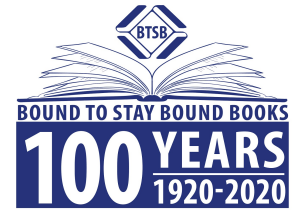




A Reader's Theater Script brought to you by
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New Kid

Written and Illustrated by Jerry Craft
Script Adaptation by Jolie Jennings, TBA Committee Member

Readers:

Jordan	Drew	Andy
Jordan's Mom	Liam	Narrator

Jordan's Mom: Jordan. Jordan! Are you listening to me?

Jordan: Huh? Oh, are we still talking about that school, Mom?

Jordan's Mom: Yes, honey, Riverdale Academy Day School! Just look at it-- the campus is beautiful, they have so many sports and activities to choose from, and you're going to love it!

Jordan: *[to his mom]* Do I really have to go? I'd rather go to art school. *[to the audience]* I've been drawing in my notebook for years. I put my thoughts, feelings, and experiences in there. Sometimes my drawings are funny, and sometimes they're sad. Like me. It's private, though, so I never really show it to anyone but my Dad.

Mom: Jordan, listen to this! You'll have a student guide to show you around. His name is Liam. He's also in seventh grade, or "first form," as they call it at Riverdale.

Narrator: On the first day of school, Jordan is nervous as he rides to school with Liam. When he arrives at Riverdale Academy Day School, also known as RAD, he gets even more nervous. Mainly because he's one of the few kids who is African American. And who's not dressed in preppy, pastel colored clothes. He feels out of place.

Jordan: So, Liam, when you were sleeping, your dad told me that both he and your grandfather went to school here, too. And your sister and brother go here now. I guess you must really love this school.

Liam: It's fine. It's not like I had much of a choice, though.

Jordan: *[talking to himself]* I can relate. I wish I could go to art school. *[talking to Liam]* Man! Everyone here sure wears a lot of pink.

Liam: It's not pink. It's *salmon*.

Andy: Hey, Liam! Who's this? One of your little brother's friends? Ha ha!

Liam: No, this is Jordan. He's in first form with us.

Andy: What? You're so small, Gordon! And what are you, anyway?

Jordan: Huh? What does that mean? And my name is Jordan.

Liam: Don't mind Andy. Come on, Jordan, let me see your schedule. It's time for homeroom, and we all have Ms. Rawle. Let's go.

Narrator: Jordan, Liam, and Andy are in their seats. Another student walks in.

Drew: Good morning! I'm Andrew Ellis.

Andy: [*angrily*] What? No! That name is taken, bro. By me!

Drew: Um...that's okay. I go by Drew, anyway.

Narrator: Jordan notices that Drew is the only other black student in the class. The bell rings, and the class leaves. The rest of Jordan's day drags on. Finally, it is time to go home.

Jordan: Thanks for taking me home, Liam. By the way, is Andy always like that?

Liam: Nope. Most of the time, he's worse! [*laughing*]

Jordan: Well, here's my house! See you tomorrow!

Liam: See you tomorrow, Jordan!

Narrator: After a few weeks of school, Jordan still doesn't feel like he fits in. One day, his teacher, Ms. Rawle, decides to have class outside. But Jordan and Drew think it's too cold and stay indoors instead.

Drew: [*sarcastically*] So, Jordan, what do you think of the amazing Riverdale Academy Day School?

Jordan: You know, I don't know. I mean, I like some things. How about you?

Drew: Well, I won't say I hate it... people still don't really talk to me. I get lots of high fives and compliments after a football game, but that's about it. And Ms. Rawle always calls me Deandre instead of Drew. What's up with that?

Jordan: Right? I've been called the wrong name too!

Drew: Plus there's other stuff. Like any time we talk about slavery or civil rights in class...

Jordan: Everyone stares at you?! I know!

Drew: Why do they make it so hard for us?

Narrator: That night, Jordan's parents went to RAD for parent-teacher conferences. When they return...

Mom: Jordan Banks! You got a C in Spanish? What's THAT about?

Jordan: This class is different than the one at my old school. I've got it now, though, Mom.

Mom: And your teacher mentioned that you didn't go outside with the rest of your class today. Is everything okay?

Jordan: Fine, Mom. It was too cold to outside! Even though some of the other kids are still wearing Shorts.

Mom: I know it's not easy, but it's necessary. To be successful, you have to know the rules and how to play the game. Riverdale can teach you that and give you opportunities that your father and I never Had.

Narrator: During the rest of the semester, Jordan, Drew, and Liam become the best of friends. But they still couldn't wait for Christmas break. When everyone got back to school, Jordan and Drew listened to all the kids talk. It seemed like everyone went on a fancy vacation, except for them! It was weeks before kids stopped bragging about where they went. One day, as they got to their usual table in the dining hall, there was Andy, picking on people, as usual. Finally, Drew has had enough.

Drew: Don't start, Andy.

Andy: What?! Why is everyone so sensitive? Besides, I'm not even talking to you.

Drew: You're being a jerk. That's what!

Andy: You're just jealous that I got to play baseball, while you had to sit on the bench.

Drew: Seriously?! I don't care about baseball. But I DO care that you think you can say whatever you want to people.

Narrator: Andy pushes Drew. Drew pushes Andy back. An apple falls from Andy's tray onto the floor, and Andy slips on it. And goes tumbling to the floor.

Andy: Ms. Rawle, Drew pushed me down!

Narrator: As Ms. Rawle begins to reprimand Drew and threatens to send him to detention, a knot begins to tighten in Jordan's stomach.

Jordan: *[to himself]* It's all too much! Too much trying to fit in! Too much of good kids being treated like they're bad. Too much of kids who act up, not being called out. Too much feeling that I'm never in control! Until now! I have to speak up! *[to everyone]* WAIT!!!

Narrator: The cafeteria goes silent as EVERYONE stares at Jordan.

Jordan: That's not what happened! Andy pushed Drew first, then Drew pushed back, and Andy slipped on his apple. Who else saw it?

Narrator: Will anyone believe the new kid and stand with Jordan? Can Jordan play by the rules and succeed at Riverdale Academy Day School? Find out in *New Kid*, a graphic novel by Jerry Craft, winner of the 2019 Kirkus Prize for Young Adult Literature.

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