



# After the Bell

## Discussion Questions

### Open

1. Why are the hours immediately after school called “the most dangerous hours of the day?”
2. Have you had experiences like the kids in the opening? Do you know some people who have? How do you explain those behaviors?
3. How do you feel about after school programs? Can you imagine ways in which such programs might be of benefit to you? Explain your answers.

### Part I

1. Explain the Police title, “Prime Time for Juvenile Crime.” What does it mean for kids your age? What does it mean for your community?
2. Describe Jamal’s living situation and the possible fate that awaited him. What things changed Jamal’s life and “fate?”
3. Have you found something positive to do after school? Explain your answer.
4. Do you have a mentor? If so, does this person know you think of him or her as your mentor? How could you tell this person how you feel? If you do not have a mentor, do you think it would be to your benefit to have one? What are some ways you might go about finding a mentor?
5. Are there after-school programs in your neighborhood or community? Describe them. Have you ever participated in them? Why or why not?
6. Do you think your parents trust you? If you don’t think that they do, how does this make you feel? Is signing you up for an after-school program just an issue of trust, or do you believe it is about something more? Explain your answer.

### Part II

1. Do you feel overscheduled? Why or why not?
2. Do you feel you have too much “free time?” What do you do with your “free time?” In considering how you spend your time, do you think there might be ways of making your “free time” more valuable to you and your future?
3. How do you feel about being without supervision after school? Do you use that time wisely?
4. How do you think kids who have been without supervision after school for a long time would react to being put in an after-school program? Why?
5. What would you do if you were the victim of an after school crime? Would you know who to contact and how to reach that person?
6. Why don’t people take advantage of after-school programs?
7. Many after-school programs are designed for younger kids. What are the options for high school kids in your community? What are some of the reasons people don’t take advantage of them?



Connect with Kids

# After the Bell

## Discussion Questions *(cont.)*

### For the Classroom

#### Part III

1. Destinee Martinez is evidence that an after-school academic program can be beneficial for everyone involved. Do you think this is a better program for her or for her mother? Explain.
2. Does the program encourage her mother to be irresponsible, or does it make her a more responsible parent? Why? How?
3. Does your school have a homework center or an education center? If so, describe it. If not, how do you think it would be used? WOULD it be used? Explain.
4. Why would some kids avoid a homework center? Why might you avoid it even if it could be helpful to you?
5. How is the homework center for Destinee like football for Jamal?
6. Are you taking advantage of any after-school programs? If so, how has it helped you? If not, why haven't you, and do you think the benefits might be worth reconsidering?

#### Close

1. List the five key elements every after school program must provide. Which of the five is most important to parents? To kids? You? Why?
2. Why do so many parents pull their kids out of after school programs when they hit middle school? Is this a positive step? Explain your answer.
3. Consider the following statement about the after school hours, "It's like this window that can be a window of opportunity, or it can be a window of great risk."
4. How could you seize this time as a time of personal enrichment? What already exists for you to take advantage of, or what must you learn to create for yourself?