



Walter Dean Myers

A Man of Many Words

A Brief Biography

Born in West Virginia, but raised primarily in Harlem, Walter Dean Myers has led an interesting life that is reflected in his writing.

His books, which stem largely from his background and interests, are written for children and young adults.

Basketball, military experiences, and life in Harlem are all examples of what he has written about in the past.

Harlem, New York: Early home for Walter Dean Myers



Harlem Brownstones

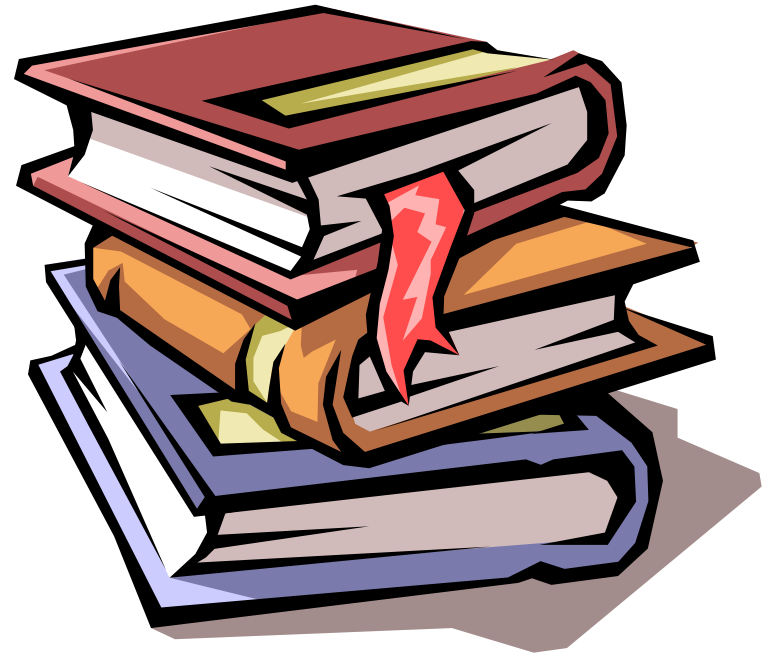
A Brief Biography

Taken in by foster parents at the age of three, Myers remembers a family that encouraged him to read even though their own skills qualified them as barely literate.

The connection with literature was immediate and became a driving force of his childhood. Myers remembers his elation when he discovered that his favorite things in the world, books, could be gotten for free at the public library.

A Brief Biography

"The public library was my most treasured place. Books took me, not so much to foreign lands and fanciful adventures, but to a place within myself that I have been exploring ever since."



A Brief Biography

Burdened with a severe speech impediment, Myers found school disappointing and frustrating.

To overcome his speech issue, Walter Dean Myers began to use writing as his tool for communication. Encouraged by teachers, this was a skill he developed as he grew.

A Brief Biography

Recognizing that college was not a financial option for himself, Myers dropped out of high school at seventeen and enlisted in the army. Upon completion of his tour of duty Myer found himself with few skills and little opportunity.

Taking on many odd day jobs, Myers used his nights to write for various sources ranging from *The National Enquirer* to cemetery ads for local papers.

A Brief Biography

His big break in writing came with his win of a children's books writing contest sponsored by the Council on Interracial Books for Children. This victory led to the publication of his first book, *Where Does the Day Go?*.

From here his success continued leading to the publication of over sixty books and over twenty awards given for his writing.

A Brief Biography

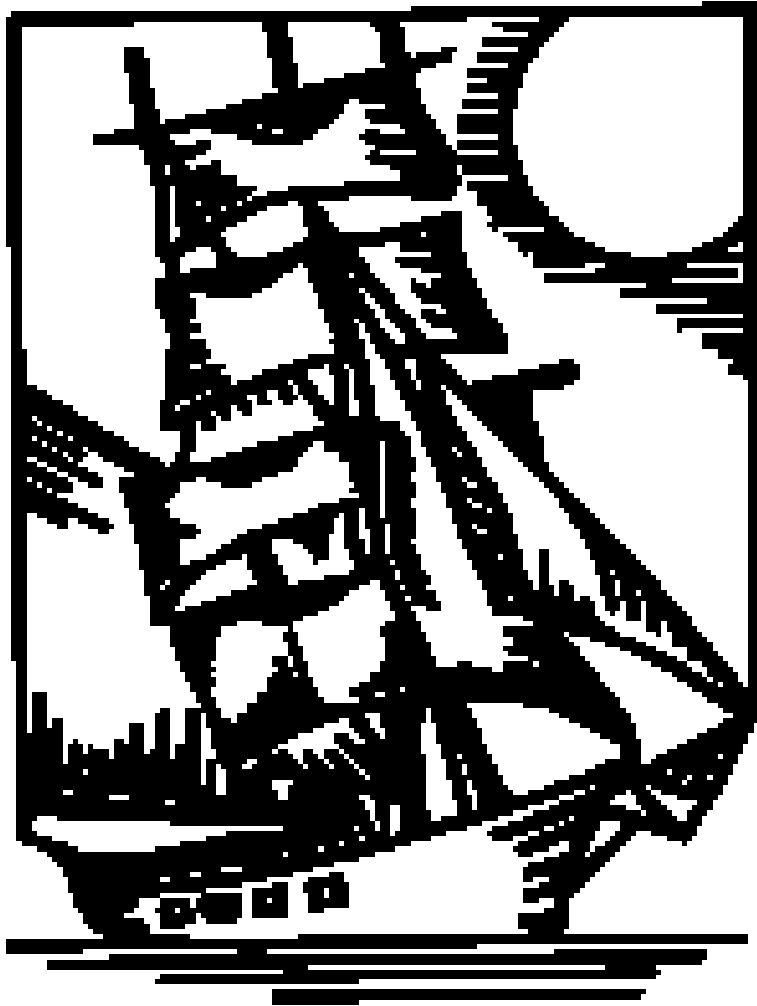
Walter Dean Myers lives in Jersey City, New Jersey with his wife Constance and his youngest son.

He has several more books on their way to publication and more ideas than he can count for future work.



Selected Books

AMISTAD: A Long Road to Freedom



This history of the **Amistad** incident includes background about Africa and the U.S. abolitionist movement. With marvelous illustrations, maps, and photographs, Myers creates a complete picture of this historic event.

SLAM!

Slam! tells the story of a Harlem high school boy who loves basketball but has difficulty with academics. Coupled with a sick grandmother, a grieving mother, an out-of-work father, and a frightened brother, this young man is struggling.

With his white coach on his case all the time, readers will wonder who's the one with attitude.

Slam! deals with the difference between lust and love. He learns his closest friend is dealing crack, and manages to keep his cool amid the prejudice of teachers and peers. A powerful book that does not sidestep issues.



THE MOUSE RAP

Told in a distinctive rap style, this tale unfolds the lives of a group of fourteen-year-olds in one busy Harlem summer. With action the whole way through, this story will keep you interested AND guessing.



THE DREAM BEARER

David's life is in turmoil, with the police looking for his brother and his father acting very strangely. Then he meets Mr. Moses, a man who claims to be over 300 years old! With his fantastic stories and vivid dreams, Mr. Moses helps David understand himself and others.



"There are special dreams," Mr. Moses says, "dreams that fill up the soul, dreams that can be unfolded like wings and lift you off the ground."

NOW IS YOUR TIME!

The African-American struggle for freedom

This book uses photographs, documents, and Myers' personal history to document the African-American struggle for freedom.



HARLEM



"Harlem Children" by Fred Stein

With his son, Christopher, Walter Dean Myers created this tribute to Harlem.

This poem incorporates the rhythms, sounds and color that make Harlem what it is. Vivid collage paintings assist the reader in understanding the written words.

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- The Outside Shot.** New York: Delacorte, 1984.
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- Me, Mop, and the Moondance Kid.** New York: Delacorte, 1988.
- Fallen Angels.** New York: Scholastic, 1988.
- The Mouse Rap.** New York: HarperCollins, 1990.
- Now is Your Time! The African-American Struggle for Freedom.** NY: HarperCollins, 1991.
- Somewhere in the Darkness.** New York: Scholastic, 1992.

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AWARDS FOR WALTER DEAN MYERS

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The Dancers.

Child Study Association of America's Children's Books of the Year, 1972.

Fast Sam, Cool Clyde, and Stuff.

ALA Notable Books, 1975.

Woodward Park School Annual Book Award, 1976.

It Ain't All for Nothin'.

ALA Notable Book Citation

ALA Best Books for Young Adults Citation, 1978.

The Young Landlords.

ALA Notable Book Citation

ALA Best Books for Young Adults Citation, 1979.

Coretta Scott King Award for Fiction, 1980.

AWARDS FOR WALTER DEAN MYERS

The Legend of Tarik.

ALA Best Books for Young Adults Citation, 1981.
Trade Book in the Field of Social Studies,
NCSS and the Children's Book Council, 1982.
Edgar Allan Poe Award runner-up, 1982.

Hoops.

ALA Best Books for Young Adults Citation, 1982.

Won't Know Till I Get There.

Parents' Choice Award, 1982.

Tales of a Dead King.

New Jersey Institute of Technology Authors Award, 1983.

The Outside Shot.

Parents' Choice Award, 1984.

AWARDS FOR WALTER DEAN MYERS

Motown and Didi.

Coretta Scott King Award for Fiction, 1985.

Adventure in Granada.

Child Study Association of America's Children's Books of the Year, 1987.

Fallen Angels.

Coretta Scott King Award for Fiction, 1988.

ALA Best Books for Young Adults, 1988.

Parents' Choice Award, 1988.

Newbery Honor Book, 1989.

The Mouse Rap.

IRA Children's Choice, 1991.

The Moondance Kid.

ALA Notable Book Citation, 1988.

AWARDS FOR WALTER DEAN MYERS

Scorpions.

ALA Best Books for Young Adults, 1988.

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Newbery Honor Book, 1989.

Me, Mop, and the Moondance Kid..

Now is Your Time! The African-American Struggle for Freedom.

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Teacher Resources

Teacher Resource Guide

<http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/myers.htm>

Web English Teacher

<http://www.webenglishteacher.com/myers.html>

Somewhere in the Darkness

<http://www.maslibraries.org/infolit/samplers/somewhere.html>

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<http://www.fredstein.com/>

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