**Steelheart**

**AUTHOR:** Brandon Sanderson  
**PUBLISHER:** Delacorte Press/Random House  
**COPYRIGHT:** 2013  
**GENRE:** Fantasy  
**SETTING:** Formerly Chicago, now called Newcago

**SUMMARY:**  
An occurrence known as the Calamity produced powerful metahumans known as Epics. When this happened people thought the Epics were there to save Earth, but the Epics began using their special powers to take control. David witnessed his father being killed by an Epic known as Steelheart. He feels he can only truly get revenge by joining forces with the Reckoners. Who can David trust? Do the Reckoners trust David?

**BOOK TALK:**  
*Steelheart* is an action packed fantasy where the Epics, evil metahumans with superpowers, do battle with the Reckoners, a special force that wants to restore order to the world. The main character, David, witnessed Steelheart kill his father and also learned about this Epic’s weakness.

David wants to join forces with the Reckoners so he can get revenge on Steelheart. But the Reckoners are reluctant to take him into the fold. David earns their trust and becomes an unpredictable yet valuable team member.

This book is suspenseful; each chapter contains plot twists, action, and narrow escapes. One by one the Reckoners undermine Steelheart’s empire in Newcago, which is the former Chicago, now turned into metal. But in order to get Steelheart’s attention, they must create an imaginary Epic who would seem to be a threat to his territory. Read *Steelheart* to see if this plan is successful.

**BOOK TRAILER:**  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6sC9NtpXLH4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6sC9NtpXLH4) from Random House Kids

**AUTHOR’S BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH:**  
**AUTHOR’S NAME:** Brandon Sanderson  
Author’s Website: [http://brandonsanderson.com/](http://brandonsanderson.com/)

**Other books written by the author:**  
*The Wheel of Time*  
*Infinity Blade*  
*Legion*  
*The Rithmatist*  
*Elantrist*  
*Mistborn*
Reviewer’s Name: Shawn Humphrey
Reviewer’s Position: Media Specialist, Riverside Junior High School

Other information: Sanderson generally writes fantasy series titles, but also wrote the Alcatraz series for middle grades, which includes Alcatraz Versus the Evil Librarians. He has a B.A. and M.A. from BYU, where he is an adjunct teacher of creative writing.

SIMILAR BOOKS/BOOKS WITH A SIMILAR THEME:
Inhuman by Kat Falls
Pulse by Patrick Carman
The Vindico by Wesley King
The 5th Wave by Rick Yancey
Ender’s Game by Orson Scott Card

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
1. Would you rather be a Reckoner or an Epic? Why?
2. Why do you think revenge can cause you to do irrational things?
3. If you could have a single power like an Epic, what would you choose and why? In what ways would you use your powers for good or bad?
4. The people of Newcago accept Steelheart’s questionable dictatorship tactics of violence and threats because the city has many of the amenities they feel are necessary in life: food, electricity, water, and a means of communication. Other parts of this new world aren’t as fortunate. Would you rather live in fear but have known comforts and necessities or would you rather feel safe but have to live with little food, electricity or your phone? Why?
5. In what ways do the Reckoners and Epics differ and in what ways are they similar? Think of how they operate, the structure of their ranks, their powers and abilities, etc.

ACTIVITIES WITH STANDARDS:

Language Arts and Science

- Energy Tools
  Determine the types of energy being used or generated by the following tools of the Reckoners:
  Tensor
  Vest
  Dowser
  Harmsway
  Cite evidence from the text to explain your answers. Create sketch drawings of each item and note how the different pieces contribute to their energy creation.
Reading and Writing Standards for Literacy in Science
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
6-8.RS.7 Integrate quantitative information expressed in words in a text with a version of that information expressed visually (e.g., in a flowchart, diagram, model, graph, or table).

Science Content Standards
7.1.1 Explain that when energy is transferred from one system to another, the total quantity of energy does not change.

7.1.2 Describe and give examples of how energy can be transferred from place to place and transformed from one form to another through radiation, convection and conduction.

7.1.3 Recognize and explain how different ways of obtaining, transforming and distributing energy have different environmental consequences.

7.1.4 Recognize and provide evidence of how light, sound and other waves have energy and how they interact with different materials.

8.4.3 Investigate the properties (i.e., mechanical, chemical, electrical, thermal, magnetic and optical) of natural and engineered materials.

Social Studies

- Map
  Map the city of Newcago based on evidence from the text. Use a current map of Chicago as a start to this activity. Steelheart transformed the city, so be sure to include the changes made and the location of his palace.

Steelheart uses fear to lead his empire. Compare the reign of Steelheart to other empires or rulers that used similar tactics to take command. Cite evidence from the text and sources used to research. How were their fates similar or different?

Chronological Thinking, Historical Comprehension, Analysis and Interpretation, Research
6.1.20 Analyze cause-and-effect relationships, keeping in mind multiple causations, including the importance of individuals, ideas, human interests, beliefs and chance in history. Examples: The decline of Greek city-states, the destruction of the Aztecs, and state-sponsored genocide, including the Holocaust.

7.1.16 Analyze cause-and-effect relationships, bearing in mind multiple causation in the role of individuals, beliefs and chance in history.
Social Studies Literacy Standards

Writing

6-8.LH.5.1: Write arguments focused on discipline specific content.

6-8.LH.5.2: Write informative texts, including analyses of historical events.

Challenging Words

sullen - p. 2
cacophony - p.4
precognition - p. 23
vapidity - p. 27
lichen - p. 72
affable - p. 145
incendiary - p. 163
impinged - p. 169
impregnable - p. 192
chivalrous - p. 216
sonorous - p. 250
writhed - p. 264
centrifuge - p. 267
amorphously - p. 341
imperious - p. 370