

Coahoma County Jr-Sr High School

9th-10th ELA

Week 2

March 30-April 3, 2020

We the Animals by Justin Torres, modified by Goalbook

900L · 552 words



1 When we got home from school Paps was in the kitchen, cooking and listening to music and feeling fine. He turned up the volume on the stereo.

2 "Watch out," he said, and spun, with grace, on one slippered foot, his bathrobe twirling out around him. In his fist was a glistening, greasy metal spatula, which he pumped in the air to the beat of the bongo drums. My brothers and I, the three of us, stood in the entrance to the kitchen, laughing, eager to join in, but waiting for our cue.

3 Paps turned the stereo even louder, so loud that if I screamed no one would have heard me. Then Paps grabbed a can of beer from the fridge and our eyes followed the path of the can to his lips. Manny rolled his eyes and kept dancing, and so we got in line and kept dancing too, except now Manny was the Papa Goose, it was him we were following.

4 "Now shake it like you're rich," Paps shouted, his powerful voice booming out over the music. We danced on tiptoes, sticking up our noses and poking the air above us with our pinkies.

5 "You ain't rich," Papi said, "Now shake it like you're poor."

6 We got low on our knees, clenched our fists and stretched our arms out on our sides; we shook our shoulders and threw our heads back, wild and loose and free.

7 "You ain't poor neither. Now shake it like you're white."

8 We moved like robots, stiff and angled, not even smiling. Joel was the most convincing.

9 I'd see him practicing in his room sometimes.

10 "You ain't white," Paps shouted. "Now shake it like a Puerto Rican."

11 There was a pause as we gathered ourselves. Paps watched us for a while, leaning against the counter and taking long draws from his beer.

12 "You ain't white and you ain't Puerto Rican. Watch how a purebred dances, watch how we dance in the ghetto." Every word was shouted over the music, so it was hard to tell if he was mad or just making fun.

13 He danced and we tried to see what separated him from us. He pursed his lips and kept one hand on his stomach. His elbow was bent, his back was straight, but somehow there was looseness and freedom and confidence in every move. I tried to watch his feet but something about the way they twisted and stepped over each other, something about the line of his torso, kept pulling my eyes up to his face, to his broad nose and dark, half-shut eyes and his pursed lips, which snarled and smiled both.

14 "This is your heritage," he said, as if from this dance we could know about his own childhood, about the flavor and grit of tenement buildings in Spanish Harlem, and projects in Red Hook, and dance halls, and city parks, and about his own Papi, how he beat him, how he taught him to dance, as if we could hear Spanish in his movements, as if Puerto Rico was a man in a bathrobe, grabbing another beer from the fridge and raising it to drink, his head back, still dancing, still stepping and snapping perfectly in time.

RL.9-10.1**Key Ideas and Details**

Read the excerpt from *We the Animals*. Then answer the prompt.

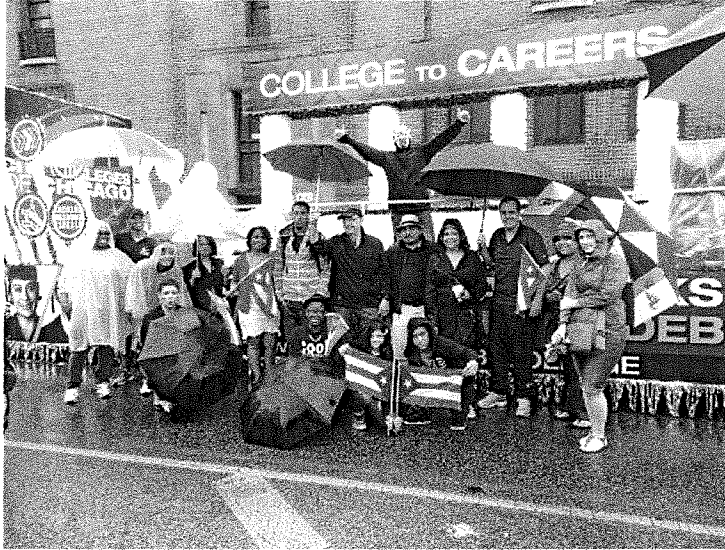
In this excerpt, the narrator describes the loyal and heartfelt relationship he had with his brothers and father. Which of the following examples from the text best represents their closeness?

- A. “My brothers and I, the three of us, stood in the entrance to the kitchen, laughing, eager to join in, but waiting for our cue.” (paragraph 2)
- B. “Paps turned the stereo even louder, so loud that if I screamed no one would have heard me.”(paragraph 3)
- C. “We moved like robots, stiff and angled, not even smiling.” (paragraph 8)
- D. “ 'This is your heritage,' he said, as if from this dance we could know about his own childhood . . .” (paragraph 14)

A Simple Proposal to Revive the American Dream by Rahm Emanuel, modified

by Goalbook

1200L · 627 words



1 During the industrial age, when high school was the gateway to the American dream, public-school systems covered the costs of earning a diploma. Today, however, as associate's degrees have replaced high-school diplomas as the indispensable ticket into the middle class, families are forced to cover the costs of tuition and more. If the information-age economy demands a workforce with additional training, we need to begin cutting students and families the same deal: Anyone willing to work hard and earn the degree should be able to attend community college—for free.

2 With that basic bargain in mind, a small band of mayors and governors has begun working to spark a quiet revolution in American education. We believe that associate's degrees should be as accessible for the next 80 years as high-school diplomas have been for the past 80. So the City of Chicago has joined Oregon, Rhode Island, and Tennessee in experimenting with ways to make community college free. Three years in, we're starting to develop a clearer picture of how this can work.

3 Under the terms of the Chicago Star Scholarship, a program that has already enrolled more than 6,000 students, we tied eligibility to academic achievement. If a student at a local public high school maintains a B average, the City will provide a free associate's degree at a local community college, regardless of immigration status. Then, through a program we call Star Plus, students who have maintained that 3.0 GPA are eligible to receive subsidized tuition at 18 of the four-year colleges located in Chicago, enabling many to graduate debt-free.

4 At the outset, we chose to make our program merit-based for two reasons. First, we suspected that setting a rigorous academic standard would change attitudes inside Chicago's high schools. If students in grades nine to 12 know that good grades will earn them a guaranteed free education, they're further incentivized to run through the tape. (Chicago's high-school graduation rate grew from 56.9 percent in 2011

to 78.2 percent in 2018.) Second, we theorized that making the scholarship merit-based would help the program avoid the plague of college dropouts—and that’s exactly what’s happened. Chicago Star’s retention rate is 86 percent, well above the national average of 62.7 percent.

5 Unlike some of its sister programs, Chicago Star covers not only tuition, but books and public transportation as well. And we decided to require recipients to complete the program in three years, allowing students to earn their associate’s degree while working full-time, but precluding them from dragging the process out indefinitely. Our shot-clock approach works: 49.7 percent of Chicago Star recipients complete their degree, more than double the national average of 23.6 percent.

6 The demographic impact is remarkable. More than two-thirds of Chicago Star scholars are Hispanic and 80 percent are first-generation college students... As cities and states serve as laboratories of democracy, our national leaders must look to these programs as models for modernizing and expanding access to higher education.

7 I’ve spent most of the past four decades in public life... But I can say without reservation that I’m as proud of the Star Scholarship as I am of any other professional achievement. I can feel its impact in the embrace of tearful parents who understand how an associate’s degree will help their children achieve the American dream. This program matters.

8 For years, reformers have focused on the impact that pre-k can have on young people as they grow into adulthood. Now, cities and states are working quietly to revolutionize public education again by adding community colleges to the nation’s public-school systems and educational requirements. Once we understand how best to do this, government can rebuild the pipeline to the American middle class and the belief in the American dream.

RI.9-10.2**Key Ideas and Details**

Read *A Simple Proposal to Revive the American Dream* and answer the question below.

Reread paragraph 1 from the passage.

1 During the industrial age, when high school was the gateway to the American dream, public-school systems covered the costs of earning a diploma. Today, however, as associate's degrees have replaced high-school diplomas as the indispensable ticket into the middle class, families are forced to cover the costs of tuition and more. If the information-age economy demands a workforce with additional training, we need to begin cutting students and families the same deal: Anyone willing to work hard and earn the degree should be able to attend community college—for free.

Which statement best describes the central idea of paragraph 1?

- A. A high school diploma is paid for by individual states.
- B. The nation needs more workers with associate's degrees.
- C. Making community colleges free is a way to revive the American dream.
- D. The cost of college tuition is an obstacle to many students' families.