

The Boy in the Black Suit

By Jason Reynolds

Grade Levels:

- 7-12

Synopsis:

When Matt Miller's mother passed away, he and his father couldn't get past the weight of their grief. Matt knew his father's drinking meant no money for bills so he considered a job at Cluck Bucket but a family friend offered him a better paying job – at the funeral home where his mother had been laid out. Soon Matt is wearing a black suit and sitting in on funerals looking for the one person in each situation whose grief is as great as his. Then he meets Lovey – someone who is not defined by her grief...

This quiet, character-driven title shows a different side of urban life.

Author Website: <http://www.jasonwritesbooks.com/>

Twitter: @JasonReynolds83

Publishers' Website for Jason Reynolds:

<http://authors.simonandschuster.com/Jason-Reynolds/403685768>

Lesson Ideas:

- Article: Confronting Grief in YA Literature
<http://review.gawker.com/confronting-grief-in-ya-literature-an-interview-jason-1683547819>
- Article: Jason Reynolds on Building Houses and Affirming Young Lives
<http://www.slj.com/2015/08/diversity/jason-reynolds-on-building-houses-and-affirming-young-lives-summerteen-2015/#>
- Article: The Graceful Power of Jason Reynolds
<http://www.nbcnews.com/news/nbcblk/graceful-power-novelist-jason-reynolds-n399721>
- Article: Wouldn't You Like to Know...Jason Reynolds
<http://voyamagazine.com/2014/05/19/wouldnt-you-like-to-know-jason-reynolds/>
- Biography: <http://www.pippinproperties.com/authors/jason-reynolds/>

Common Core Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.3. Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.3 Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

Suggested Companion Titles:

Professional Reviews:

- *Booklist* (02/01/2015)
- *Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books* (02/01/2015)
- *Horn Book Guide* (10/01/2015)
- *Kirkus Reviews* (10/15/2014)
- *Library Media Connection* (05/01/2015)
- *School Library Journal* (10/01/2015)
- *Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA)* (02/01/15)

Award:

- Coretta Scott King Author Honor, 2016