



Stand By Me meets Holes.

On a desert work detail, the kids from D Block juvenile detention are framed for a heist and use their collective criminal insight to turn the tables and take a shot at freedom.

When a mining operation hits gold unexpectedly, the technicians split into two groups. Both sides want to hide the fortune from their employer, a selenium prospecting firm, and independently approach Cunningham, the head of security. Cunningham decides to kill them all and take the gold, but he needs to cover his tracks. A small group of inmates, the hard cases from D Block, are sent out into the nearby desert on a work detail as part of the plan. The dead technicians will look like casualties in an escape gone wrong. Everything is planned with military precision, but the junior criminals from D Block are far more resourceful than anticipated. While they attempt to reverse the set-up, they tell their origin stories and come to an empowering new understanding of who they are, what they are supposed to be, and what they might become instead.

Writer Jeff Johnson was on D Block in the Albuquerque Juvenile Detention Center in 1985. Shot entirely in New Mexico with a cast that is primarily Hispanic, Short Bus is a noir designed to showcase emerging talent while making the most of film incentives.

“Jeff Johnson is a gifted and natural storyteller, and he knows about things you don’t know.”--**John Irving**, Academy Award Winning author of *Cider House Rules*