include brief written reactions to readings, message board responses, organized

group discussion activities, and individual study question responses.

## **Accommodations/Modifications**

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- The selection of this text is in itself an accomdation as it is in an accessible read yet deals with serious themes.
- Provide guided viewing questions for the film Hoop Dreams.
- Provide vocabulary / slang lists for each chapter.

## **Unit Resources**

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- Hoop Dreams (documentary, 1994)
- SLAM! by Walter Dean Myers

## **21st Century Life and Careers**

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CAEP.9.2.12.C.3	Identify transferable career skills and design alternate career plans.
CAEP.9.2.12.C.4	Analyze how economic conditions and societal changes influence employment trends and future education.
CAEP.9.2.12.C.9	Analyze the correlation between personal and financial behavior and employability.

## **Interdisciplinary Connections**

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SOC.9-12.1.1	Chronological Thinking
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