# **ONE MARYLAND ONE BOOK 2010**

TEACHER'S GUIDE FOR GRADES 9-12

## OUTCASTS UNITED

BY WARREN ST. JOHN

## IMAGINE IF EVERYONE IN MARYLAND READ THE SAME BOOK AT THE SAME TIME

#### WHAT NEW THINGS WOULD WE HAVE TO TALK ABOUT WITH ONE ANOTHER?

One Maryland One Book, a program of the Maryland Center for the Book at the Maryland Humanities Council, is Maryland's first and only statewide community reading program. It is designed to bring together diverse people in communities across the state through the shared experience of reading the same book and participating in book-centered discussions and other related programs at public libraries, high schools, colleges and universities, museums, bookstores, and other organizations.

The 2010 book selection is *Outcasts United:* A Refugee Team, an American Town by Warren St. John. *Outcasts United* is the story of a soccer team of refugee boys called the Fugees from war zones in Liberia, Congo, Sudan, Iraq and Afghanistan; their coach, Luma Mufleh; and the town where they live—Clarkston, Georgia—a sleepy, southern town upended by refugee resettlement. The story is not only an inspiring tale of a small town becoming global, but also a story about resilience, the power of one person to make a difference and the challenge of creating community in a place where people seem to have little in common.

The Maryland Humanities Council has at the core of its mission the deep commitment to providing Marylanders with an opportunity to gather and discuss issues important to their lives, believing that a great work of literature provides an excellent springboard to do so. One Maryland One Book is not just about reading or literature. It is also about bringing people together for meaningful dialogue.

Outcasts United: A Refugee Team, an American Town By Warren St. John 31 chapters; 300 pages (excluding Author's Note & Reader's Guide) Spiegel & Grau Trade Paperback, 2009 ISBN 978-0-385-52204-5

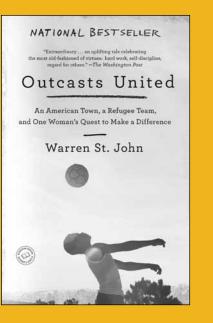
#### **GET THE BOOK**

Pick up a copy of *Outcasts United* at your local public library or bookstore and start up a conversation with your family, friends, co-workers or even the person sitting next to you as you ride the bus or train. This is your chance to take a moment to have a great conversation with an old friend or to make a new one.

#### **JOIN IN**

We invite you to join Honorary Chair, Maryland's First Lady Katie O'Malley, and thousands of other Marylanders at one of the many book discussions and related programs happening around the state in September and October. Look for Warren St. John at the Baltimore Book Festival on Sunday, September 26 and other venues around the state during the last week of September.

To find One Maryland One Book programs in your area, go to: www.onemarylandonebook.org and click on *Calendar*.





LETTER FROM THE HONORARY CHAIRPERSON FIRST LADY KATIE O'MALLEY

On behalf of the State of Maryland, it is my pleasure to invite you to participate in the third year of One Maryland One Book, our state's community reading project. Every year, thousands of Marylanders make time in their busy schedules to take part in the invaluable shared experience of reading the same book and then coming together to discuss the book and how it relates to issues important to their daily lives. I encourage you to join us this year in reading *Outcasts United: A Refugee Team, an American Town* by Warren St. John.

America is known for welcoming those from foreign shores who seek economic opportunity, safety, and political freedom. *Outcasts United* offers a window into the lives of a soccer team of refugee boys, the remarkable woman who coaches them, and the town where they live—a small, quiet, southern community turned upside down by the process of refugee resettlement. *Outcasts United* is complex, inspiring, and sheds a bright light on the many ways we create community in a very complicated and rapidly changing world.

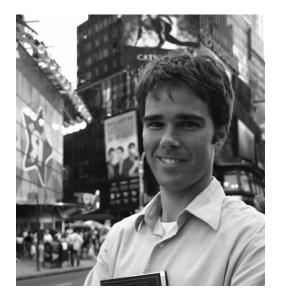
A program of the Maryland Humanities Council, One Maryland One Book is possible through the generosity of our community partners and sponsors, who have been great supporters of the program since its inception. We graciously thank them for their continued support. I hope you will join me and thousands of Marylanders by visiting your local public library or bookstore to pick up a copy of *Outcasts United* and join in the conversation about how we create and define community both in Maryland and in this country.

Thank you for taking part in this very special project.

Sincerely,

Katie OMalley

Katie O'Malley First Lady of Maryland



Clarkston, Georgia, was a typical southern town until it was designated a refugee settlement center in the 1990s, becoming the first American home for scores of families in flight from the world's war zones-from Liberia and Sudan to Iraq and Afghanistan. Suddenly Clarkston's streets were filled with women wearing the hijab, the smells of cumin and curry, and kids of all colors playing soccer in any open space they could find-the last thanks to Luma Mufleh, an Americaneducated Jordanian woman who started a youth soccer team to unify Clarkston's refugee children. With unsentimental compassion and grueling training sessions, and defying some local resistance, Mufleh lead her players through an unforgettable season. In return, from the kids and their grateful loved ones, she receives "a family of 120."

Set against the backdrop of a fading American town struggling to accommodate its new arrivals, *Outcasts United* is the stunning real-life story of an inspiring group of refugees and a woman who, with tough love and fiery determination, changes an entire community for the better.<sup>1</sup>

#### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Warren St. John is a feature writer for *The New York Times* and best-selling author of *Rammer Jammer Yellow Hammer: A Road Trip into the Heart of Fan Mania* (2004). *Rammer Jammer Yellow Hammer* was named one of *Sports Illustrated's* best books of the year, and ranked number one on *The Chronicle of Higher Education's* list of the best books ever written about collegiate athletics. *Outcasts United: A Refugee Team, an American Town* is his latest book based on an acclaimed series of front-page stories in *The New York Times*, which was released to rave reviews in early 2009.

St. John has written for *The New Yorker, Slate, Wired* and *The New York Observer*, in addition to his work in *The New York Times*. He has appeared on *The Today Show*, National Public Radio, MSNBC, CNN and other outlets to discuss his experience reporting on the town and team in *Outcasts United*. Born in Birmingham, Alabama, St. John attended The Altamont School. He studied English literature at Columbia College in New York City, where he now lives with his wife and daughter.

#### MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION CORE LEARNING GOALS - ENGLISH

#### GOAL 1: READING, REVIEWING AND RESPONDING TO TEXT

The student will demonstrate the ability to respond to a text by employing personal experiences and critical analysis.

EXPECTATION 1.1 The student will use effective strategies before, during, and after reading, viewing, and listening to self-selected and assigned materials.

INDICATOR 1.1.1 The student will use pre-reading strategies appropriate to both the text and purpose for reading by surveying the text, accessing prior knowledge, formulating questions, setting purpose(s), and making predictions.

INDICATOR 1.1.2 The student will use during-reading strategies appropriate to both the text and purpose for reading by visualizing, making connections, and using fix-up strategies such as re-reading, questioning, and summarizing.

INDICATOR 1.1.3 The student will use after-reading strategies appropriate to both the text and purpose for reading by summarizing, comparing, contrasting, synthesizing, drawing conclusions, and validating the purpose for reading.

EXPECTATION 1.2 The student will construct, examine, and extend meaning of traditional and contemporary works recognized as having significant literary merit.

INDICATOR 1.2.1 The student will consider the contributions of plot, character, setting, conflict, and point of view when constructing the meaning of a text.

INDICATOR 1.2.2 The student will determine how the speaker, organization, sentence structure, word choice, rhythm, and imagery reveal an author's purpose.

INDICATOR 1.2.3 The student will explain the effectiveness of stylistic elements in a text that communicate an author's purpose.

INDICATOR 1.2.5 The student will extend or further develop meaning by explaining the implications of the text for the reader or contemporary society.

EXPECTATION 1.3 The student will explain and give evidence to support perceptions about print and non-print works.

INDICATOR 1.3.1 The student will explain how language and textual devices create meaning.

INDICATOR 1.3.5 The student will explain how common and universal experiences serve as the source of literary themes that cross time and cultures.

**TEACHER'S NOTE:** Be aware, the F-word is used twice in the book on pages 217 and 218. "What the hell..." appears on page 278 and "You played a first half that sucked so bad..." on page 279. Female circumcision is mentioned on page 39 and defined only in general terms. Please be sure to review all Web links included in this Guide before sharing them with your students.

#### THEMES

Super diversity, survival, war, resettlement, community, loyalty, service, resentment, fear, distrust, multiculturalism, teamwork

#### TEACHER PREPARATION

Read "A Conversation with Warren St. John" on pages 313-318 of the book.

#### RESOURCES

## www.fugeesfamily.org/about.html

Founded by Luma Mufleh, Fugees Family is a non-profit organization devoted to working with child survivors of war.

#### www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=7761970

NPR interactive – A report on the Fugees; "Meet the Fugees," the youngest Fugees share their stories and their countries of origin are labeled. Video recommended for student viewing.

#### http://vimeo.com/10570303

A recent (March 2010) interview with Coach Luma; Fugees' poetry is included on the far right side of the webpage. Throughout this guide, additional poems written by players are recommended for student viewing.

#### www.mdhc.org

The following are available online on the One Maryland One Book page of the Maryland Humanities Council website: www.mdhc.org – click on "Programs" then "One Maryland One Book" then "Reader Resources"

#### TEACHER RESOURCES

- Enrichment projects
- Defined vocabulary
- Character organizer worksheet plus teacher's copy

#### **PRE-READING: DETERMINE PRIOR KNOWLEDGE**

- What do students already know about immigrants?
- What is the difference between an immigrant and a refugee? (Immigrants leave their homeland willingly; refugees leave a desperate, violent situation fearing for his/her and family members' lives.)
- Today, what areas of the world are going through civil war or government takeover? (Parts of Africa, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, etc.)
- What challenges might refugees face upon resettlement in the U.S.? (Isolation, language barriers, poverty, discrimination, assault, etc.)

#### ACTIVITY

#### RESEARCH TO GAIN NEW BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

There are numerous organizations mentioned in *Outcasts United* related to the topics and issues found in the book. Allow students time to research one from the list below. As each organization is referenced in the book, student(s) can share with the class the information gained.

- United Nations (UN)
- UDHR (Universal Declaration of Human Rights)
- NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization)
- Amnesty International
- International Rescue Committee (IRC)
- UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees)
- ECOMOG (Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group)
- Office of Refugee Resettlement
- YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association)
- Lost Boys of Sudan

#### **REFUGEES' HOMELANDS**

- Afghanistan Eritrea
- Albania
- Bosnia Gambia
- Burundi
- Cameroon Haiti
- Congo Iraq
- Egypt Kosovo

• Ethiopia

• Guinea

- The Ivory Coast
- Togo
- Vietnam
- Russia

Liberia

- Sierra Leone
- Somalia
- Sudan

#### DURING READING

In an effort to offer a variety of media, the Introduction could be replaced by the audio and photos at the following website:

#### www.nytimes.com/2007/01/21/us/21fugees.html

The author Warren St. John narrates. Photos of Clarkston, the coach, and the original Fugees help establish the setting of the book.

MumbaiPhilippines

### CHAPTER 1 - Luma (pages 15-25)

#### CHARACTERS

- Hassan al-Mufleh: Luma's father
- Sawsan al-Mufleh: Luma's mother
- Inam al-Mufleh: Luma's younger sister
- Munawar: Luma's maternal grandmother
- Rhonda Brown: Luma's volleyball coach
- Misty Wyman: Luma's best friend

#### SUMMARY

Luma's privileged upbringing and experiences as a talented athlete influence her decision to remain in the U.S.

#### VOCABULARY

• Expatriate [eks-pey-tree-it] n. a citizen who has left his or her own country to live in another, usually for a prolonged period (page 17)

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 What challenges does Luma face due to her upbringing and her immigration to the U.S.?
- 2 How does being an athlete help her face those challenges?

## CHAPTER 2 - Beatrice and Her Boys (pages 26-32)

#### CHARACTERS

- **Beatrice Ziaty:** refugee from Liberia; one of many new heads of household trying to survive in a foreign country
- · Jeremiah Ziaty: Under 15 player, Beatrice's youngest son
- Mandela Ziaty: Under 13 player, Beatrice's middle son
- Darlington Ziaty: one of the most talented Under 17 players, Beatrice's eldest son

#### SUMMARY

Liberia's history intertwines with the Ziatys' long journey from Liberia's violent upheaval in the 1990s to Clarkston. In her new world, Beatrice must work away from home; she despises leaving the children alone.

#### VOCABULARY

- Foibles [foi-bullz] n.pl. minor character flaws, shortcomings (page 27)
- Oligarchy [ol-uh-gahr-kee] n. a government by the few (page 27)
- Squalid [skwol-id] adj. unclean, dirty (page 29)

- 1 Why would it be worth leaving a loving spouse and father of your children to travel without him to a foreign country where you don't know the language or culture? Do you know anyone who has?
- 2 Does the U.S. have a responsibility to support refugees from war torn countries? Consider this throughout the book; it will be asked again at the end of the book.





## CHAPTER 3 - "Small Town...Big Heart" (pages 33-45)

#### CHARACTERS

- · Karen Feltz: anthropologist and city council member
- Lee Swaney: life-long Clarkston resident, owner of a heating and air conditioning business, and recently elected mayor

#### SUMMARY

The predominantly white town of Clarkston, Georgia, established just after the Civil War, remained homogeneous and conservative for 100 years until in the 1980s when numerous nonprofit organizations determined that it would be a prime place for refugee resettlement because of its proximity to a big city in need of low skilled workers.

#### VOCABULARY

- Exurb [ek-serb] n. community beyond the suburbs of the city (page 33)
- Pejorative [pi-jor-uh-tiv] adj. belittling, derogatory (page 34)
- Hijab [hi-jab] n. headscarf worn by Muslim women, custom of Islamic society where women dress modestly outside the home (page 38)
- Burka [boor-kuh] n.pl. loose garment covering the entire body and having a veiled opening for the eyes, worn by Muslim women (page 38)
- Mosque [mosk] n. a Muslim place of worship (page 38)
- Circumcision [sur-kuhm-sizh-uhn] n. surgical removal of tissue (often genital) (page 39)
- Ideologies [ahy-dee-ol-us-jeez] n. pl. beliefs that guide large groups or individuals (page 39)
- Platform [plat-fawrm] n. a public statement of principles, objectives, and policies (page 41)
- Impunity [im-pyoo-ni-tee] n. exemption from punishment, immunity (page 42)
- Sultanate [suhl-tn-eyt] n. territory ruled by a sultan (page 42)
- Assimilation [uh-sim-uh-ley-shun] n. merging of distinct (and often disparate) cultures (page 43)

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 How would a large influx of refugees be received in your community?
- 2 What did research reveal regarding the problems that ensued with resettlement?

#### CLASS ACTIVITY

Individually or in pairs, students create a timeline of Clarkston's major changes from the 1970s to the 1990s in order to visually see the impact of diversity that occurred in Clarkston during that time.

#### CHAPTER 4 - Alone Down South (pages 46-52)

CHARACTERS - no new major characters are introduced

#### SUMMARY

Luma gets over some of her homesickness when she discovers not only a Middle Eastern market where she can get a taste of home, but she also finds refugee boys playing her favorite sport of soccer. Differing opinions begin to divide Clarkston residents when Luma decides to organize soccer teams.

#### VOCABULARY

- Incongruous [in-kong-groo-us] adj. out of place, inappropriate, unbecoming (page 47)
- Intuit [in-too-it] v. to know by perception rather than learned knowledge (page 48)
- Chadors [chuhd-erz] n.pl. traditional garment of Muslim and Hindu women, drab-colored cloth that envelops the body from head to foot and covers all or part of the face (page 49)
- Tableau [tab-loh] n. picturesque grouping of persons or objects, a striking scene (page 49)

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1 What are the pros and cons of Luma's methods of coaching?

2 Would you say that finding the Talars market greatly influenced Luma's life, moderately influenced her or marginally influenced her? Consider all that was going on in her life. Be sure to explain your answer.

#### CHAPTER 5 - The Fugees Are Born (pages 53-62)

#### SHARE: http://vimeo.com/10586153

Poem by Mohammed - poignant presentation revealing the strife that one Fugee felt

#### CHARACTERS

- · Chris Holliday: ran the community center that was used mainly by refugees
- Art Hansen: professor of migration studies, community council board member, refugee supporter
- Emanuel Ransom: helped turn the old high school into a community center; feels refugees don't give back

#### SUMMARY

Diverse opinions within Clarkston expand the community divide. Luma opens her own business and also establishes a boys' soccer team to offer an outlet for the refugee boys.

#### VOCABULARY

• Xenophobic [zee-no-fo-bic] adj. undue fear of what is foreign, especially people of foreign origin (page 55)

## CHAPTER 5 CONT.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1 How did Holliday and Ransom differ in their point of view towards the refugees in Clarkston?

2 Why weren't the refugees' new lives what they had expected?

### CHAPTER 6 - Paula (pages 63-70)

#### CHARACTERS

- Paula Balegamire: mother of six children who left husband Joseph to ensure her children's safety; eventually Paula joins Luma's cleaning service
- · Josue Balegamire: Paula's oldest son
- Grace Balegamire: an Under 13 Fugee player
- Manace and Ephraim Balegamire: Paula's twins

#### SUMMARY

Paula and her children's difficult escape from the Democratic Republic of Congo takes them through many countries before the U.S. permits them to resettle in Clarkston.

#### VOCABULARY

- Despot [des-puht] n. dictator, tyrant, domineering person (page 63)
- Collateral [co-lat-uh-ral] adj. accompanying, added, ancillary (page 63)
- · Circumscribed [sur-kuhm-skrahyb] adj. limited, confined (page 63)
- Kleptocrat [klep-tuh-crat] n. government official who is a thief or exploiter (page 65)
- Fomented [foh-men-ted] v. to instigate or foster as in rebellion or discord (page 65)
- Marxist [mahrk-sist] adj. follower of the teachings of Marxism, developed by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, whose theories on political, economic and social principles promote the creation of a classless society (page 66)
- Dire [dire] adj. calamitous, with terrible consequences (page 69)

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 If your life was in jeopardy and you had only 20 minutes to pack up necessities/valuables, what would you pack for yourself?
- 2 Was the refugees' distrust of the Clarkston residents warranted? What could the residents do to change it?

#### CLASS ACTIVITY

If you had 20 minutes to evacuate your house and could only take what you could carry, what would you take with you? Create a personal list and then share within a small group. Using the individual group members' ideas, create one list on which your group agrees. The spokesperson for the group should be able to justify each item when groups share orally.

## CHAPTER 7 - "Coach Says It's Not Good" (pages 71-80)

#### CHARACTERS

- Bienvenue (Bien) Ntwari: Burundian refugee, Under 13 Fugee
- · Alex Ntwari: Under 15 player, Bien's older brother
- Ive (EE-vay) Ntwari: Bien's younger brother, also Under 13 Fugee
- Generose Ntwari: mother of Bien, Ive, and Alex
- Peshawa Hamad: Iraqi refugee, also one of the most talented Under 17 players

#### SUMMARY

From a whirlwind journey, limited English-speaking Bienvenue, his mother, and his siblings join the refugees in Clarkston where outgoing Bien quickly befriends Grace, a boy who speaks Swahili like Bien and who practices with the Fugees. Luma realizes she needs to impose new rules. The Fugees face negativity from their opponents as well as their opponents' parents and coaches.

#### VOCABULARY

- Vertiginous [ver-tij-uh-nuhs] adj. whirling, affected with vertigo (page 71)
- Lingua franca [lin-gwa frang-kuh] n. widely-used spoken language of an area (page 76)
- Rorschach test [ror-shak] adj. personality test using ink blots (page 78)
- Epithet [ep-i-thet] n. word or phrase associated with a person or thing (page78)
- Proclivities [pro-cli-vi-teez] n. pl. natural tendencies, predispositions (page 79)
- Roiling: [roil-ing] v. disturbing, irritating (page 80)

- 1 If Grace resettled in your hometown and attended your school, would his perception of American boys and girls be similar or different from his perception of classmates in Clarkston? Explain.
- 2 Why did the Fugees' equipment deficiencies and lack of proper English cause such consternation with opposing teams when all everyone wanted to do was play soccer?
- 3 Was Luma's impact on the boys on the team beneficial or detrimental? Support your opinion.

CHAPTER 8 - "They're in America Now—Not Africa" (pages 81-85)

## CHARACTERS

- Chike Chime (Chee-kay Chee-may): Nigerian immigrant
- Timothy Jordan: Clarkston police officer with a record of unnecessary use of force

## SUMMARY

Even after fifteen years of refugee resettlement, many Clarkston residents carry grudges and animosity toward the newcomers. For example, without any provocation, Officer Jordan physically and verbally assaults Chike Chime and then puts Chime in jail.

## VOCABULARY

• Rogue [rohg] adj. having an abnormally savage, unpredictable disposition (page 85)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Was there anything that Chime could have done to protect himself and remain out of jail? How did Officer Jordan justify his behavior?
- 2 Chime may have had cause to sue the city for Officer Jordan's behavior. Why do you think that he did not?





## CHAPTER 9 - Get Lost (pages 86-98)

## CHARACTERS

- Nathaniel Nyok: one of the Lost Boys of Sudan and a refugee in Clarkston
- Tracy Ediger: Nebraskan who moved to Georgia to help refugees, joined the Fugees in 2006 as a team coordinator, head of tutoring, and fundraiser

## SUMMARY

Rather than growing accustomed to diversity, the town of Clarkston divides into "them and us." Those with authority and control continue to disallow the same privileges to the refugees that the town residents receive. Luma's practice site must move to a poorly-maintained field behind the local elementary school that is riddled with broken glass and debris; Nyok receives the runaround when he peacefully requests space to play soccer with his friends. Soccer becomes a dirty word in Clarkston. Tracy joins the Fugees to help Luma.

## VOCABULARY

- Emanate [em-uh-neyt] v. to flow outward (page 87)
- Hegira [hej-er-uh] n. any journey to escape an undesirable situation (page 88)
- Vestiges [ves-tij-ez] n. pl. visible evidence of something that is no longer present (page 88)
- Arcane [ahr-keyn] adj. mysterious, obscure (page 89)
- Succinct [suh-singkt] adj. concise, expressed in few words (page 90)
- **Bivouacked** [biv-wakd] v. to assemble in a military-like encampment with improvised shelters (page 92)
- Cathartic [kuh-thahr-tik] adj. purging (page 96)
- Reticent [ret-uh-suhnt] adj. hesitant, reluctant (page 97)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 If Nyok understood the mayor's point of view regarding soccer and the town's playing fields, what solutions could he have provided to counter the mayor?
- 2 Why was Luma (and her team) willing to put on a "good face" and practice on the dangerous field offered to them by the city?

## CLASS ACTIVITY

Go to Google Earth at http://maps.google.com/earthview and determine how many green areas in your community could be used for soccer team practices. How many spaces could be used?

SHARE: http://vimeo.com/10586130 Babba Poem - another Fugee's story

CHAPTER 10 - "I Want to Be Part of the Fugees!" (pages 101-109)

#### CHARACTERS

- Christian Jackson: Under 15 Liberian striker who lost his siblings in a fire
- Prince: Under 15 Liberian refugee, quick talented player who refuses to cut his braids
- Eldin Subasic: Under 13 Bosnian refugee, easy-going, cooperative goalie
- Mafoday Jawneh: Under 13 Bambian refugee with many of the same characteristics as his buddy Eldin

#### SUMMARY

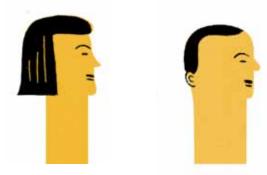
During the new season's tryouts, Luma evaluates the strengths and weaknesses within each of her three teams. A handout with Luma's expectations is sent home with each player with the understanding that irrevocable boundaries have been drawn; ignoring any expectation means the player is dismissed from the team. Long hair and braids on team members becomes an issue.

#### VOCABULARY

- Tedium [tee-dee-uhm] n. monotony, sameness (page 101)
- **Spate** [speyt] n. a sudden, almost overwhelming outpouring (page 101)
- Perennial [puh-ren-ee-uh] adj. enduring, lasting for an indefinitely long time (page 103)
- Aspiration [as-puh-rey-shuh n] n. goal, desired objective (page 103)
- Malleable [mal-ee-uh-buhl] adj. adaptable, flexible, pliable (page 103)

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Explain the differences among Luma's three teams. Why do the differences exist?
- 2 Explain why gangs are so enticing, especially for vulnerable boys like the refugees? Is it the same in your community?
- 3 Evaluate Luma's rules. If you were the coach, which would you keep and which would you discard?
- 4 Why would it benefit the refugee children to understand Beatrice's comment regarding the importance of remembering "...the life we passed through?" Is that comment important for the average American teen?



#### CHAPTER 11 - Figure It Out so You Can Fix It (pages 110-126)

#### CHARACTERS

- Kanue Biah: responsible, take-charge, Liberian refugee on the Under 15 team
- Fornatee Tarpeh: most assimilated Under 15 player, Liberian refugee
- Alex Nicishatse: Under 15 player

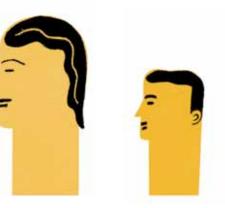
#### SUMMARY

Though Luma turns herself inside out to find necessary soccer equipment for the Fugees, she refuses to "baby them." The lure of gangs proves difficult for teammates. Beatrice feels strongly that corporal punishment produces respectful children and bemoans the fact that the U.S. doesn't allow it.

#### VOCABULARY

- Taciturn [tas-i-turn] adj. reserved in speech, inclined to silence (page 116)
- Acumen [ak-yuh-muhn] n. keen insight (page 117)
- Sotto voce [sah-toh voh-chee] adj./adv. using a soft tone of voice (page 117)
- Wanton [won-tn] adj. deliberate, careless, reckless (page 121)
- Indigenous [in-dij-uh-nuhs] adj. original inhabitants (page 121)
- Analog [an-l-awg] n. similarity, something having the property of being analogous to something else (page 121)
- **Corporal punishment** [kawr-pruhl puhn-ish-muh nt] n. physical punishment, ex. spanking (page 124)

- 1 Why is long hair on the players such an issue for Luma, for Beatrice, for Prince, and for Kanue?
- 2 Why are the Liberian refugees looked at differently from their other African countrymen? Are the perceived differences valid?
- 3 How do opinions among parents in the book vary regarding corporal punishment? Do you see this disparity within your own community?



## CHAPTER 12 - Meltdown (pages 127-133)

#### CHARACTERS - no new major characters are introduced

#### SUMMARY

The Under 15 team attends a soccer game where half the players don't appear. Luma fumes, too frustrated to coach; instead, she turns away from the team and watches from the sidelines. Kanue Biah steps up to motivate, coordinate, and lead the remaining team members.

#### VOCABULARY

- Affluence [uf-floo-uhns] n. abundance of money, property, and other material goods (page 128)
- Stultifyingly [stuhl-tuh-fany-ing-lee] adj. smotheringly, suffocatingly (page 129)
- Juke [jook] n. a fake, usually intended to deceive a defensive player (page 130)
- Feint [feynt] n. an attack aimed at one place used as a distraction from the real point of attack (page 130)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Like parents, Luma uses reverse psychology. What is it and how effective is it?
- 2 Which character, thus far, can you relate to? Want for a friend? Would ignore? Why?

CHAPTER 13 - "How Am I Going to Start All Over?" (pages 134-142)

#### CHARACTERS

• Barlea: Kanue's hardworking uncle and guardian

#### CLASS ACTIVITY

Review the text, creating high level questions that can promote discussion rather than be answered with one word/phrase.

#### POSSIBLE RESOURCE

http://projects.coe.uga.edu/epltt/index.php?title=Bloom%27s\_Taxonomy Brief animation of Revised Bloom's Taxonomy, "Bloom's Bakery"

#### ASSIGNMENT

While reading this chapter, students create two to three upper level discussion questions.

#### SUMMARY

Luma cancels the season for the Under 15 team because the boys lack motivation, are frequently tardy or are frequently absent. Kanue, one of the few highly responsible boys, is devastated. On the other hand, Luma finally tells the Under 13 team that they played a good game.

### CHAPTER 13 CONT.

#### VOCABULARY

- Asylum [uh-sahy-luh m] n. a place of refuge, any secure retreat (page 135)
- Mulled [muhl] v. to think about carefully, to ponder, to ruminate (page 139)
- Portend [pohr-tend] v. to indicate in advance as an omen does (page 140)

#### CLASS ACTIVITY

Students think-pair-share their questions. Students refine questions with a partner and then use the questions to promote class discussion. Potential themes for discussion: disappointment, disrespect, anger, language immersion, problem resolution.

CHAPTER 14 - Alex, Bien, and Ive (pages 143-148)

CHARACTERS - no new major characters are introduced

**SUMMARY:** Telemarketers prove to be another nemesis for the non-English speaking refugees. Since foreign language capabilities tend to be in inverse proportions with the eldest having the most difficulties acquiring the new language and the youngest having the least difficulty, naïve youngsters tend to be the translators for the parents. Bills often arise unexpectedly. Generose expected the U.S. to be paradise and not a place where she needs to leave her six-month-old in the care of her older brothers.

#### VOCABULARY

• Guffawed [guh-fawd] v. to laugh loudly, boisterously (page 148)

- 1 Telemarketers prove to be a huge challenge for the often non-English speaking refugee parents. What other U.S. social norms might prove problematic? (For example, a doctor's visit, parentteacher conferences)
- 2 Primary caregivers often weigh the pros and cons of working outside the home. Was Generose's situation worse than others or about the same?

## CHAPTER 15 - Trying Again (pages 149-155)

CHARACTERS - no new major characters are introduced

#### SUMMARY

Though a volunteer, the YMCA refuses to allow Luma to cancel the Under 15 season. If she wants to continue the other teams, she must reinstate the Under 15 team. Luma decides on new tryouts; those who show up will give her the respect she deserves.

#### VOCABULARY

• Incensed [in-sensd] adj. very angry (page 149)

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Luma sees situations as right or wrong, black or white. Are there more than two ways to look at things?
- 2 With all the problems Luma faces, why doesn't she just give up?

## CHAPTER 16 - The Fifteens Fight (pages 156-162)

#### CHARACTERS

- Peshawa Hamad: talkative, self-confident Under 17 player
- Muamer: new Under 15 offensive player from Bosnia

#### SUMMARY

The newly-chosen Under 15s have difficulty because many "brothers" didn't return for the tryouts, diversity reigns and proves problematic and few players have anything in common. To see how the new team will deal with challenges, Luma has them play the Under 17s. Luma approaches Mayor Swaney in hopes of gaining a better field for the teams; Swaney passes the decision to the City Council.

#### VOCABULARY

- Taciturn [tas-i-turn] adj. reluctant to join in conversation, inclined to silence (page 157)
- Irascible [ih-ras-uh-buh] adj. easily provoked to anger, very irritable (page 157)

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 What is the difference between "functional English," "conversational English," and "formal English?" What are the benefits and detriments of each?
- 2 If you were Luma, how would you have dealt with Fornatee?
- 3 What are Mayor Swaney's strengths and weaknesses as a town leader?

## CHAPTER 17 - Go Fugees! (pages 163-168)

CHARACTERS - no new major characters are introduced

#### SUMMARY

Though rarely filled with worry, the Under 15s' first game after suspension makes Luma extremely anxious. Surprisingly, the team "...played a beautiful game."

#### VOCABULARY

• Scrum [skrum] n. scrape, scuffle (page 167)

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Up to this point, has Luma united her team members or divided them?
- 2 What could be done to make more people attend the boys' games? Is there any way to get the boys' primary caregivers to the games? Consider their work day, child care, transportation, etc.
- 3 Project what would have happened to the team if the Under 15s had lost.

## CHAPTER 18 - Gunshots (pages 169-171)

#### CHARACTERS

• Tito: Under 15 Liberian, new recruit

#### SUMMARY

Tito, now a member of the gang called the Africans, gets shot in the face. Concerns arise about gangs. The hostility from the older residents is minor compared to the violent hostility from poor Americans both white and black.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1 Are gangs a reality in your community? If so, what kind of impact do they have on people your age? Older residents? Your younger siblings? Do gangs fulfill the same purpose in your community as they do in a resettlement complex?

## CHAPTER 19 - Getting Over It (pages 172-186)

#### CHARACTERS

- Bill Mehlinger: owner of Thriftown, the privately-owned market in the Clarkston Shopping Center
- William Perrin: Clarkston Baptist Church member who believes the church should follow the teachings of Jesus by bringing people of all nations together
- Phil Kitchin: Clarkston Baptist Church pastor who agrees with Pellin
- Tony J. Scipio: the new police chief
- Steven Vertovec: a British researcher who studied diversity

#### SUMMARY

Bill Mehlinger, the local market owner, loses business as Clarkston residents move out. Using a refugee employee's suggestion, Bill stocks international products to provide convenience for the refugees. "If you don't change, you're gone," Bill realizes. The Clarkston Baptist Church, the town's spiritual center for over 100 years, also recognizes the importance of being more inclusive. As Jesus said, "Heaven is a place for people of all nations." In an out-of-character move, Mayor Swaney hires a black police chief. The biggest problem in Clarkston is not the diversity, but that the "small town community is fading."

#### VOCABULARY

- Precipitous [pri-sip-i-tuhs] adj. quickly and steeply (page 173)
- **Pallet** [pal-it] n. a low, portable platform on which materials are stacked for storage or transportation (page 174)
- Mélange [mey-lahnj] n. a mixture (page 174)
- Maelstrom [meyl-struh m] n. a restless, disordered, tumultuous state of affairs (page 178)
- Nuance [noo-ahns] n. very slight difference (page 180)
- Splayed [spleyd] v. spread out (page 182)
- Proximity [prok-sim-i-tee] n. nearness in place, time, relation, occurrence (page 184)

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Why was hiring Tony J. Scipio as police chief a bold move for Swaney?
- 2 Explain in your own words the meaning of the following quote: "Civility probably emerges more from indifference to diversity than from any appreciation of it." Do you agree or disagree?
- 3 Do you live in or know of a community like Clarkston facing the same issues?

## CHAPTER 20 - The 'Soccer People' (pages 187-194)

CHARACTERS - no new major characters are introduced

#### SUMMARY

Mayor Swaney expresses the concern of many when he points out that "they don't get involved" in reference to the refugee community. Swaney talks his double talk of contradictions with the author, Warren St. John. Luma approaches the City Council and because of Swaney's comments, the council unanimously approves her request for a better field.

#### VOCABULARY

- Acumen [ak-yuh-mu n] n. keen insight (page 188)
- Red herring [red hair-ring] n. misleading clue (page 189)
- Evinced [ih-vins] v. to show clearly (page 191)

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Mayor Swaney uses the phrase "those people." Is this offensive? Is it a form of stereotyping? Explain.
- 2 Would it have helped if the Fugee team members had attended the City Council meeting? What if a team spokesperson had addressed the Council rather than or in addition to Luma?

#### CHAPTER 21 - Playing on Grass (pages 195-200)

CHARACTERS - no new major characters are introduced

#### SUMMARY

Chief Scipio and Luma meet with the teams to discuss gangs; the boys share their view of how they can make a difference in their less than perfect lives. The grassy field feels like a new home.

#### VOCABULARY

- Kudzu [kood-zoo] n. fast growing vine in the South often planted to prevent soil erosion (page 198)
- Bucolic [byoo-kol-ik] adj. suggesting an idyllic, rural life (page 198)

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1 Why would gangs appeal to the refugees? Which age group would be more likely to join one? Discuss the gang situation in your community.

#### PART THREE: FULL CIRCLE

SHARE: http://vimeo.com/10571213 *Fugees on Inside Africa* - Coach Luma, the Fugees, and Clarkston in a news report

#### CHAPTER 22 - Who Are the Kings? (pages 203-209)

#### CHARACTERS

- Qendrim Bushi (CHIN-drim): Under 13 goalie who came to Georgia when he was 6 years old
- Xhalal Bushi: Qendrim's father who shared ownership of two stores in his homeland but now stocks shelves and hauls groceries

#### SUMMARY

Qendrim idolized his grandfather, one of the best-known goalkeepers in Kosovo, rather than the international soccer players of today. Like the other refugees, Qendrim faced many challenges when his family left Albania. Qendrim loves that he knows so many players from other countries. The Under 13 team begins to gel; Luma has learned most of their strengths and weaknesses.

#### VOCABULARY

- Emulate [em-yuh-leyt] v. to imitate with the effort to equal (page 203)
- Befuddlement [bih-fuhd-l-ment] n. perplexity, confusion (page 208)

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Why is Qendrim's father's attitude so different from other refugee parents? Has that attitude filtered down to Qendrim? How or how not?
- 2 Do you anticipate that most Clarkston residents would respond differently to either of them?

CHAPTER 23 - Showdown at Blue Springs (pages 210-214)

#### CHARACTERS

- Idwar Dikori: Under 13 player
- Robin Dikori: Under 13 player and Idwar's younger brother

#### SUMMARY

The Under 13s play a tight game against "...all white people." Perseverance, cohesive teamwork, and even better coaching lead Luma's youngest team to a well-deserved win. One man from the opponent's side tells the team that he would've paid money to have seen such a great game.

#### VOCABULARY

• Tendril [ten-dril] n. branch, offshoot (page 210)

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1 What wins games, a strong offense or a strong defense?

#### CHAPTER 24 - Coming Apart (pages 215-225)

#### CHARACTERS

• Jeremy Cole: a youth counselor

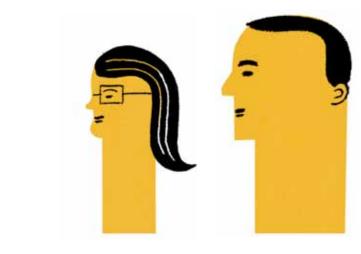
#### SUMMARY

The Under 15 team struggles to assimilate. The new team members lack skills and the original players miss their former teammates. In his frustration, Mandela mutters an obscenity during the game and in front of coach; Luma quickly benches him. Luma shares her disappointment in Mandela with some of his friends, who reluctantly agree that Mandela should be cut from the team.

#### VOCABULARY

- Affluent [uh-floo-uh nt] adj. wealthy (page 215)
- Vulnerable [vuhl-ner-uh-buhl] adj. capable of being hurt, open to attack, criticism, temptation (page 220)
- Sisyphean [si-si-fee-n] adj. both effortful and futile; based on the Greek myth of King Sisyphus, who was punished by being cursed to roll a huge boulder up a hill, only to watch it roll back down and to repeat this throughout eternity (page 220)
- Accrual [uh-kroo-uh l] n. increase, growth, accumulation (page 220)
- **Magistrate** [maj-uh-streyt] n. a civil officer responsible for the administration of the law, i.e., justice of the peace, judge of minor criminal cases (page 222)
- Pious [pahy-uhs] adj. pertaining to religious devotion, sacred rather than secular (page 223)
- Osmosis [oz-moh-sis] n. absorption, assimilation (page 224)

- 1 Do you agree or disagree with the research that says teens are generally "ambiguous?" Explain. Be specific.
- 2 What are the benefits to those people who assist the refugees?
- 3 Is the refugees' distrust of the residents warranted? Explain your answers.



## CHAPTER 25 - Hanging On at Home (pages 226-234)

#### CHARACTERS

• David Faryen: a Liberian political scientist, refugee, and the new man in Beatrice's life

#### SUMMARY

Refugees and immigrants frequently take jobs that Americans are unwilling to do; for example Generose works one hour from home in a chicken processing plant that has terrible working conditions, leaving Alex to take care of the house. Mandela is moody after his dismissal from the Fugees. Beatrice begins to see David Faryen.

## VOCABULARY

- Pabulum [pab-yuh-luh m] n. food, nutrient (page 229)
- **Dollop** [dol-uh p] n. small quantity, a lump or blob of some substance (page 230)
- Untethered [uhn-teth-erd] v. not confined or connected to (page 232)
- Contentious [kuhn-ten-shuh s] adj. tending to argue, quarrelsome (page 232)

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Many business people turn to refugees to do the jobs that Americans are unwilling to do. What are the benefits and disadvantages of them doing so?
- 2 Should the described working conditions be against the law? Why or why not?

## CHAPTER 26 - The Dikoris [di-kor-eez] (pages 235-244)

#### CHARACTERS

• Daldoum and Smira Dikori: Robin, Idwar, and Shamsoun's parents

#### SUMMARY

The new field invigorates the players. The Dikoris, a well-to-do Sudanese family, bring their youngest boys to the Fugees. Their speed will impact the Under 13 team. The Dikori boys lose their mother and three sisters in a car accident. Soccer keeps them (the boys) sane. Shamsoun notes that, unlike people in his country, American's appear afraid of newcomers.

## CHAPTER 26 CONT.

## VOCABULARY

- Quotidian [kwoh-tid-ee- uh n] adj. daily, ordinary, customary (page 235)
- Incapacitated [in-kuh-pas-i-tey-tid] adj. crippled, disabled (page 235)
- Jihad [ji-had] n. a holy war undertaken as a sacred duty by Muslims; any vigorous, emotional crusade for an idea or principle (page 238)
- Insurgent [in-sur-juh nt] n. a person who rises in forceful opposition to lawful authority, a rebel (page 238)
- Bulwark [buhl-wawrk] n. a person or thing giving strong support or encouragement in time of need, danger, or doubt; a barrier, defense (page 238)
- Genocide [jen-uh-sahyd] n. a deliberate and systematic killing of a nation, a race, or cultural group; holocaust, mass execution, ethnic cleansing, race extermination (page 239)
- Diffidence [dif-i-duh ns] n. hesitancy, reluctance, reserve (page 242)

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Do people in your community welcome or disdain new people, new cultures, new religions or new races? Provide details that support your response.
- 2 Is reading the stories of the refugees likely to affect the way you look at people different from yourself?

## CHAPTER 27 - "What Are You Doing Here?" (pages 245-256)

SHARE: http://vimeo.com/10586099 Poem by Manace - A Fugee's personal expression about his homeland.

#### CHARACTERS

- David Anderson: head coach of the Valiants, the Under 13s' competition
- Joni (YAN-ni) Scherzer: The Valiants' star player

#### SUMMARY

Luma is arrested on the way to the Under 13s' game because of a suspended license and because the game was on a weekend her protests of innocence could not be checked out by the police. The players' concerns bring back memories of family members in their homeland who had been taken without cause and never seen again. Confused and concerned, the team loses (5-0). Grace's twin brother tries to understand the concept of bail in the U.S.

#### VOCABULARY

- Exorcise [ek-sawr-sahyz] v. to free a person or place from bad influences or evil spirits (page 246)
- Pettiest [pet-ee-est] adj. of least importance (page 249)

#### CHAPTER 27 CONT.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1 Was it Luma's fault that the boys lost?

2 Why does the police officer hold Luma if she didn't have a suspended license? Was it legal?

#### CHAPTER 28 - Halloween (pages 257-262)

CHARACTERS - no new major characters are introduced

#### SUMMARY

International news, though scant, creates worry for Paula's family; her husband may have been a part of a prison riot back home. Luma wants her Under 13s to have a break and introduces them to Halloween in the suburbs. Providing costumes and transportation, Luma watches as the boys experience what they had always expected to find in the U.S., "a land of plenty."

#### VOCABULARY

- Cul de sac [kuhl-duh-saj] n. a street closed at one end so there's no through traffic (page 258)
- Jaundiced [jawn-dist] adj. exhibiting prejudice, as from envy or resentment (page 261)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Where do people in other parts of the world get the idea that the U.S. is "a land of plenty?"
- 2 Was it wise of Luma to allow the boys to experience Halloween? Why or why not?

### CHAPTER 29 - The Fifteens' Final Game (pages 263-267)

## CHARACTERS - no new major characters are introduced

#### SUMMARY

The Under 15s are worn out by the 2 ½ months of intense practices after their reinstatement. Even after an unexpected win over a top team, the season's end looks so bleak that the boys approach the final game with indifference. After a miserable first half and the coach's rebuke, Kanue and Natnael attempt to lead the team toward the finals.

#### VOCABULARY

- Piqued [peekd] adj. flared up (page 263)
- Hiatus [hahy-ey-tuh s] n. pause, interruption (page 264)

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 After feeling such frustration with the Under 15s, why would Luma become empathetic?
- 2 Do the Under 15s gain anything from this season? If so, what? If not, why not?

## CHAPTER 30 - My Rules, My Way (pages 268-272)

CHARACTERS - no new major characters are introduced

#### SUMMARY

Luma recognizes the stronger bond she has with the Under 13 boys. Going into division play, the boys (both Christian and Muslim) decide among themselves a way to pray for the team. A win puts them in third place for the division. Luma readies them for the Tornado Cup where the best teams in the state will play.

VOCABULARY - no new vocabulary

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1 Why would even a skimpy set of goals make such a difference to soccer players?

2 What is the strategy behind Luma's coaching that she won't allow wins to go to the boys' heads?

## CHAPTER 31 - Tornado Cup (pages 273-290)

#### CHARACTERS

• Nini Pinzon: a Columbian immigrant playing through a scholarship on the Concorde Fire, the opposing team, who's more like the boys on the Fugees.

#### SUMMARY

In preparation for the Tornado Cup, Luma arranges for the Under 13s to play the Under 15s. Though they lose, they play hard and pressure the angry Under 15s to beat them rather than beating themselves. At the Cup, the boys play their best game of the season, but then lose to the Strikers. During Luma's planned sleepover, which is filled with exhausted boys, she finds out that the team has one more shot at the finals. The Under 13s and Under 15s work to raise the money to pay the registration to play in a mid-winter tournament. Again, a practice field is taken away.

#### VOCABULARY

- Antithesis [an-tith-e-ses] n. opposite (page 281)
- Fusillade [ fyoo-suh-lahd ] n. simultaneous outpouring of anything (page 285)
- Sic [sic] Latin for thus, so, in such a manner. Often used within a text meaning that a spelling/ phraseology/colloquialism is knowingly incorrect or not common, but has been kept the way it was written or said (page 289)

- 1 Describe the difference in attitudes of the Under 13s and Under 15s during the scrimmage. What is each team playing for?
- 2 How is the spirit of the Tornado Cup described?

## EPILOGUE (pages 291-300)

#### SUMMARY

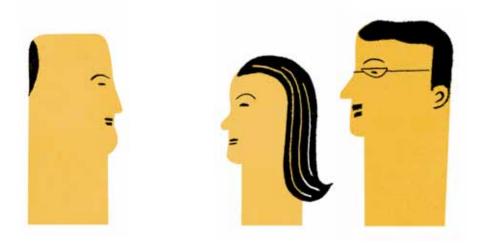
Luma's parents visit the U.S. Mandela and Luma begin talking again; Luma advises him to get out of the resettlement right away and join Job Corps. Academic successes offer opportunities for many of the Fugee team members. Some families move to other parts of the country; other ethnic groups resettle in Clarkston. Clarkston crawls through the changes, one step forward, two steps back. In January 2007, St. John shares the Fugees story in *The New York Times*. The articles result in positive changes for the teams; for example, the City Council once again allows the teams to use the grassy field. Since 2008 Luma has continued to coach four Fugee teams and to help refugee families adjust to their new world.

#### VOCABULARY

- **Rapprochement** [ra-prawsh-mahn] n. an establishment or reestablishment of harmonious relations (page 292)
- Curmudgeon [ker-muhj-uh n] n. a bad-tempered, difficult, cantankerous person (page 298)
- Drubbing [druhb-ing] n. a decisive, humiliating defeat (page 299)
- Hapless [hap-lis] adj. unlucky, unfortunate (page 299)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Should Luma be put on a pedestal? Why or why not? What is the benefit of seeing her as a being just like the rest of us?
- 2 What challenges do you anticipate the new mayor will face?
- 3 Consider again a previous question: Does the U. S. have a responsibility to support refugees from war-torn countries? Yes? No? Maybe? Should conditions be placed on any of the acceptances? Has your mind changed since the beginning of the book?
- 4 Once this book is made into a movie, what challenges and advantages might impact Luma and the Fugees?



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