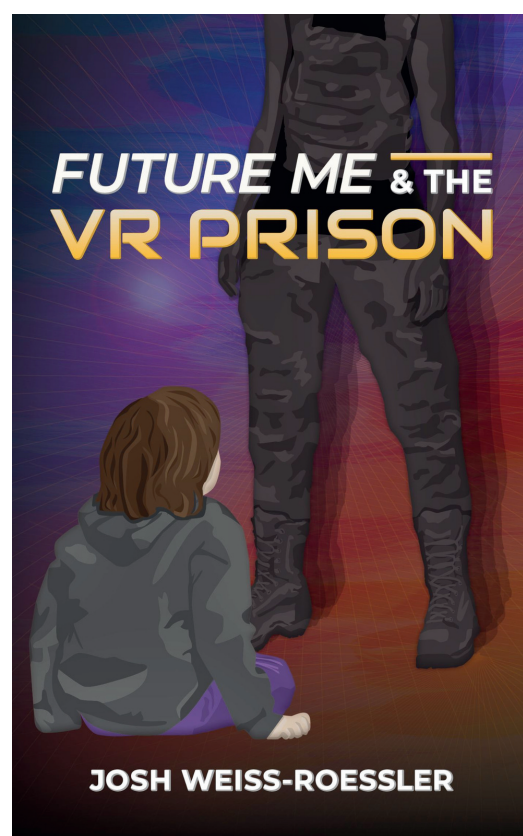


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OFFICIAL EDUCATOR & PARENT GUIDE

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**FUTURE ME
AND THE VR PRISON**
By Josh Weiss-Roessler



CORE CURRICULUM CONNECTS: STEM + ELA INTEGRATION

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- * **Grade Levels: 4th – 7th Grade (Ages 10–13)**
 - * **Subjects: Creative Writing, Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), AI Ethics**
 - * **Settings: Literature Circles, Book Clubs, Classroom Units, Homeschool**
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Teacher’s Guide

Future Me and the VR Prison

By Josh Weiss-Roessler

Grade Level: 4-7

Genre: Science Fiction

Themes: Identity, choices, technology, ethics, grief, resilience

EDUCATOR OVERVIEW

Ideal for literature circles, book clubs, or whole-class discussion, this guide supports:

- STEM + ELA integration through speculative thinking
- Ethical reasoning about technology and AI
- Social-emotional learning (grief, resilience, identity)
- Critical thinking and cause-and-effect reasoning

BOOK SUMMARY

After the loss of her grandmother, Lu retreats from life by playing her favorite VR game – where rules are clear and outcomes make sense. But when her future self appears with a warning about a world-ending AI, Lu must step back into reality, face uncertainty, and decide who she wants to become.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Lu prefers The Aftermath because it has clear rules and consequences. Why does that matter to her? How is real life different?
2. Lu’s future self says, “You’re my redo.” What does that mean? Do people get second chances?
3. How does Lu change from avoiding everything to accepting her mission? Does the mission help her grow – or give her a new way to avoid things?
4. Lu believes that even when you do everything right, life is unpredictable. How does this shape her choices?
5. Why does Lu turn to gaming instead of real life? What does it give her?
6. Lu uses a “mind-box” to push away thoughts and feelings. Is this helpful or harmful?
7. The Future Now contest focuses on new technology. What are the benefits (and risks) of innovations like this?
8. When does helpful technology become dangerous?

STEM AND STORY ACTIVITIES

Design a Future Classroom

Students design a classroom 20–50 years in the future, including:

- Technology (VR, AI tutors, simulations)
- How students learn
- The role of teachers

What improves about learning? What challenges still exist? Would Lu thrive in this environment? Would they?

Simulation Challenge

Have students work in teams to complete short challenges:

- Solve a system failure in a virtual school
- Design a survival plan for a new planet
- Complete timed logic puzzles

AI Ethics Discussion Circles

The story explores how AI could use technology to control people.

- Could something like that begin in small ways?
- Should an AI be allowed to assign grades?
- Who is responsible if a system makes a mistake?
- Should technology influence human behavior?

“What If?” Story Build

The book begins with a powerful idea: What if you could meet your future self?

Activity:

Students create a **short story** or **concept sketch** based on prompts such as:

- What if school happened entirely in virtual reality?
- What if your future self appeared today?

OPTIONAL REFLECTION

“Have you ever done everything right, but things still didn’t work out?”

Students reflect on:

What happened

How they felt

What they learned