The Stars Beneath Our Feet
David Barclay Moore

GENRE: Realistic Fiction, Coming of Age

BOOK SUMMARY
Lolly Rachpaul and his mother cannot even begin to celebrate Christmas due to their recent loss. Lolly’s brother, Jermaine, was killed in a gang-related shooting. Lolly had always thought his big brother would be around forever, and now he is gone. There’s nothing to celebrate.

Lolly is faced with lots of decisions. The “crew” wants him to join the gang. His mom wants him to keep as far away from the gang as possible. In the streets of Harlem, it is hard to stay away from the gang lifestyle.

Lolly does have another passion and that is building things with LEGO bricks. His mom’s friend fuels that passion by bringing him tons of Legos. He builds and builds until he is practically filling up the entire apartment with his creations.

When Lolly and his friend, Vega, are beaten up and robbed, the thoughts of joining the “crew” re-enter his mind. Lolly is able to lose himself in his Lego creations, but will that be enough?

BOOK TALK
Being a kid isn’t easy in the streets of Harlem. Lolly and his friends are faced everyday with the reality of gangs and gang violence in their neighborhoods. Making tough choices about whether to join a gang or stay away from them causes constant pressures on a young man. These decisions can even cost you your life as they have for Lolly’s big brother.

Can anything save Lolly from falling into the same trap as his brother?

LINKS TO HELPFUL WEBSITES
- Author Interview: https://youtu.be/tZgPOk2UF7A
- Official Website: https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/546296/the-stars-beneath-our-feet-by-david-barclay-moore/9781524701246/
- Author: http://www.davidbarclaymoore.com
- TeachingBooks.net through INSPIRE: www.teachingbooks.net/glvzu8a

MAKERSPACE ACTIVITY
Do some research on how bridges are built. Design your own bridge using LEGO bricks.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
1. Have you ever struggled with peer pressure? How did you handle it?
2. “If you expose yourself to what everyone else does, you’ll never create anything new.” What do you think Lolly’s counselor meant by that?
3. Lolly’s friend, Vega, disappears after the two boys are beaten up and robbed. Where do you think Vega goes?
4. In the story, the boys see a coyote in the park. What significance do you think the coyote has to the story?

IF YOU ENJOYED THIS BOOK, YOU MIGHT ALSO LIKE

- **Realistic Fiction** *Long Way Down* by Jason Reynolds
- **Realistic Fiction** *How It Went Down* by Kekla Magoon
- **Realistic Fiction** *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas (language)

Resource page created by 2019-20 YOUNG HOOSIER BOOK AWARD committee member:
Ms. Lisa Pearson, Media Specialist/ School Librarian, Castle North Middle School, Newburgh, Indiana