

What teenagers are saying about *My Orange Duffel Bag*:

“Reading this book brought graphic insight into my life. Until this book, I had only an overview of the more criminal sectors of society, knowing that they existed but not much else. I had not actually thought about what it must be like to grow up in the midst of these sectors and then try to leave.”

“The enormous courage needed to accomplish standing up to your parents and saying that you will not be like them is unthinkable. I do not know if I could do it.”

“His story was so powerful that it caused some emotional responses from other students. Each student that told their story had serious problems at times, too. But they never gave up trying to make everything better again. The support that others gave to them helped them to achieve a better life. The same thing happened with Mr. Bracken.”

“He taught me to never give up on my goals to become successful in life.”

“People living in ‘less than perfect’ circumstances such as Sam Bracken’s are often lost in the back alleys of streets and sometimes in prostitution. The fact that these youngster’s minds aren’t so much as given a chance to succeed not only hurts them, but also hurts society. To deny a child a chance to be the next Voltaire or Einstein simply... is a travesty.”

“This book should help to enlighten those people who believe that life is as privileged for everyone as it is for them....”

“...when Sam Bracken speaks he gives people courage to stand up and describe things to him that they would not normally say to people that that’s the type of guy he is.”

“Sam experienced many traumatic events, but he never let himself become a victim of unfortunate circumstances. Sam developed an internal motivation that helped him to create a series of end goals. He realized that he was a phenomenal athlete, so he could visualize a pathway out of his situation.”

“My orange duffel bag is empty so far but will be filled with college books and football cleats. I am planning on making good grades so when it comes time to choose a college I will have a broad selection of choices. I will spend more time and exert more effort in school, choose between soccer and football, and decide what kind of person I want to be now that I’m almost in college. If all the goals aren’t completed, I will still be content because I will have tried my best.”

“My Orange Duffel Bag is an inspirational book about how one boy overcame seemingly impossible life barriers and continued on to become a successful man. This book proves

that nothing is impossible no matter how young or old. One important idea that I have taken from this book is that if people tell you that you can't do something, with time and effort you can use that negativity to push your body to the limit proving people wrong. I think the most important thing is to not let people bring you down not matter what they do or say."

"*My Orange Duffel Bag* inspired me in many ways. The fact that one boy had the power to change his entire life around when in that environment shows me that no matter how bad things get, I always have a better option."

"I really admired his passion to succeed."

"In recognizing a destination for yourself, you have subconsciously made the first transition towards a better tomorrow."

"...things that are hard take work. With work and dedication come good things."