



Violence Hits Home

by Denise Rinaldo

Connect Across Texts

In "Fear," Zo faces **intruders** who are trying to break into his house. In this magazine article, a teen struggles against **violence** in his own community.

A Bad Situation

Growing up in Oakland, California, Antonio Bibb knew about violence. His community **has been plagued by** murders, battles between gangs, and robberies. So when Antonio heard about an anti-violence program for high school students called Teens on Target, he was **intrigued**. He was in the seventh grade at the time, but promised himself that when he got to high school, he'd join the group.

Antonio knew lots of kids who had lost family members to violence. He felt lucky he hadn't, and he wanted to do something **positive**. "I felt like there was no way to stop violence, but I hoped I might be able to change things a bit," Antonio, now 18, says.

He also wanted to show others that he was on the side of peace. "Pretty much every adult on my dad's side of the family has been in jail, including my dad," Antonio says. "Even when I was young, people were starting to judge me and categorize me because of that."

Positive Start

In his freshman year, Antonio joined Teens on Target. By tenth grade, he was doing well in school and had become a leader in the program. He got to travel to Maryland for an anti-violence conference. "It was more than **an extracurricular activity to me**," Antonio says. "I really felt like I was helping to stop younger kids from making the same mistakes adults in their families might be making."

Interact with the Text

1. Make Connections

Circle a phrase that explains how people treated Antonio. Describe a time when you felt that someone judged you before they got to know you. How does this help you understand Antonio?

Key Vocabulary

- intruder** *n.*, someone who goes where he or she should not go
- violence** *n.*, physical action that is very rough, harmful, and mean
- **positive** *adj.*, good, helpful, favorable

In Other Words

- has been plagued by** has had many
- intrigued** very interested
- an extracurricular activity to me** something I did outside of school

To the Rescue

Who kept Antonio from **snapping**? A woman named Teresa Shartell. Teresa is the Teens on Target program coordinator with whom Antonio had been working since his freshman year. She was his teacher, counselor, and friend.

"Teresa reminded me that lots of kids we work with were going through the same situation I was, and that now I was in an even better position to **motivate** them," Antonio says. "She said they'd see how I was reacting to my situation and that would really help them out."

Antonio says he "took what Teresa said and **ran with it**. I realized that we're all going to go through pain. It's what you choose to do with it that makes you the person you are."

The teen **threw himself into his work** with Teens

on Target with more passion than ever. He also **vowed to serve as an inspiration for** his now-fatherless cousin. "A lot of kids turn to violence because they see it at school and at home; they don't have strong role models," Antonio says. "I'm trying to be that role model for my cousin."



Teresa Shartell (right) helped Antonio channel his anger over losing his uncle and friend into helping others keep the peace.

Key Vocabulary

• **motivate** *v.* to give reason to, to inspire, to stimulate

In Other Words

snapping doing the wrong thing
ran with it really used it, really applied it
threw himself into his work decided to work intensely
vowed to serve as an inspiration for promised to act the right way to help

Root Causes

WHAT CAUSES VIOLENCE? HOW CAN VIOLENCE BE AVOIDED?

FEAR. If someone is afraid to walk down a street, he or she may carry a weapon for protection. A better idea is to talk to someone like a parent, teacher, or counselor who can help resolve a tense situation peacefully.

STEREOTYPING. Violence can result when people are judged by their looks, dress, or whom they hang out with. A better idea is to get to know people before you decide how you feel about them.

BAD ROLE MODELS. If kids grow up surrounded by violence, they're going to **emulate** it. Providing positive role models and teaching kids to act peacefully can prevent future violence.

A Life's Work

Antonio plans to **devote** his life to the fight against violence. That includes making sure as few people as possible have to go through the kind of losses he's experienced. One of his goals is to reduce the number of guns on the street. "If it hadn't been so easy

to get guns, I think my uncle would still be living," Antonio says.

Now a high school graduate, Antonio has continued to work with Teens on Target and is shopping around for a college to attend. "My life is pretty blessed right now," he says. "I'm doing

5. Interpret

Underline the idea in the first column on page 202 that caused Antonio to become a better role model. Explain how he can be a better role model now.

6. Development of Ideas

Explain how the text box on this page adds important information to the magazine article. Summarize its main points.

7. Make Connections

Circle phrases that tell you about Antonio's goals. What kind of connection can you make to Antonio's goals?

In Other Words
emulate copy
devote dedicate

Interact with the Text

8. Interpret

Underline three phrases or sentences that show some of Antonio's advice. Explain his message in your own words.

exactly what I want to do." Antonio is used to giving advice to kids. "Be a leader. Stop following everyone else," he says. "It doesn't matter if you can't buy the stuff you think is cool from movies

and videos—some Phat Farm or some Sean John or whatever it is. Just be yourself. The more you shine for yourself, the more you can shine in front of everybody else." ❖

In Other Words

some Phat Farm or some Sean John popular clothes or shoes

Selection Review Violence Hits Home

A. Choose one story detail below and make a connection. Identify the connection as Text to Self, Text to Text, or Text to World.

Story Detail 1: Antonio knows at a young age that he wants to work for peace.

Story Detail 2: Antonio chooses to do what is right and does not seek revenge.

Connection: _____

B. Answer the questions.

1. What features of the magazine article helped you understand what the writer was saying?

2. If you wrote an email to Antonio, what would you tell him about revenge?
