

# Under slammin' pressure – slam by walter dean myers essay sample

[Literature](#), [Books](#)



Out of all the books I have read this year, one has stood out most and made me really think about it. Just over a week ago, I finished reading Slam!, by Walter Dean Myers. The main character, Greg " Slam" Harris, and his family live in a suburb house in the Bronx. Slam got his name from his standout basketball skills and his innate ability to slam-dunk. Slam goes to Latimer High, after switching from his old school Carver, to play basketball there and hopefully get a better education. Slam runs into a few problems in school and they threaten his basketball playing. Slam's grades aren't exactly great, in fact they were plain out bad, but this wasn't the worst problem Slam faced in the book. Slam faced the most difficult task of his life; growing up and deciding what he wants to do with his life.

In the book, Slam!, there is a plethora of well-detailed and interesting characters. Slam's parents aren't all that exciting, but his " Mums" keeps him in line. His Mother is constantly on Slam to do better in school and talks to Greg a lot about life. Greg's Father doesn't play much of a role at all in the story, he just seems to be a working alcoholic who helps the family make ends meet. Slam's little brother, Derek, is as colorful as any nine year-old who acts much like Slam, but also strives to be different. Derek and Slam have a pretty good relationship between the two of them, even though they do have their rough times.

Even when Derek lost the schools' camera, that Slam borrowed, Slam didn't make him suffer any repercussions. Another main character in Slam's life is his girlfriend, Mtisha. Mtisha and Slam have an odd relationship, they don't know whether they are serious about each other or not and they find

themselves falling for one another. Then there is Ice, Slam's best friend, who he grew up with. Ice is still going to Carver and ragged Slam for going to Latimer, but they are like brothers. As the book goes on Ice and Slam find themselves drifting off in different directions and Slam starts to thinking Ice may be dealing crack. The relationship between Ice and Slam is very brother-like and they both have great respect for one another.

Slam is a great basketball player; hence his name Slam! Slam can do just about what ever he wants with the ball. The basketball is practically an extension of his hand and you can feel his presence on the court. Not one to talk trash, but he is one to walk to the walk all over the court. Slam has always loved basketball; growing up he and Ice always played together and dreamed of going to the NBA. Ice was a very talented basketball player, some say better than Slam. When Slam transferred to Latimer he had to tryout for their basketball team. The coach of the team, Coach Nipper, didn't think much of Slam; he thought that he was another hotshot brother trying to light up other teams. Slam could sense this easily; the coach wouldn't play him, so finally the coach asked Slam to go one on one with him. Slam beat him so easily he didn't even need to work; he just played his game and ran his mouth.

This goes on to plague Slam for the whole season; the coach doesn't want a hotshot out on the court not being a team player. Slam is the one who ends up saving all the games, going into the second half and owning other teams. Slam befriends the old basketball coach, Goldy, who not only gives him basketball tips but also gives him tips on life Finally nearing the end of the

season, Carver, the defending league champions, played Latimer. This meant Slam and Ice were going to show down against each other for the first time since they were on the same team just last year. This time Slam got the nod to start against Ice. Who will win this battle?

Slam faces many problems during the course of the story, many in which he has to make some difficult decisions. Slam's grades are lacking in school and the principle, Mr. Tate, makes a few conferences with Slam's Mother. They talk about having a tutor and neither Slam, nor his father want this. Slam makes the decision to let Mtisha help him and he tries to do better. Now that he has tried to get that out of the way, he gets into trouble with Mtisha. Mtisha and Slam have always been close, but neither of them has let each other know how they feel, so Slam does things loosely.

One time after a game, Ice picked him in a Mercedes with a few of his girlfriends. One of the girls, Kicky, turns onto Slam and starts laying it down on him, but he doesn't really care for it. The next day Mtisha found out and went ballistic. Slam and Mtisha try to work things out and figure out where they stand once again, but another problem has made them realize it doesn't even matter, nor compare. Ice and Slam haven't been together much because of them being in two different schools so they didn't hang out as much as they used to and began to drift apart. Slam started to notice that Ice had lots of money on him and carried a beeper. Then Ice picked up Slam with a Mercedes; that he claimed he was borrowing. Mtisha and Slam both begin thinking of the possibility of Ice dealing crack and they both now where that leads. Can Mtisha and Slam save their life-long friend?

The book, Slam!, is a very realistic and powerful book for teenagers. The hardships and relationships Slam goes through can be easily compared and applied to other kids lives. By reading this book you'll not only read a great story but also see what another teens life is like in the Bronx. You can actually benefit a lot from reading this book also. You will see things through someone else's eyes, and have more of a wider understanding of the ways others live. This book will show you, what paths you can take in life and how to balance your love and your work. Not only will you gain some good advice through this book, but also you'll enjoy the great basketball action. The question is; are