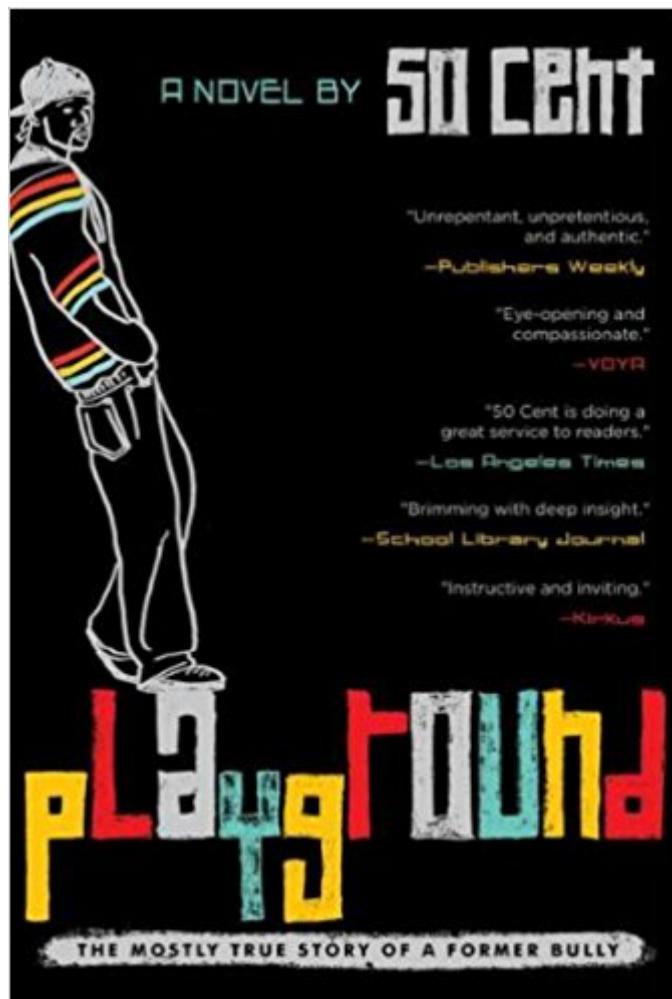


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# Playground



## **Synopsis**

A hard-hitting and inspirational novel about the redemption of a bully from international icon 50 Cent. Thirteen-year-old Butterball takes readers on a journey through the moments that made him into the playground bully he is today. Loosely inspired by 50 Cent's own adolescence and written with his teenage son in mind, *Playground* received wide critical praise--and is now poised to become a perennial classic.

## **Book Information**

Paperback: 320 pages

Publisher: Razorbill; Reprint edition (November 13, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1595144781

ISBN-13: 978-1595144782

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.8 x 8.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 33 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #407,472 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #87 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Peer Pressure #148 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Peer Pressure #206 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Bullying

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## **Customer Reviews**

'A fascinating insight into the mind of a vulnerable teenager. Compelling; a one-sitting read' Alex Scarrow. Alex Scarrow 'rapper Fiddy has written some YA fiction! And what's more, it's a funny, smart and engaging read, perfect for older teens' Bliss. Bliss 'Beautifully written and paced' Books for Keeps. Books for Keeps 'cracking read' Daily Mirror. Daily Mirror 'a raucous read' Flipside. Flipside 'I loved *Playground*. I think it will appeal to a very broad range of kids, girls and boys, rich and poor, black and white, but crucially including many who don't feel that they are represented in most books' Keren David. Keren David 'I'd recommend to anyone who likes rap and a gritty storyline' Teen Titles. Teen Titles 'incredibly readable' Chicklish. Chicklish --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Curtis Jackson III (aka 50 Cent) is an internationally successful hip-hop star, actor, writer, and entrepreneur. He rose to fame with the release of his albums Get Rich or Die Tryin' and The Massacre. He is the author of the bestselling books From Pieces to Weight and The 50th Law. Lizzi Akana is an award-winning animator and designer. She graduated with honors from the Rhode Island School of Design and has since gone on to create artwork and animated content for television, film, advertising, and print. She lives in Brooklyn, New York.

After finishing The Fault in Our Stars, I really needed to read something different. I had bought this book on a whim, at first scoffing at it, then intrigued by it. I was torn between being impressed by Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson writing about his early start as a playground bully and being annoyed by this ghost written story pumped out to make more money. Now that I have read Playground: A Mostly True Story of a Former Bully, I think I am more impressed than annoyed...Butterball is a big guy. Junior High is rough enough for a kid, let alone a fat kid, so you have to be tough to make it through. When Maurice, Butterball's only real friend at school, starts telling people something truly horrible about Butterball's family, he does the only thing he can. He defends his honor. He bashes Maurice's face in with a sock filled with D batteries. Now Butterball has to go to a social worker twice a week and talk about his feelings- the last thing he wants to do. Butterball and his mother moved out of the city to Garden City when his parents split up. He still goes to the city occasionally to see his father, but his dad is usually preoccupied by his latest girlfriend. Butterball's mom works constantly between her time at the hospital and college classes to become a nurse. Mostly he spends his time with Evelyn, his mom's friend who makes gross vegetarian stews and rags on Butterball to behave himself. At school he has gotten a lot of attention, some good and some bad, for what he did to Maurice. Now a group of guys wants him to do it again to a guy Butterball has never met. But Butterball doesn't understand- this guy hasn't done anything to him, so why would Butterball bash his face in? I wouldn't say this was a great story, but it was one that has a good moral and is told from a different perspective than others of its kind. I like the fact that 50 Cent took the time (via a ghost writer) to get his story out there about his own bullying, why he did it, and how it affected him later. As an artist many kids look up to, it is great to put yourself out there and try to be a positive role model to them. I think it was important for him to stress that there was a reason behind Butterball's actions. While the reason doesn't condone the actions, it helps someone understand and address the situation properly. I would probably keep this book around, even though there are better stories out there, because it would appeal to some kids where other books might not. They may pick it up and read it just because the author is someone they know and look up to.

And to be honest, the moral of the story is pretty strong. Overall, not a bad book but definitely one that has a place on my shelves.

One of my 7th grade students was reading this book -she got it from our reading specialist - so I borrowed a copy. This book gives the real deal on bullying - the best teen fiction book on bullying I have found yet! (some, like "Crash" are not realistic). You look past the urban setting and get a good understanding of how the dynamic of bullying works. The actions of the school and the counselor is exactly how it goes in the school systems I am familiar with and that is a good thing! I especially liked the weight 50 gives to the coercion factor which is when older kids bait a younger, insecure kid into doing bad things. Yes there is some profanity in it, but that's the way the kid talks- he is a troubled kid! And this book had a good ending -I can say no more - Just read it! Ironically, the school I work in is 2 miles from 50 Cent's house in Farmington, CT. He is trying to sell it...Anyone want to buy a HUGE house? I mean hotel size house!

Even though this book was written more for the teen scene, I still enjoyed it. The main character went through some dark times, he was bullied, he bullied; but, in the end, he really grew up mentally. All it takes is someone to see the potential of a child or even an adult, and help foster that talent, it can turn that person's view of themselves totally around. The book started out dark and a little depressing, but ended on an up note. Any time I think about the characters long after I've closed the book, that's how I know it was a good read.

This is a great book, and it's amazing that Hip Hop legend 50 cent is doing his part in combatting bullying. I highly recommend this.

My reluctant readers love this book. Loosely based on 50's life. Many kids relate to it. Very interesting upbringing that helps us understand many people's drives and childhoods.

This book is great for middle school and high school children especially if a teacher needs to address bullying.

I have almost all of 50 Cent's books. His book are always very interesting. I found this story very funny and I read it to my 10 year old who also enjoyed it. The story is written in a language that inner city youth can relate to. I am an adult and I enjoyed it very much.

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