

# ***How to Grow Up Like Me: The Ballou Story Project***

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## **BOOK OVERVIEW**

Objectives:

- To increase readers' interest by reading a high interest level text written by and about students in Washington, DC.

Before students read the book, allow them to complete a KWL chart in order to find out what students know about Ballou Senior High and discuss possible challenges that students from Ballou could experience academically and socially.

See DCPS-School Profile Sheet to get a snapshot of basic demographic facts about the school.

[http://profiles.dcps.dc.gov/pdf/2013\\_Equity\\_Report\\_DCPS\\_External\\_Ballou%20High%20School.pdf](http://profiles.dcps.dc.gov/pdf/2013_Equity_Report_DCPS_External_Ballou%20High%20School.pdf)

### **Pre-reading- KWL Chart “Ballou Senior High School”**

What do you <b>know</b> about Ballou High School?	What do you <b>want to know</b> about Ballou High School?	What did you <b>learn</b> about Ballou High School?

Extension Questions: Based on your research about Ballou High School, what are some possible academic and social challenges a student that attends the school may face?

List 2 possible **academic challenges** a student at Ballou could possibly face based on your research:

- 1.
- 2.

List 2 possible **social challenges** a student at Ballou could possibly face based on your research:

- 1.
- 2.

## MINI LESSONS

Read each story with a group of students and follow the suggested mini lesson plan. Each lesson has pre-reading, during reading, and post-reading components.

### Lesson 1- “Without My Father” by DaSean Lee, page 48

**Materials Needed** – text, sticky notes (2 per student), pen, paper

**Pre-reading** – On a sticky note, students should complete the phrase:

“Fathers are.....”

Students can complete the phrase any way they chose, and their responses will remain anonymous. Teacher will collect sticky notes and read responses aloud. Teacher will ask students what they noticed about the ideas of “fathers” from responses given. Encourage an environment where students can express their ideas in a safe and non-judgmental atmosphere.

**During Reading** – Teacher can read story aloud and ask students to follow along or have students read silently and independently.

Students will write down questions that come to mind when they are reading the text on the second sticky note.

Some typical questions include:

- Why would DaSean’s father go to the club instead of the hospital with his mother?
- Did DaSean have other males in his life to replace the role of a father while growing up?
- Will DeSean really be a good father to his own children?

**Post-reading** – Each student will share out loud the questions they came up with and engage in meaningful discussion about the importance of fathers in children’s lives and in communities.

### Lesson 2- “Definition of Success” by Allen Weaver, page 14

**Materials Needed**- text, pen, notebook paper, sticky note

**Pre-reading** – On a sticky note, define “**success**” in your own words. List 2 people you think are successful. One person listed must be someone in your community or someone you know.

Teacher will ask students to listen to common themes about success that students identified based on responses given. Ask one student to list common themes on the board or on a large piece of chart paper. Also make a list of people students identified as being successful. Encourage an environment where students can express their ideas in a safe and non-judgmental atmosphere.

**During Reading** – Teacher can read story aloud and ask students to follow along or have students read silently independently.

Jot down notes about what “success” means to the author, Allen Weaver.

**Post- reading** – Discussion Questions:

- How does your definition of “success” compare to Allen’s definition?
- Why do you think the word “success” has different meanings for different people?
- Based on what you read, if Allen Weaver were asked to list someone he thinks is successful, who do you think he would choose and why?

### **Lesson 3- “The Healer” by Dreonna Richardson, page 37**

**Materials Needed-** text, chart paper, pen, notebook paper, sticky notes

**Pre-reading** – Students can research online answers to following questions:

- Define schizophrenia.
- What are some common symptoms and behaviors associated with schizophrenia?
- Are there medications and treatments to help someone who has this condition?

**During Reading** – Teacher can read story aloud and ask students to follow along or have students read silently independently.

How has Dreonna’s experience with mental health disorders inspired her career aspirations?

**Post- reading** – Q & A session with school or healthcare professional

This is a perfect opportunity for collaboration with the counselor, psychologist, or social worker in the school to come and help answer questions students may have about the condition of schizophrenia or the subject of mental health disorders in general.

### **Lesson 4- “Ways Band Can Helps You Realize the World” by Christopher Allen, page 30**

**Materials Needed-** text, computer for video clip, pen, paper

**Pre-reading-** Watch a video on YouTube of a Ballou Marching Band Performance

(See Link below, Video approx. 6 min)

<http://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=ballou+band+on+youtube&view=detail&mid=6E0EAA79C3BD913EF2816E0EAA79C3BD913EF281&FORM=VIRE1>

What are your thoughts the school's Marching Band?

What kind of commitment do you think it takes to be a part of the band and learn this type of routine?

**During Reading**-Teacher can read story aloud and ask students to follow along or have students read silently independently.

What is one life skill that Christopher Allen has learned while being in the band that he applies to other parts of his life and future?

**Post- reading** –Discussion Question

What is one extra-curricular activity you have participated in? What is one life skill you were able to gain from being involved in this extra-curricular activity?

Extension – Research 3 prestigious places/events where the Ballou Marching Band has performed.

*(The band has performed for inaugurations of President George Bush and President Barack Obama)*

## **Book Post-Reading Activities**

### **Analyze the quote**

Read the quote in the beginning of the book by Nelson Mandela:

“I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it.

The brave man is not he who does feel afraid but he who conquers the fear.”

Summarize the quote.

Explain how the quote relates to any of stories in the book.

Speculate on why you think the quote was chosen.

### **Analyze the photos in the book**

Look at photos attached to each story.

Discuss why you think each photo was chosen based on the story it relates to.

Look at the photo on the book cover.

- What does the cover photo represent?
- Why do you think the cover photo was chosen?
- Does the cover photo relate to any themes or stories you read? How so?