

Take Back the Block
Discussion Guide
Grades 3-7

Before Reading: to activate schema, build background knowledge, and set a purpose.

- Have students complete the *Anticipation Guide*.
- Brainstorm some social justice issues going on in your community.

During Reading: to engage students, check for understanding, and make connections.

- Ch. 1-3: How would you describe Wes? Why might Wes and Kari's friendship be changing?
- Ch. 4: Why do you think Wes asked Alyssa to pack up some of the nicest clothing at the drive?
- Ch. 5-6: How are Wes and his friends beginning to feel about leaving their community?
- Ch. 7-9: How is Wes' character developing? What predictions do you have about his actions?
- Ch. 10-12: Why do you think Wes and Brent's friendship is changing? Have you ever disagreed with a close friend? How has that made you feel?
- Ch. 13-15: How might have Kari and Wes felt during the situation with the officers? Why do you say that? How does the situation connect to real issues in society?
- Ch. 16-18: How is Wes continuing to fight for what he believes in?
- Ch. 19-22: Why is it important to learn about the history of your community?
- Ch. 23: How is Wes using his passions for good?
- Ch. 24-28: Why might Kari be acting this way?
- Ch. 29-30: How would you define "family"? How do you think the different characters in the book define it?
- Ch. 31-32: How do you imagine Wes is feeling about this news?
- End: How was Wes' true character demonstrated throughout the way he took on leadership roles? What are some issues you feel are important to fight for?

After Reading: to summarize, question, and reflect.

- What are some lessons we can learn from "Take Back the Block"?
- Are there any kids you know in your life that have spoken up to make a difference in the world? How can you do this in your community?

If your students enjoyed this book...

- Encourage them to continue to discuss it and refer to it in other lessons and conversations.
- Let them explore more about the topic by reading other books with similar themes, structure, characters, or content.
- Bring them outside of your school walls and into the community to get involved with local issues.