

Keepin' it Real:

URBAN LIT



FOR TEENS



MS=Appropriate for most middle school students
HS=Appropriate for most high school students
MS\HS=Appropriate for both middle and high school students
CASS=Book available on cassette
CD=Book available on compact disk
DVD=Movie version available

Tyrell

Coe Booth (YA Boot)

At fifteen, Tyrell has dropped out of school and is trying to keep his drug-using mom and at-risk little brother safe and fed in their make-shift shelter in the Bronx. Tyrell wants to avoid the trouble that put his father in jail, but with all temptation of fast money and easy sex, can he stay strong? MS/HS

Upstate

Kalisha Buckhanon (YA Buck, CASS Buck, CD Fic Buck)

Seventeen-year-old Antonio, in jail for the murder of his father, is determined not to let his incarceration keep him from deepening his relationship with his girlfriend Natasha. The Harlem natives write back and forth for several years, but can their relationship last? HS

We Beat the Street: How a Friendship Pact Helped Us Succeed

Sampson Davis (YA 610.922 Davi)

Three men from Newark, NJ, made a pact when they were young: they would get out of their neighborhood, stay clean, and make a difference by becoming doctors. Their inspirational, true story shows that with drive and passion, youth can choose to beat the street. MS/HS

Street Pharm

Allison van Diepen (YA Diep)

When Ty Johnson's father goes to jail, Ty inherits his highly lucrative—and dangerous—drug dealing business. When a competitor enters the neighborhood and threatens to take over Ty's clientele, a turf war begins that could cost Ty his life.

Romiette and Julio

Sharon Draper (YA Drap, CASS YA Drap)

African-American Romiette and Latin-American Julio become friends online, and then realize they attend the same Cincinnati high school. When they meet in person, they know they are meant to be together, but their happiness is short lived as a local gang violently opposes their love. MS/HS

From Pieces to Weight: Once Upon a Time in Southside, Queens

50 Cent (YA B Fift)

In this honest and riveting biography, rapper 50 Cent tells of his rise from drug-dealing teen to Billboard chart topper. 50 shares details of his home life and early experiences on the street. HS

Imani in Young Love & Deception

Jackie Hardrick (YA Hard)

Five inner-city teens are faced with the realization that every choice they make has an impact on their lives and the lives of others. HS

The Outsiders

S. E. Hinton (YA Hint, CASS YA Hint, CD YA Hint, DVD Outs)

After their parents' death, three brothers struggle to stay together as a family. Rival youth gangs control the streets, and the boys must decide how much they are willing to risk for each other and for their community of friends. MS/HS

Ride Wit' Me

Katina King (YA King)

Mercedes knows her family is wealthy, but doesn't know the truth about her father's business until she starts to date Dalvin, a teen whose father is involved in the same illegal "industry." When tragedy strikes, Mercedes must decide where to turn for comfort: her family or her boyfriend. MS

The Fallen

Paul Langan (YA Lang)

Martin Luna is on the cusp of disaster: his sophomore year may be cut short by a fight at school and at home he is being chased by the most feared guy in his neighborhood. MS/HS

Street Love

Walter Dean Myers (YA Myer)

Written in free verse and set in violent and poverty-stricken Harlem, this book tells the story of a teen romance from both sides: the point-of-view switches between Damien and Junice as they each struggle through their issues and dream of a future together. MS/HS

Imani All Mine

Connie Porter (YA Port)

Tasha, an unwed, fifteen-year-old mother, works hard to provide for herself and her baby in the ghettos of Buffalo, New York. Written completely in dialog, the story unfolds to reveal the truth about Tasha's baby, and the horrific event that rips the small family apart. HS

The Rose that Grew from Concrete

Tupac Shakur (YA 811.54 Shak)

A collection of verse written by the late Tupac Shakur. Topics include life in the ghetto, teenage parenting, Nelson Mandela, poverty and violence. Over one hundred poems included. MS/HS

The Hoopster

Alan Lawrence Sitomer (YA Sito)

17-year-old Andre is a typical teen; he lives for basketball, tries to connect with his girlfriend, and argues with his friends and family. When he's brutally attacked by a racial separatist, Andre must look deep inside to discover who he really is. MS/HS

Flyy Girl

Omar Tyree (YA Tyre, CASS YA Tyre)

This moralistic tale focuses on young, materially-driven Tracey, who is drawn to a life of gratuitous sex, lies, and violence. It is only when she meets some older women with an interest in their African heritage and spirituality that Tracey begins to think about changing her ways...but is it too late?

Emako Blue

Brenda Woods (YA Wood)

Emako Blue's incredibly singing voice draws in a community of new friends—and an important record producer—but the hard Los Angeles streets are dangerous, and in one horrific instant, everything changes for Emako and her friends. MS/HS

Gansta Rap

Benjamin Zephaniah (YA Zeph)

When Ray and his friends form a successful rap group, they are prepared for easy fame and lots of money. The reality of their increasing popularity is not what they expected at all, as gang violence from both sides of their London home threaten to cut the group's fame—and their lives—short. HS