expressions on their faces to illustrate pathos. We drew a three-way Venn diagram to show how authors might use two rhetorical appeals to persuade readers or, to be really persuasive, a combination of all three.

The students were now ready to identify the use of these persuasive strategies in magazine advertisements. One student cut out an ad for face cream, which featured the statistic, "9 out of 10 women saw a decrease in wrinkles" as well as a photo of a woman laughing with her friends. Using the following sentence starters, one student wrote, "*This advertisement is using pathos because* the woman feels young and happy with her friends" and "*It also uses logos because* it contains a statistic."

We then helped students practice another key skill in argument writing: distinguishing between claims and evidence. We selected an issue our school is facing—whether to allow the use of smartphones as a resource in class. Students practiced identifying claims by looking at good examples ("Students should be allowed to access smartphones during a lesson"; "Smartphones are a valuable resource in the classroom") as well as bad ones ("Many students have phones in their backpacks"; "Smartphones are not allowed in many schools"). Asking students to explain what the good examples had in common helped them identify the features of effective claims—mainly, that they're specific and debatable (that is, they have more than one side).

We used the same process for teaching students about effective evidence by showing them good examples (evidence that was relevant and sufficient to support a claim), such as, "Studies show that the use of smartphones to conduct research in the classroom can increase learning." We also showed them bad examples (evidence that was insufficient or

WALTER DEAN MYERS
on Connecting with Your Characters

As a child, I loved stories and the characters I discovered in my reading. Everyone told me that the worlds I encountered when I curled up with a book were purely imaginary and had no actual ties to life. Assuming this was true, I approached writing as an exercise in creating "other worldly" scenarios. As I continued my writing career, however, I began to sense that the characters in my stories not only had strong connections with me, but that they also related strongly to my outlook on the world. I saw the world through the eyes of my characters and spoke *through* them, not just *for* them. The world I imagined was an integral part of the world in which I lived.
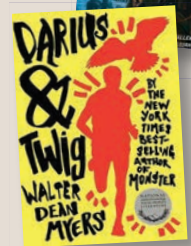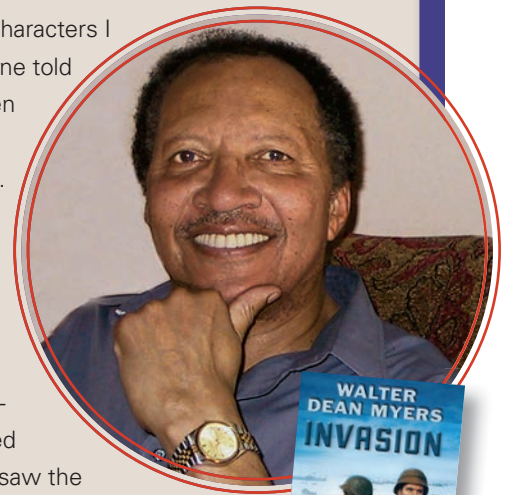
My wife recently described me as "bookish." At first I was a bit put out by this, as I interpreted her one-word description as synonymous with nerdy. On reflection, though, I agreed. I spend most of my life writing, thinking about writing, or reading what others have written. I am, indeed, bookish. I am also, by some standards, somewhat nerdy.

As a teenager, I went out of my way to avoid being thought of as a nerd. I took brown paper bags to the library with me so other kids wouldn't know I was borrowing books. But today, I've learned to embrace the idea of being bookish and to relish my involvement with language and stories.

During my prewriting phase, I cut out and reproduce photographs of all my characters (or people who resemble them) and put them on my wall behind my computer. So when I sit down to actually write, I look up, and there they all are, looking down at me—these people who are so closely connected to who I am. What a pleasure to greet them each morning, what an absolute pleasure to know I will spend the day with them. I've learned to love who I was as a teenager. Isn't that wonderful?

Walter Dean Myers (www.walterdeanmyers.net) is the author of more than 110 books for children and young adults. His most recent book is *Invasion* (Scholastic, 2013).