



# Upstanders: How to Engage Middle School Hearts and Minds with Inquiry

*Harvey "Smokey" Daniels, Sara Ahmed*

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*For all things Upstanders-including chapter-by-chapter sneak previews, blog posts from Smokey and Sara, videos of Sara's classroom and of them talking about the book, and more-visit*

**Heinemann.com/Upstanders.**

*"Upstanders is about helping young people question the world, build knowledge, become skilled researchers, and communicate thoughtfully-in the service of humanity, not just themselves."*

**-Harvey "Smokey" Daniels and Sara Ahmed**

How can we meet today's elevated academic goals and engage middle school kids-but not simply replicate our competitive, winner-take-all society? How can our students achieve an even higher standard-demonstrating the capacity and the commitment to bend the world toward justice?

In a word, inquiry.

Welcome to the classroom of Sara Ahmed. With Smokey Daniels as your guide you'll see exactly how Sara uses inquiry to turn required curricular topics into questions so fascinating that young adolescents can't resist investigating them. Units so engaging that they provide all the complexity the standards could ever expect, while helping students grow from bystanders to Upstanders.

Smokey and Sara describe precisely how to create, manage, and sustain a classroom built around choice, small-group collaboration, and critical thinking. You'll be inspired by what Sara's students accomplish, but you'll also come away from *Upstanders* with a can-do plan for teaching your own classes thanks to:

- a developmental look at what makes middle school kids special, challenging, and fun
- specific lessons that develop collaboration, self-awareness, and compassion
- a toolbox filled with teaching strategies, structures, tools, and handouts
- "Point-Outs" from Smokey that highlight key teaching moves
- "Game-Time Decisions" from Sara that reveal in-the-moment instructional choices
- narratives that document the incredible work that inquiry allows kids to do
- ambitious, engaging, and important units on commonly taught middle school themes.

What kind of classroom do we want for our middle schoolers? How about one that develops the skills the standards demand and prepares kids to take action in the world right now? We can do it-if we help kids become *Upstanders*.

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