

May 8th, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

After thirty years in education, most of the things that I remember don't have a lot to do with grades, tests, and assignments. I do remember kids and the moments I spent with them. As a high school librarian for twenty years, the most precious moments for me were students standing at my door saying, "Do you have another book just like this one?" That question would always mean that a book had touched someone's life and that the person wanted that moment to "stay with them".

*An Invisible Thread* by Laura Schroff and her co-authors is a book that stays with the reader. It is a true story about a warm and wonderful relationship between an African American youth and a successful white woman. Yes, you read that correctly. No, it's not your typical story. But it is a story for everyone who has felt the need to reach out and care about someone else.

***If you, as a high school or college educator, are looking for a book for your students to read as a class or school, you will be creating a "life moment" for your students if you choose this book for your students! This title would be excellent for "One School, One Book" projects!***

In 1986, a busy New York ad executive was unable to ignore the young man who was begging for money on the street. She turned around---those words, "turned around" created an "invisible thread" between her and the young man that would last for over twenty years.

This book is the story of that relationship. The book is a story about a defining moment and the people who experienced it. Fortunately, the reader gets to feel that experience and all the joys and sadness that accompany it.

Reading *An Invisible Thread*....will meet several educational goals that will enrich students' learning experience. Naturally, the first goal is to get students reading more. Reading the book will make students a part of a group, and most young adults have the need to fit in. *An Invisible Thread*...is a fantastic choice for reluctant readers! Why?--- because it is not a difficult book to read and while it is over 200 pages, it moves quickly with lots of action and drama. Slower readers will be drawn to this book as they were to *A Child Called It* by Dave Pelzer.

With the implementation of the Common Core Standards nationwide, emphasis is placed upon reading more non-fiction in schools. *The Invisible Thread* is non-fiction, thus helping schools present to its students high interest, best-selling non-fiction. Reading this book can help students perceive that people of different races and socio-economic levels can become friends and have rewarding relationships, both concepts students need to understand.

But the most important purpose served by this book is showing that "one person can make a

difference.” That phrase is over-used, but the ideal is not. Now, more than ever, young people need to know that it is still possible for one person to make big things happen, good things. They need to see that every day must count, and we are all connected on this planet, whether we want to be or not.

In *An Invisible Thread*, Laura Schroff takes young Maurice to ball games, makes his lunch, involves him in family activities--normal everyday things that were not being done for him. She takes the time to let him bake cookies and helps him wash his clothes. All these things were missing in Maurice’s life, until he found Laura because she “turned around”. We can only imagine how many other Maurices are out there, but does anyone care? Perhaps this book would encourage a young person to volunteer for Big Brothers/Big Sisters, the YMCA, a local soup kitchen, or even a local nursing home. Actually, the book is a powerful tool for change and inspiration.

The possibilities for projects with this book are endless. Envision students having drives for local food banks, working to collect clothing for the disadvantaged, writing essays about the sacrifice of caring for others, researching the topic of abused or neglected children, debating race relations, volunteering at an elementary school, or mentoring young students---these are all activities that could be incorporated with this book. Implementing the reading of this book could be a part of school’s effort to show evidence that not only is it teaching subjects, **it is teaching character.**

Using *An Invisible Thread* would not only unite schools and groups in reading, but in learning the importance of each student’s place in the world. It’s very possible that it could be used with an anti-bullying campaign. Above all else, this book is about love and about taking the time to love others who are not loved. Unfortunately, not all students are being taught this at home.

In his book *Divine Alignment* by Squire Rushnell, the author explains that when an “arrangement of coincidences...(turns) into a pattern of alignment so astonishing they could have only come from a higher source,” then it is more than a coincidence; it is a “divine plan.” Such was the meeting between Laura and Maurice. It made both of their lives better.

Now, their experience can be shared and make others’ lives better with its inspiration.

I highly recommend this book for young adult and college age readers. It could also be included on college reading lists. It would be perfect for book clubs, church groups, and city-wide reads. And it should be in all young adult and adult library collections. Please contact me if I can be of further assistance. Give your students a moment that “stays with them” by having them read *An Invisible Thread*.

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