

Game Five (25 minutes)

By Peter Hsu

Illustration by Brenda Chi

Curriculum developed by Andrew Ramirez

Synopsis: When their father suddenly departs, young Chris must survive along with older brother John. Chris and John find community at their local Taiwanese church — holding tight to their strong bonds of faith and basketball. But in the early days of the AIDS crisis, several of their friends are ostracized for contracting the disease, and left to suffer alone without a community. Witnessing this darker side of humanity, this leads Chris to question his faith, and deepen his bond with his brother John despite an unjust world.



Vocabulary

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| 1. nostalgic | 5. sanctuary |
| 2. hypocrite | 6. resigned |
| 3. seamless | 7. sermon |
| 4. obedient | 8. meager |

Pre reading writing prompt

Do you believe there is a “higher power” that controls and commands the outcome of humanity, or is human experience driven by random chance? Or perhaps you believe the truth is somewhere in the middle. NOTE: It is OK to say “I don’t know.” But be sure to explain why you are unsure, and provide examples from our world that support your uncertainty on the existence of a higher power.

Pre reading discussion prompt (class wide or in pairs)

Just like a car needs unleaded fuel to run, what do YOU need in your life to keep your engine going? (This could be a specific passion, person, or goal that drives you daily.)

Post reading discussion questions (class wide or in pairs)

1. Why do you think the father leaves John and Chris, to go back to Taiwan? Do you believe the father has good reasons for leaving, or not?
2. Why do you think the author chooses to “scaffold” this story with the Lakers/Bulls basketball final series? What effect does this formatting have on your understanding (and enjoyment or non enjoyment) of this story?
3. How does Cho treat Margaret after she contracts AIDS? Is it consistent with what a “good person” would do? Why do you think Cho acts the way he does? Do you believe the church plays a part in Cho’s behavior?

4. “No matter what you do, how hard you try, how good a person you are, God may or may not give a shit in the end.” Why does John say this to Chris? What is John directly quoting, and what is John also referring to (two different things) when he says this?

Post reading writing reflection:

Do you think John is doing a good job “raising” Chris, after their dad leaves? Provide reasons for why or why not.