

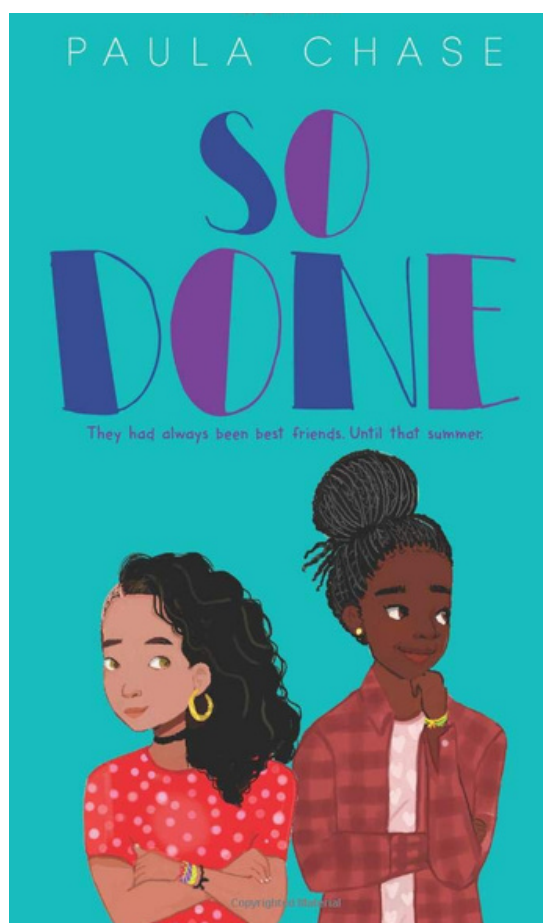
# SO DONE

BY: PAULA CHASE

**Genre:** Realistic Fiction

**Reading Level/Interest level:** 6th grade and up

**Themes:** friendship, standing up for what's right, always talk about your problems, family structure.



## BACKGROUND:



Co-founder of the award-winning blog, The Brown Bookshelf, Paula Chase is a longtime Inclusion Jedi and advocate for diversifying the type of fiction featuring Black characters that's highlighted among educators, librarians and parents. She's presented and blogged about the need to expand the focus beyond children's literature that centers the pain of the Black experience. Chase is the author of nine children's books. *So Done* (Greenwillow/HarperCollins), her critically acclaimed middle grade debut, was named a 2018 Kirkus Reviews Best Book. *So Done* and its companions, *Dough Boys* and *Turning Point* are blazing the trail for books that tackle tough and sometimes taboo topics for younger readers.



## SYNOPSIS:

Jamila Phillips and Metai Johnson have been friends since they were small children. Living across the street from each other they were most of the time inseparable growing up in Pirates Cove, a low-income housing project. The summer was coming to an end and Metai can't wait for her best friend to come home after spending the summer at her aunt's house in the suburbs. Jemila just isn't as excited to see Metai as Metai is to see her. Jemila is struggling to hold in the secret from her dad, but it's eating away at her. To top it all off Jemila is tired of Metai calling her by her nickname, Bean. With their friendship in jeopardy, Jemila and Metai just might be done with each other.

# BEFORE READING DISCUSSION:

- What does friendship mean to you?
- Have you and a friend ever grown apart because one of you has changed? How did you feel about that friendship changing?
- Do you ever notice when a friend is having a hard time or needs to talk about something that is bothering them?
- What would you do if something bad happened to a friend and you witnessed it?
- Have you ever been a bystander in a situation? Explain.
- Do you have dreams and hobbies outside of your friends or that are different from your friends?
- Have you ever reached a breaking point in a situation? What was it? What did you do?

# BEFORE READING ACTIVITIES:

- Make a list of how to be a good friend. Discuss situations students have had with friends - the good and the bad. Why are they friends with the people they call their friends?
- Have students look at the cover of the book and analyze the cover.
  - What do you think the book is about?
  - Does the cover give a positive vibe or a negative vibe?
  - Look at the characters on the cover. Why do you think it looks like they have their backs to each other?
- Read the first chapter aloud to the class. Have them make predictions about what they think will happen in the book. Predict how the book will end.
- Have a discussion about the importance of names.
  - How did you get your name?
  - Do you have a nickname? Do you like the nickname?
  - Why are you called by that nickname?

# PURPOSE FOR READING:

- As students are reading, they should pay attention to:
  - The main characters' relationship as friends and how it has changed throughout the book.
  - How secrets can eat away at a person and how secrets can destroy a friendship.
  - The impact drugs can have on a person and their family.

# QUESTION GUIDE

## LITERAL COMPREHENSION:

- Identify the relationship between the main characters, Jemila and Metai. How does this relationship impact the story? How does their relationship change?
- Identify the setting of the story and the importance the setting plays in the development of the story.
- What do you think the problem is going to be for Metai and Jemila?
- What are the motivations, wants and desires of the main characters Jemila and Metai?
- From what point of view is the story told?
- Why is it important to understand these characters' perspectives?
- Who is Rock and what is his purpose in this story?
- Why does Jemila not want to be called by her nickname, Bean?
- How have stereotypes played a role in this book?
- In Chapter 4, what is a blemish? What do Metai and Jemila have in common about their mothers?
- Describe JJ, Jemila's older brother. Why is Metai jealous of Christol?
- What actions show you Jemila's secret is starting to eat away at her?
- In chapter 21 (p. 267) why do you think Jemila is so shocked about Metai agreeing to tell her grandmother the truth about her father?

## HIGHER LEVEL THINKING:

- Why do you think Mila (Jemila) isn't into standing up for her hood (where she lives) like Metai?
- Why would Mila have to watch what she says in her own neighborhood?
- What do you think is causing Jemila to want to change all of a sudden?
- What do you think is the problem Jemila is having with Metai's dad and why has Metai noticed there has been a change with her friend?
- What secrets are kept by the main characters and how do they affect the main characters' relationship with each other?
- In chapter 7, Jemila's secret comes out. Why do you think Jemila is having a hard time telling her dad what happened?
- In chapter 9, why do you think Jemila didn't run from Metai's house when she saw her father there?
- Do you feel that Metai's actions have been selfish throughout the book or justified?
- Describe why Metai might be jealous of Jemila.
- In chapter 13 (pg. 172), it talks about Metai and Jemila only having a drug addict parent. Which do you think is better, having a parent around or gone that is addicted to drugs?
- Explain why Metai might have to act strong and like an adult.
- Describe how Jemila and Metai's friendship might be one sided. In chapter 21 how does Jemila and Metai's friendship change or grow?
- Why do you think Jemila feels that what happened to her is her fault?

# READING RESPONSE:

- Compare and contrast the main characters Jemila and Metai.
- After reading the book, how would you describe Jemila's and Metai's relationship?
- Pick a character and identify their character trait(s) using evidence from the text to support your thinking.
- Write a letter to Jemila explaining why it's not good to hide your feelings and hold things in.
  - **Points to include:** Feeling about Metai calling her by her nickname, dance classes, needing space for friendships, Metai's father touching her, and being honest about life and problems with the people she loves.
- Think about how the book ends. Do you agree with how the book ends, or would you have given it a different ending? Explain your thinking and opinion.
- Pretend you are Jemila's father. Write about what it might be like for him raising his children in the inner city.
- Pretend you are Metai. Write a journal entry that could be written by Metai.

# ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (WRITING) ACTIVITIES:

- Create an argument on who is the better friend Metai or Jemila. Use evidence from the book to support your argument.
- Create a two column chart on the positive and negative consequences of the decisions made by the characters in So Done. On one side, identify the decisions and who made the decision, and, on the other side, identify the consequence of the decision and whether it was positive or negative.
- As you are reading, identify figurative language being used in the book and the meaning of the figurative language. This can be similes, metaphors, personification, and hyperbole. Keep a list on your teacher-provided graphic organizer.
- Write about the theme or themes of the book So Done. Make sure to talk about how this theme develops throughout the story. Use evidence throughout the text to support your theme.
- Choose a character from the book. Write about how that character changed throughout the book. Use evidence from the book to support your thinking.