

Merrill Middle School  
Des Moines, Iowa

Dear Francisco Jimenez,

I'm not blind, but you helped me see. Before I read your book, Breaking Through, I had a narrow perspective of what happens in real life. It was hard for me to believe what Panchito and his family had to go through just to get through life. I had no idea how difficult it was to have Panchito go to college. His parents were afraid they might run out of money and lose their house. Since I had no experience with anything like this, it sounded like something I would see in a movie, not real life. But you changed all that. After reading your book I don't think that, any more.

Now I know that with hard work and strong determination people can overcome almost any difficulty, no matter how much discrimination or problems they face. Your book has also opened my eyes to really how much discrimination goes on. So many things happen in a day that could be considered discrimination that I get used to it and overlook it. Now I know the difference between being playful and when someone goes overboard and crosses the line.

Your book is a great example of people overcoming the odds. It has also taught me that just because someone is different from me doesn't mean they are bad or wrong. Thank you, Francisco Jimenez, for opening my eyes to what goes on in life. You have also made me think about how lucky I am and how much I already have.

Sincerely

Ricky Strohman