

# EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT READING WITH RELEVANCE!

## *Students Love Reading With Relevance!*

I've learned a lot in this program because in the beginning of the year I had no respect for myself, adults, and friends. Then **I started reading with relevance and it changed me.** Every Tuesday when I walked in the room I felt happy because I could share my feelings. I learned as a person how to express myself more. **This program has given me the privilege to speak up and take responsibility for myself.** I changed from bad to terrific. My teacher told me that I improved in my reading. I've learned a lot in this program. In the book we read, Walk Two Moons, Sal was confident, honest, respectful, and patient. She's just like me. I love this program!

~Jazmyn, 4th Grade, Oakland, CA

I liked Reading with Relevance because I could relate to it. The book we read, Street Life, talked about poverty and the struggles Victor went through. I could relate to him not knowing his father. He also talked about slacking off and finally finding someone at school who could help him. That's like me. **I really like Reading with Relevance because I feel like I could relate to what I read.** I've never really read any other books at school that let me see myself like that.

~Eric Clayton, 11th Grade, Hayward, CA

## *Teachers Value Reading With Relevance!*

I started the program last Friday with a group of my school's **most difficult fourth and fifth grade students**--the ones who always seem to end up in the Principal's office. The first day was such a success! They loved the book, right from the first page, and the discussion questions got them sharing about their lives right away. **I was shocked when my students ran up to me on Monday morning and told me that they couldn't wait to keep reading,** and that they'd be sure to have all of their homework done by Friday so that they could participate in the next session. **It's like they didn't even know that it was an academic intervention!**

~Elizabeth Calleja, Redwood Elementary School, Crescent City, CA



I take my Reading with Relevance teacher's guide with me to every teacher professional development meeting and conference I attend, and share the word with every teacher I know. This is a **teacher's anti-burnout tool**: it's a lifesaver for new teachers getting their feet wet in the classroom, it's a game-changer for teachers working with challenging student populations, and it's a force for re-invigorating veteran teachers!

~Julia Ann Gillam, John Muir Charter Academy, San Francisco, CA



The Reading with Relevance curriculum has been an **invaluable resource**. As a continuation high school teacher with three classes to prep, I'm tasked with building units that address a wide range of skills for students with an even wider range of proficiency levels. Most of the canned teaching materials I've found are either too narrow, too advanced, or too out of touch. Reading with Relevance combines texts that are truly relevant to my students' lives with activities that target a diversity of skills. Most importantly to my students, the books are both **engaging and accessible**. Most importantly to me, the plans are **well-organized, in-depth, and forward-thinking**.

These are not rote drills or busy-work packets. They are effective lessons that challenge students to engage critically with important social issues (e.g. violence, safety, poverty, gender inequality, racism, power), as well as with the personal experiences that often affect today's adolescents (e.g. decision-making, impulse control, self-esteem, identity, mental health, relationships, family struggles). **They help me empower my students with knowledge and skills that will build their character while enhancing their academic performance.** And they sure as hell alleviate the stress of late-night planning by providing me with vocabulary, reflective writing prompts, discussion questions, creative assignments, and formal writing tasks, not to mention strategies and supplemental materials for differentiating instruction.

I've been lucky enough to use Reading with Relevance curricula for the past four years and will continue using them to help me be the effective educator I want to be.

~Sean Gleason, Ralph Bunche Academy, Oakland, CA

Reading With Relevance is providing my English learners with exactly what they need now--a way to connect and **develop a relationship with reading that is authentic**, while improving skills and comprehension at the same time.

Reading With Relevance is a total departure from the scripted programs of recent curricular history. It uses compelling literature that engages the student reader through personal connection to their own lives. My students clearly demonstrate their own excitement to get to work, and they are proud of their ability to academically discuss, use new vocabulary, and write meaningful compositional passages. **My English learners' enthusiasm to excel through Reading With Relevance is a game changer for them!**

As an educator, I would love to see Reading With Relevance in as many hands as possible. It is a program that is equally well suited for any classroom, small group, or tutoring configuration. The Teaching Guides are clearly written and well organized, facilitating their use by paraprofessionals as well as credentialed teachers. Reading With Relevance is money well spent!

**~Lyn Greene, English Language Development Specialist, Crescent City, CA**

I have been a teacher for over fifteen years, primarily working with at-risk high school students who are often below grade level. I am always looking for language arts curriculum which provides a great deal of scaffolding, a variety of exercises, is easy to use, and builds critical thinking skills. I have been fortunate enough to find and use Reading with Relevance!

**Unlike some curriculums in which I need to “cherry-pick” certain items, I have been able to rely on the Reading with Relevance curriculum as a whole.** The curriculum builds on a foundation of phenomenal book choices that motivate my students to read. The relevant social and emotional themes are of particular importance for my population, and allow me to easily frame each day's lesson. The discussion questions are well thought-out and have provoked great academic discussion in my classroom, and the journal prompts are thought-provoking and require my students to think about the story in the context of their own lives. **The curriculum is extremely user-friendly, and allows me to teach thoughtful, effective lessons with little to no prep time.**

I highly recommend this curriculum to any educator, regardless of the population of students with whom they are working. I am looking forward to reading the other Reading with Relevance titles, and am grateful that this curriculum reduces my planning time with quality lessons and activities.

**~Cheri Issac, Hayward Community School, Hayward, CA**

The Reading with Relevance curriculum is **not only highly engaging and relevant to inner city youth, but it can also save lives!** Indeed, one of my students recently shared, "Street Life saved my life. I was going to quit school and go back to the streets, but then I read the book, and it motivated me not to quit and return to gangbanging."

My students love the activities in the curriculum, from the vocab to the journal writing and the artistic extension activities. They easily make connections between the text and their own experiences. I have witnessed my students make tremendous academic and personal growth, thanks to Reading with Relevance!

~Antoine Lagarde, Assistant Principal, San Francisco Conservation Corps, San Francisco, CA

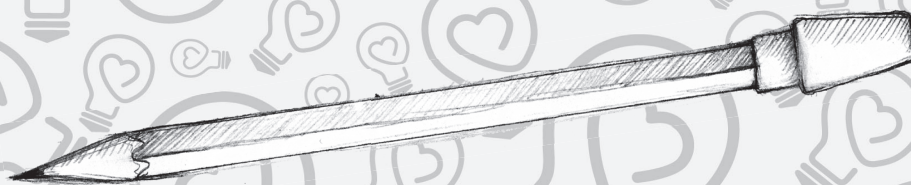
## ***After-School Educators Appreciate Reading With Relevance!***

I have served as a California Region 1 Advisor for Afterschool as well as the Program Coordinator for the Kids 1st Afterschool Programs in Del Norte County for 9 years. In all that time, **I have never found a literacy program that has made such an impact on the way our students approach life.**

My staff was hesitant to begin a new program that, on the surface, looked like more academics. As proponents of quality programing, they knew that after school should be expanded learning and not an extended school day. Within days, they were convinced that Reading with Relevance had the potential to address all the social & emotional learning we knew was important (but never had the time for), while giving our students a boost in their literacy skills.

Thank you for changing how we help kids academically as well as socially.  
**Reading with Relevance has taken our program to a whole new level of quality!**

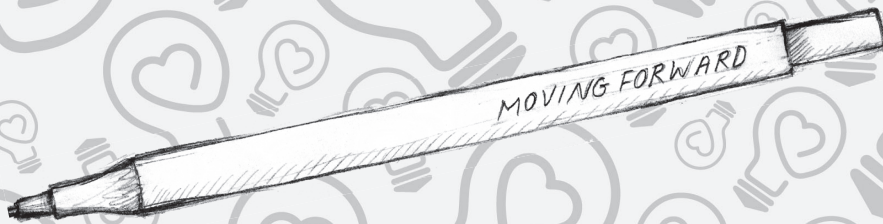
~Denise Doyle-Schnacker, Kids 1st Program Coordinator, Del Norte County, CA





**I've seen this program blend two core after-school focuses--academic instruction and social development--together really well.** Reading with Relevance makes space for our students to talk about the social and emotional issues they are facing in their lives. Our students explore how facets of their identities, including race, class and gender, play out in their everyday lives, and how they can be empowered by them. At the same time, we're also meeting their academic needs--they learn how to read more fluently, they have an increased vocabulary, they become better writers. With the Reading with Relevance curriculum, we're able to blend academics and enrichment together seamlessly in our after-school program.

**~Noah Lystrup. After-School Tutor / Oakland, CA**



## Ready to Teach Reading with Relevance?

To bring *Reading with Relevance* to your classroom or school community, reach out our way today! You can place an order through our website at [www.readingwithrelevance.org](http://www.readingwithrelevance.org), or contact us via phone or email to explore a partnership: 510.658.4475 or [info@movingforwardinstitute.org](mailto:info@movingforwardinstitute.org). We look forward to supporting your work!

