

A Curriculum Guide for Educators & Readers



Discussion points, activities, and writing prompts to help educators use *Bernard Jones is Going Places* as a classroom read-aloud or as a selection for independent reading. Great for book clubs, too!



About the Author, Teko Bernard

Teko Bernard is an imaginative and seasoned storyteller who writes middle-grade action-adventure chapter books for boys and girls that explore themes of courage, family, imagination, and responsibility; and feature elements of mystery, history, fantasy, and magic. To learn more, visit www.tekobernard.com.

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Common Core Aligned for 2nd-5th Grade

2nd: ELA.RL.2.1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; W.2.1, 2, 3, 7; SL.2.1, 2, 3, 4

3rd: ELA.RL.3.1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; W.3.1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8; SL.3.1, 2, 3, 4

4th: ELA.RL.4.1, 2, 3, 4, 5; W.4.1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8; SL.4.1, 2, 3, 4

5th: ELA.RL.5.1, 2, 3, 4, 5; W.5.1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8; SL.5.1, 2, 3, 4

Before You Read...

1. Take a close look at the cover of *Bernard Jones is Going Places*. What do you see? Describe the characters. Can you guess what the story might be about? What clues can you find in the cover art to support your prediction?
2. Read the text on the back of the book. What do you learn about the story from this blurb? What questions does it raise about the story?
3. Open the book and read the chapter titles. Do the titles give any further information regarding what the book might be about?
4. Using all this information, can you make any predictions about what might happen in the book? List at least five things you hope to find out by reading the book.

Chapters 1-2

1. Using chapters one through two as evidence, who is Bernard? Draw an outline of a human figure, which will represent Bernard, on a large piece of paper.
 - a. Write any known details about Bernard inside the outline. Outside of the outline, discuss and write any questions about Bernard that you might have.
2. Who is Grandpa Jones? Draw an outline of a human figure, which will represent Grandpa Jones, on a large piece of paper.
 - a. Using chapters one through two as evidence, write any known details about Grandpa Jones inside the outline. Outside of the outline, discuss and write any questions about Grandpa Jones that you might have.
3. Why does Bernard think Grandpa Jones got him a scooter for his birthday?
 - a. Why do you think Bernard wants a scooter?
 - b. Why do you think Bernard's parents do not want him to have a scooter?
 - c. If you were Bernard, where is the first place you would go on a scooter?
4. Bernard's parents do not seem very happy with or impressed by his grandpa. What evidence from chapter one and two support this?
 - a. Why might they not care for the way Grandpa Jones conducts his life?

- b. Why do Bernard's parents ground him on his birthday? Do you think this is fair? Why or why not?

Making Connections:

Grandpa Jones told Bernard that his birthday gift would take him "to all the places he wants to go." Bernard thinks it's the red motor scooter and black helmet he spied in his grandpa's garage when they were on a video call.

Bernard is super excited about getting a scooter, but his parents, who are "extra protective" do not think it is a good idea.

Bernard will need to try and persuade his parents to let him keep the scooter. Ask your students if they know what "persuade" means. If not, can they make any guesses?

Discuss:

- What it means to persuade
- Times or situations in which you might want to persuade someone (i.e., persuade your parents to let you stay up "one more minute.")

When you write to persuade, you are trying to convince the reader to agree with you. Your persuasive essay should: tell the reader what you believe; give the reader at least three reasons why you believe it; have a good concluding sentence.

Students should pretend they are Bernard and write a persuasive essay to his parents called "Why I Should Keep the Scooter" using the

following TREE structure:

T = Topic sentences

The topic sentence tells the reader (or mother, in this case) what you think or believe. Remember, you are writing from the point of view of Bernard.

Making Connections: (cont'd)

R = Reasons

The reasons tell the reader (or parents, in this case) why you believe you need a scooter. (Remember, you are writing as if you are Bernard.) Write at least 2 -3 sentences supporting 3 reasons. Use evidence directly from the text, when possible.

E = Ending

Wrap it up with a conclusive sentence.

E = Examine

Look closely. Does your essay have all the necessary parts?

Share your essays with the class. Which is the most persuasive? Why do you think so?

Chapters 3-4

1. What is Grandpa Jones's job?
 - a. Where is Grandpa Jones and Kene returning from?
 - b. What has Grandpa Jones brought back from his travels?
2. Who is Remi Hawkins III and what is he doing in Grandpa's house?
3. In your own words, retell the legend of Mansu Musa's magic mask and chair.
4. Why does Remi need Grandpa to go with him? What will happen if Grandpa refuses?
5. What did Bernard's parents decide to do with the motor scooter?
6. What was really in the crate?
 - a. How did they find out what was in the crate?
 - b. How does Bernard first feel about the gift? How would you react to getting a chair instead of a scooter?
7. What are the rules while Bernard's parents are out of town?

8. Can you make any predictions as to what Bernard will learn about the chair when he reads the letter and book from Grandpa?

Making Connections:

Grandpa Jones has the exciting job of unearthing ancient relics and giving them to a cultural center or museum.

Invite a museum curator from a local Natural History or Anthropology Museum to your class or ask them to visit via Skype to teach about ancient relics in their collection and how they were obtained.

What do you want to know about? Write a list of questions ahead of time and provide them to the museum curator.

During the visit, practice taking notes and creating follow up questions.

After the visit, draft a written report and present what you learned.

Chapters 5-6

1. Using the internet, research Bernard's questions, as best you can:
 - a. Who was Mansa Musa?
 - b. Where is the land on the map?
 - c. Where is Timbuktu?
2. What happens when Bernard sits on the chair?
3. Where does Bernard decide to go for his first teleportation trip? Why?
4. Where would you decide to go, if you were to use the chair? Explain your answer.
5. What does Bernard pack to take on his trip? Why do you think he chooses the items he does?
 - a. Would you pack anything else? Why or why not?

6. The rules of the chair are a little complicated. Are there any rules that worry you or would make you hesitate before traveling? Explain your answer using details from the chapter when necessary.

Chapters 7-8

1. Do you remember what Grandpa first told Bernard about his gift? Now that you know what the gift is, what do you think Grandpa meant?
2. Using a map, imagine that Bernard lives in your town and figure out how many miles Bernard traveled in his first three-hour trip.
 - a. If he was to use an airplane, how long would each leg of the trip take?
3. What prompts Bernard to go to Sada and Kene's house to look for Grandpa?
 - a. Who does he find there?
4. What is Bernard's plan at the end of Chapter 8?

Making Connections:

"When Bernard returned home, his heart was racing from the thrill of his unbelievable adventures. He realized he had a powerful gift that required great responsibility."

Discuss *responsibility* with your class.

1. What is *responsibility*?

- Being accountable for what you do, for your actions, and behavior.
- Doing the right thing at the right time, so others can trust and depend on you.
- Don't make excuses or blame others.

2. How do the following demonstrate *responsibility*?

- Complete your homework and chores on time without being reminded.
- Follow through on your commitments, even when you don't feel like it.
- Accept responsibility for your mistakes and learn from them.

3. How do you think Bernard can best demonstrate responsibility with the chair?

Chapters 9-10

1. Refer to the description of the Great Cliffs in Chapter 9 and draw your own depiction of them.
2. What does Grandpa Jones instruct Bernard to do to help him?
3. How do Remi and Ivan find out about Bernard and the real magic chair?
4. Why does Remi ask Boris to sit in every seat in Grandpa Jones's house?
5. Who comes to Bernard's rescue when Boris follows him through the portal into his room?
 - a. In what other ways does this person help Bernard capture the Mansa Musa gang?
6. Why does Grandpa Jones visit Bernard and his family?
7. Where do you think Bernard is heading at the end of the Chapter 10?

After You Read...

Here are a few extension activities to further the learning and the fun!

1. Several themes run through *Bernard Jones is Going Places*.

Responsibility	Family	Bravery
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Choose one of these themes on which to base a 500-word essay.

What can readers take away from *Bernard Jones is Going Places* in relation to this theme?

2. Pick a scene you enjoyed or remembered well from one of the chapters. Re-write the scene from another character's first person point-of-view.
3. Create your own book trailer for *Bernard Jones is Going Places* to convince others to read the book.
4. The end of the book leaves room for a sequel. Can you predict what adventure Bernard Jones will be up to next? Brainstorm possible scenarios and write a 500-word synopsis of your imagined sequel.

5. Have students work together to create a newscast about Bernard's adventures to present to their classmates. Students will write a script and take on the roles of anchors and on-site reporters. Students can choose to interview characters and eyewitnesses. Videotape the final newscasts so that students can watch themselves on TV.
6. Bernard, Grandpa Jones, Kene, and Maurice might not have been able to stop the Mansa Musa Gang alone, but together they were successful! How did each person contribute to the success?

Try these team-building activities.

Rubber band Trial (groups of 4-5)

- You will need several plastic cups, one rubber band and four or five ribbons or strings.
- To make the rubber band grabber, tie pieces of string to the rubber band, spacing them as evenly apart as possible (it should look like a sunshine with sun rays going out in all directions).
- Each member of the team should hold onto one of the strings that are attached to the rubber band.
- Each group will be tasked with stacking all the plastic cups on top of each other using only the rubber band grabber. The group then uses this tool to pick up the cups and place them on top of each other by pulling the rubber band apart and then bringing it back together over the cups.
- Teams should work to increase speed and accuracy.

Cross the River Challenge

Challenge students to work together to build a bridge that really works! Of course, a little imagination is going to go a long way here, too!

- Set up two tables or desks in the classroom that have a large gap in between them (approximately 3-4 feet is ideal.)
- Explain to students that they will be working in groups of 2-3 to build a bridge to connect the two pieces of furniture.
- Provide the students with several craft items (rulers, paper, cardboard tubing, empty boxes, tape, glue, etc.) Check the recycling for other ideas of materials.
- Each group's bridge must:
 - Connect the two pieces of furniture.

- Be a construction, not merely a long piece of cardboard laid across the gap.
- Be strong enough to hold four Matchbox cars as they cross from one side to the other.

Once all bridges have been built side by side connecting the two pieces of furniture, test them out one by one as a class. Did they work? Retest? If they didn't work, head back to the drawing board.

Offer up awards to increase the competition.

- Strongest Bridge
- Most Attractive Bridge
- Most Materials Bridge
- Least Materials Bridge