

TORREY MALDONADO

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EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

ABOUT THIS GUIDE:

Secret Saturdays is a young adult and middle grade novel about:

- making tough choices,
- maintaining friendships and trust and privacy, and
- balancing wanting to do what is right with wanting to be accepted.

While ***Secret Saturdays*** is fun reading that does not feel like schoolwork, ***Secret Saturdays*** supports all the major subjects (English, History, Math, Science, and more).

I write integrated/ interdisciplinary curricula for my school (that is a fancy way of saying I design lessons that ties many courses together). I designed this guide that way. This guide provides fun and stimulating Multi-Subject Activities and Vocabulary that makes readers stronger in many areas.

Please visit torreymaldonado.com for reviews, an excerpt, and more on ***Secret Saturdays***.

ENGLISH WRITING ACTIVITIES:

1. Justin and Sean record their inner feelings and thoughts on the pages of their rhymebooks. Personify their books (imagine that their rhymebooks came alive and now think, feel, and speak).

- Write what Justin's book would say to Justin.
- Write what Sean's book would say to Sean.
- Write a rap that you feel is missing in either of their books.

2. Write the conversation that you imagine Sean and Justin have after Justin realizes that it's "Time to man up."

HISTORY ACTIVITIES:

1. Geography: Have students use either print sources or the Internet to get a map of Red Hook, Brooklyn which also shows Manhattan. Remind students about the Grey House scene. Students should be able to show where Red Hook is relatively located to Manhattan in terms of cardinal directions (north, south, west, and south).

2. Culture: Have students define "culture". Ask students to identify what shapes a culture. Students then pinpoint what influences the culture of the main characters of ***Secret Saturdays***. Remind students that all people can improve and ask them to improve the culture of the main characters of ***Secret Saturdays*** by deciding which cultural influences they would remove or add to the characters' neighborhood and lives.

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MATH ACTIVITIES:

1. Perimeter: Handball is popular sport played in Justin's and Sean's neighborhood and Sean is excellent at it. In discussing perimeter, take your students to a handball court. If one is not near you, have students print out an image of one. If at a handball court, have students find the perimeter of the different boxes that make up the court. If viewing the computer-generated image, have students make diagrams of the court and they should determine the perimeters of the varying boxes that comprise their design.

2. Comparing Data: The characters in *Secret Saturdays* are in a competition for popularity in their neighborhoods and in their schools. Ask students to list several characters in *Secret Saturdays*. Then ask them the following questions.

- How many people feel this character is popular in school? (Teach students to tally their votes.)
- How many people feel this character would be popular out of school? (Have students tally the votes.)

The results should be listed in a chart with three columns: Person, Popularity in School, Popularity Out of School. Once you have displayed the charted results to all students, have them write two true statements comparing the data in the table.

SCIENCE ACTIVITIES:

1. Classifying Parts of a System: Many things happen in the cafeteria of Justin's school.

Procedure: Ask students to think and write about how your own school lunchroom operates. Students answer these questions:

- Is the physical layout of the lunchroom the best possible design?
- What climates do the cafeteria fruit come from?
- What regions do the cafeteria fruit come from?
- Where is the food shipped from?
- How is the food handled, prepared, and cooked?
- Which parts of the cafeteria are needed? Which are unnecessary?

Analysis: Classify the lunchroom's system as cycles and processes.

2. Observing Air Pressure: On top of the Grey House the air is thinner. This could explain why Justin felt a bit dizzy up there. Have students write a paragraph describing what might happen to the air pressure if there were twenty more floors to the Grey House and both boys climbed to that height.

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VOCABULARY:

In *Secret Saturdays*, words are sometimes used that are not a part of the characters' every language. Ask students to retell a scene or a few parts of *Secret Saturdays* using the below terms:

- verbal abuse
- examine
- consequence
- stereotype
- fraternity
- multidimensional

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Torrey Maldonado is a teacher and author who was born and raised in the Red Hook projects of Brooklyn, New York. He overcame his neighborhood's poverty and violence and went on to earn a BA in Sociology from Vassar College and a Master's Degree in Educational Administration from Baruch College. For nearly ten years, he has taught in a Brooklyn public school. Prior to that, he trained teachers and administrators to run conflict resolution programs in schools throughout New York's five boroughs. *Secret Saturdays* is a work of fiction inspired by the author's experiences with youth, city schools, fatherlessness, and poverty.