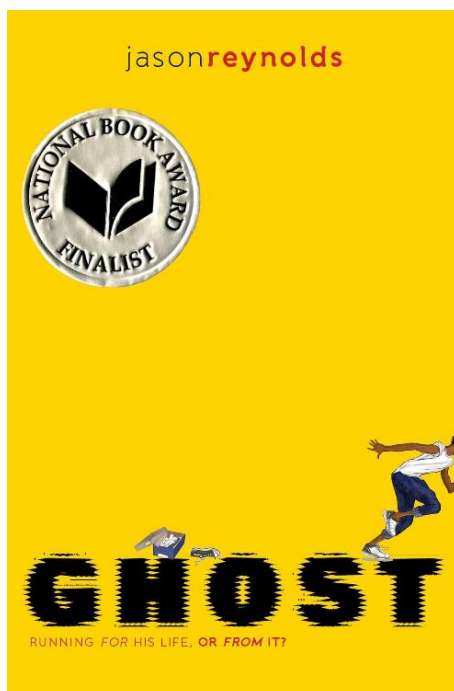


GHOST

BY JASON REYNOLDS





GHOST

AUTHOR: JASON REYNOLDS

GENRE: Fiction

PAGE COUNT: 192

LEXILE LEVEL: 730

TOPICS: Coming of Age; Friendship; Sports (Track); Father-Son Relationships; Family Violence

ABOUT THE BOOK

Running. That's all that Ghost (real name Castle Cranshaw) has ever known. But never for a track team. Nope, his game has always been ball. But when Ghost impulsively challenges an elite sprinter to a race -- and wins -- the Olympic medalist track coach sees he has something: crazy natural talent. Thing is, Ghost has something else: a lot of anger, and a past that he is trying to outrun. Can Ghost harness his raw talent for speed and meld with the team, or will his past finally catch up to him? [\(Source: Goodreads\)](#)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jason Reynolds is the New York Times best-selling author of *All American Boys*, *the Track series*, *Long Way Down*, *For Everyone*, and *Miles Morales-Spiderman*.

He is an American author who writes novels and poetry for young adult and middle-grade audiences, including *Ghost*, a National Book Award Finalist for Young People's Literature.

Born in Washington, DC and raised in neighboring Oxon Hill, Maryland, Reynolds found inspiration in rap to begin writing poetry at nine years old. He focused on poetry for approximately the next two decades, only reading a novel cover to cover for the first time at age 17 and publishing several poetry collections before he published his own first novel, *When I Was The Greatest*, in 2014. He won the Coretta Scott King/John Steptoe Award for New Talent for this first work of prose and seven more novels followed in the next four years, including *Ghost* (2016) and two more books in what became his *New York Times* best-selling Track series, *Patina* (2017) and *Sunny* (2018); *As Brave As You* (2016), winner of the 2016 Kirkus Prize, the 2017 NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Literary Work for Youth/Teen, and the 2017 Schneider Family Book Award; and a Marvel Comics novel called *Miles Morales: Spider-Man* (2017).

Reynolds returned to poetry with *Long Way Down* (2017), a novel in verse which was named a Newbery Honor book, a Printz Honor Book, and best young adult work by the Mystery Writers of America's Edgar Awards. [\(Source: Jason Reynolds\)](#)

ABOUT THE CURRICULUM GUIDE

This curriculum guide is a resource to be used over 5 weeks. Educators can create a more meaningful reading experience for their students by leading them through a close read that connects the book to their own lives and the world.

The guide includes:

- weekly reading comprehension checks
- discussion questions with text analysis
- writing prompts
- research topics
- projects
- supplemental texts & media

SECTION 1

CHAPTERS: 1-2 (pages 1-28)

FOCUS: Memories; Pride

PREVIEW: Discuss – For most of Chapter 1 the author uses flashbacks. What effect does this have? How would the story be different if there were no flashbacks?

SECTION 2

CHAPTERS: 3-4 (pages 29-75)

FOCUS: Discipline; Consequence; Shame

PREVIEW: Write – Think about a time when an action of yours had consequences. What was the impact on those around you?

SECTION 3

CHAPTERS: 5-6 (pages 76-109)

FOCUS: Fear; Theft; Sports

PREVIEW: Project – Ghost’s shoes are much more than just a pair of shoes to him. Re-create his shoes and represent the meaning they hold for him.

SECTION 4

CHAPTERS: 7-8 (pages 110-135)

FOCUS: Trust; Secrets; Community

PREVIEW: Write – How do Lu, Sunny, Ghost, and Patty’s secrets make them who they are now?

SECTION 5

CHAPTERS: 9-10 (pages 122-165)

FOCUS: Connections; Character Development; Change

PREVIEW: Supplemental Text – Read about the importance of a strong coach/athlete relationship.

VOLUNTEER GUIDE

How is Ghost’s identity tied to his nickname? If you gave yourself a nickname, what would it be?

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

The prompts and activities in this guide are aligned with Common Core. Here are some of the key standards:

READING LITERATURE:

- 5.1, 6.1, 7.1, 8.1
- 5.2, 6.2, 7.2, 8.2
- 5.3, 6.3, 7.3, 8.3
- 5.4, 6.4, 7.4, 8.4
- 6.6, 7.6
- 5.8

READING INFORMATIONAL TEXTS:

- 5.1, 6.1, 7.1, 8.1

SPEAKING & LISTENING:

- 5.1, 6.1, 7.1, 8.1
- 5.4, 6.4, 7.4, 8.4

WRITING:

- 5.1, 6.1, 7.1, 8.1
- 5.2, 6.2, 7.2, 8.2
- 5.3, 6.3, 7.3, 8.3
- 5.4, 6.4, 7.4, 8.4
- 5.7, 6.7, 7.7, 8.7
- 5.9, 6.9, 7.9, 8.9

www.corestandards.org

SECTION 1 GUIDE

READING CHECK

Use these simple comprehension questions to check that your students have completed their reading assignment for this section and understand what they read:

1. Ghost's mother allows Ghost to run track provided he remains focused on what?
2. Why does Coach want Ghost to run track?
3. Why is Ghost so loyal and friendly toward Mr. Charles?
4. What does Ghost always purchase from Mr. Charles?
5. What is Ghost's full name?

Answer Key

1. School.
2. Because Ghost has natural talent and potential.
3. Because Mr. Charles sheltered Ghost and his mother the night Ghost's father tried to kill them.
4. Sunflower seeds.
5. Castle Cranshaw.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS & TEXT ANALYSIS

- ♥ 1. Read and analyze: *"I know sunflower is made up of two good words, and that man ain't got two good words in him, or anything that any girl would like, because girls don't like men who try to shoot them and their son. And that's the kind of man he was"* (Ch. 1, pgs. 4-5)
- How is Ghost's perception of sunflowers affected because of his father's lies?
 - Why do you think the author begins with the dad's good side and then turns him into a villain? What impact does this have on the reader?
 - Ghost refers to his father as "man." Why is this? Why not call him dad/father?
2. For most of Chapter 1, the author uses flashbacks (Ch. 1, pgs. 4-7).
- Why does the author use this device?
 - How does this device help the reader understand Ghost's character?
 - How would the story be different if the author did not include these flashbacks?
3. Read and compare Ghost's and his dad's sunflower seed method (Ch. 1, pg. 4).
- What do their methods say about their separate characters? Compare and contrast.
 - What do their methods say about parents/children of this generation?
 - How do sunflower seeds divide and connect Ghost to his dad?

See Writing Prompts – Comfort in an Object.

4. Read and analyze: *"My mom and I kept running, down the staircase into the street, breaking into the darkness with death chasing behind us. We ran and ran and ran, until finally we came up on Mr. Charles's store, which luckily for us stays open 24/7."* (Ch. 1, pg. 6)
- What does Ghost mean by "death chasing behind us"?
 - How is Mr. Charles's store being open 24/7 crucial to the plot?
 - What knowledge has Ghost gained from this experience?

SECTION 1
GHOST

CHAPTERS/PAGES:

Chapters 1-2
Pages 1-28

FOCUS:

- Memories
- Pride

♥ 5. Read and analyze: “Don’t nobody go to college for free to run no races.” (Ch. 2, pg.10)

- Why do you think Ghost thinks negatively about track?
- What does Ghost’s informal language show about him?
- Why does Ghost have negative thoughts about the future?
- Based on what you’ve learned so far about Ghost, what can be a reason he downplays college?

6. Read and analyze: “His skin was white. Like, the color white. And his hair was light brown. But his face looked like a black person’s. Like God forgot to put the brown in him.” (Ch. 2, pg. 11) and “Lu, was decked out in the flyest gear. Fresh Nike running shoes, and a full-body skintight suit.” (Ch. 2, pg. 12)

- Why is Ghost so blunt with Lu’s physical attributes?
- Is there an underlying racial issue here? How can someone be white and black at the same time?
- What does the vivid description of Lu’s gear reveal about Ghost and Lu?

7. Consider the tone and language used when Ghost explains the story of Brandon, the bully (Ch. 2, pg. 15).

- How does Ghost relate Brandon to Lu?
- Why does Lu’s success on the track irritate Ghost so much? Why does he feel the need to win?

8. Consider the race between Lu and Ghost and afterwards (Ch. 2, pgs. 17-22).

- What was Ghost trying to prove by racing Lu?
- Ghost mentioned that racing Lu didn’t scare him. What is his fear then?
- Why does Ghost immediately reject Coach’s offer to join the Defenders?

See Writing Prompt – Pride.

♥ 9. Read and analyze: “I get weird because people always treat you funny when they find out you stay in a certain kind of neighborhood.” (Ch. 2, pg. 24)

- In what ways does the bullying Ghost received throughout the years affect the way he thinks about his community?
- Why does Ghost seem closed off? Does he really not care or is it just a front? Cite evidence from the text to explain your answer.
- Does the type of neighborhood you live in determine the character of a person? Explain your answer.
- What can we infer about how Ghost views his neighborhood based on this quote?

WRITING PROMPTS

♥ 1. Comfort in an Object

Think about an object that has sentimental value to you. What is it? Describe the impact it has on your life and why it is important to you. While doing this, compare it to Ghost’s sunflower. Why is it important to him? Write two or more paragraphs. Cite text evidence to support your answer.

Cooperative Learning Strategy

Try this Kagan cooperative learning strategy to encourage student participation in creative ways and support intra-student communication!

- Ask students to sit in groups of three.
- Assign roles. For example, the person on left takes one position on a topic for debate, the person on right takes the opposite position, and the person in the middle takes notes and decides which side is the most convincing and provides an argument for their choice. One side of the debate is Ghost cares about his image and the other side is Ghost doesn’t care.
- Debrief by calling on a few groups to summarize their discussions.

2. Pride

“They just said stupid stuff like, Can’t nobody beat him.” (Ch. 2, pg. 15) Reflect on Ghost’s thoughts before racing Lu.

Write a paragraph that answers the following:

- Describe a time when you thought you were better than someone at something.
- Were you ever matched up against them? Why or why not?
- How did/would it feel if you won against them? Or how did/would it feel if you didn’t win?

RESEARCH TOPICS

World Records

To expand on the conversation about special talents people have regarding world records (Ch. 1, Page 1), research world famous records.

Divide your students into equal groups of 3/4 and have each group research a recent (within the past decade) world record. Let groups one by one write their record on the board so everyone has a different group record. Have each member of the group answer these questions. After they have completed their research, ask students to share with the whole class and discuss the students’ reactions to their findings.

Research:

- Why did your group pick this record? What stood out?
- What did the person or group do and for how long?
- What inspired this person or group to try for the world record?
- Did the person grow famous after completing the record? Any TV shows, interviews, movie appearances, or money prizes?

Discuss:

- What does the record say about the person’s character?
- Do you think you could ever complete the record?
- What’s the importance of all world records?
- What’s the reason most people try to complete a world record?
- How do you feel about the record? Disgusted? Amazed? Extremely amused?

PROJECTS

Quote Connection with Visual

Teacher’s Instructions: Throughout the week, students should work on creating a well-thought artwork of a chosen quote approved by you. The final project could be a concrete, large (or small) scale art project, based on classroom preference.

Materials Needed: Construction paper/posters, colors (markers, crayons, colored pencils), other materials (glue, scissors, etc.)

Create a visual art piece using an approved quote from the book Chapters 1-2. The visual art must relate to the quote and the quote needs to be represented on the piece of art. Students should use multiple materials, and the art should take up at least 80% of their paper/poster. Students will then explain the meaning of the quote, how it relates to the art and why they chose it on the back of the paper. Minimum of one paragraph.

SUPPLEMENTAL TEXTS & MEDIA

1. Website:

Guinness World Records videos

www.guinnessworldrecords.com/news/video

2. Article:

“Why Competition Is Good for Kids”

www.parents.com/kids/development/social/why-competition-is-good-for-kids-and-how-to-keep-it-that-way/

3. Website:

“Adolescence and Parental Influence”

www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/surviving-your-childs-adolescence/201009/adolescence-and-parental-influence

SECTION 2 GUIDE

READING CHECK

Use these simple comprehension questions to check that your students have completed their reading assignment for this section and understand what they read:

1. How many hours did it take for Ghost to get into a fight after he promised himself he would not fight anymore?
2. Where does Ghost sleep at night?
3. Who picks Ghost up from school when he gets suspended?
4. What is Ghost's favorite basketball player?
5. Who does Ghost sit with at lunch everyday?

Answer Key

1. 17 hours.
2. living room floor with blankets.
3. Coach Brody.
4. LeBron James.
5. Dre and Red.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS & TEXT ANALYSIS

- ♥ 1. Ghost has to deal with bullying at school (Ch. 3, pg. 35).
- Why do you think Brandon Simmons picks on Ghost? Why do most bullies pick on people?
 - How does Ghost respond to the constant mean jokes? How should he have reacted? What difference would it have made?
 - Ghost said that he “was altercation free for seventeen hours and two minutes?” (Ch. 3, pg.30) Why do you think he gets into so much trouble?
- ♥ 2. Read and analyze: “I got a lot of scream inside.” (Ch. 3, pg. 34) Also consider the introduction of Ghost's friend Red Griffin.
- What does the quote mean? How is it possible to “scream inside”?
 - What events could have caused Ghost to have screamed inside?
 - Ghost says “the only reason people have red hair is because they're red on the inside”. How can colors relate to the emotions/character of a person?
 - Ghost said he could tell Red also had a lot of scream. How can you tell someone has been through something without asking them directly?
- ♥ 3. Think about Principal Marshall's instruction for Ghost to call his mom (Ch. 3, pg. 41).
- Why couldn't Ghost call his mother? What does this say about his character?
 - Ghost calls Coach Brody instead. What can readers infer about their new relationship?
 - Why do most kids today struggle to talk to their parents? Do you find it challenging? Why/Why not?

SECTION 2
GHOST

CHAPTERS/PAGES:

Chapters 3-4
Pages 29-75

FOCUS:

- Discipline
- Consequence
- Shame

- ♥ 4. Read and analyze: “I guess the only other person I’m scared of, maybe... is me?” (Ch. 3, pg. 51)
- What does Ghost mean by this? How can you be scared of yourself?
 - Do you think Ghost is hard on himself? Why/Why not? Use text evidence.
 - How does Coach respond? How does it reveal Ghost’s inner conflict?
5. Consider Ghost’s workout with Coach Brody (Ch. 4, pg. 56).
- What lesson does Coach teach Ghost with excessive running?
 - How does Coach guilt-trip Ghost concerning his school suspension? Who does he mention are affected by Ghost’s actions?

See Writing Prompts – Consequence.

6. Re-read the description of Ghost tripping while running (Ch. 4, pg. 67).
- How did Ghost's carelessness cause his downfall?
 - Why didn't Ghost tie his shoelaces?
 - Why did Ghost say that he was more embarrassed when he tripped than when he gets bullied?
7. Recall Ghost’s conversation with Patty on Lu being albino (Ch. 4, pgs. 70-71).
- Could Lu’s albinism be a factor to him being a bully? Why?
 - What can readers infer about bullies in general?
- ♥ 8. Re-read Ghost’s cutting of his sneakers (Ch. 4, pg. 75).
- Why does Ghost cut off his hightops?
 - What do you think his mother’s reaction would be? Explain your answer with cited evidence.
 - Ghost says “there is so much noise inside of him”. What does this mean? How can harbored feelings affect a person’s actions?

See Writing Prompts – Shame.

WRITING PROMPTS

♥ 1. Consequence

Think about a time that you've done something that resulted in a good/bad outcome. (*Teacher Note: If students cannot think of a personal experience, they may compare to another book they've read*). What was it? Describe the impact it had on your life/others around you. While doing this, compare it to Ghost’s fight with Brandon Simmons. Who did his actions impact? How was he impacted? Cite text evidence to support your answer. Write three or more paragraphs.

♥ 2. Shame

Does Ghost blame himself or his shoes for his fall? Who/ What do you think should be blamed? Find examples in the text to support your opinion. Use specific quotations in your writing.

RESEARCH TOPICS

1. Albinism

Research:

- What is Albinism?
- What are the causes?
- What are the symptoms?
- What are the known treatments?
- What are the different types?

Discuss:

- Have you ever seen anyone with albinism? How did people/you react? If you haven't, how do you think you would react? Why is this?
- How would albinism change someone's life?
- After knowing what Albinism is, how do you think Lu feels? Why?

2. Color Psychology

Research:

- What is color psychology?
- What emotions do warm colors usually evoke? What about cold colors?
- How is color psychology used today?
- Who discovered color? How?

Discuss:

- How is color psychology used in Ghost's life?
- What color/s does Ghost mention and what emotions do they evoke?
- What color could you be described as right now? Why?

SUPPLEMENTAL TEXTS & MEDIA

1. Website:

"The Top Reasons Why People Bully"

www.betterhelp.com/advice/general/the-top-reasons-why-people-bully/

2. Article:

"Punishments vs Consequences"

www.empoweringparents.com/article/punishments-vs-consequences-which-are-you-using/

3. Website:

"Color Psychology"

www.verywellmind.com/color-psychology-2795824

Cooperative Learning Strategy

Try this Kagan cooperative learning strategy to encourage student participation in creative ways and support intra-student communication!

- Divide students into groups of 3/4
- Each student in the group is responsible for picking their own color, connecting an emotion/character to that color and writing a short 5-6 sentence story/situation that relates to the color and emotion/character.
- Debrief by allowing student to share their short story to their group

See Research Topics—Color Psychology.

SECTION 3 GUIDE

READING CHECK

Use these simple comprehension questions to check that your students have completed their reading assignment for this section and understand what they read:

1. Who brought attention to Ghost's "low tops" in Social Studies?
2. Where was the first place Ghost went after skipping school?
3. What activity do the runners do on Thursdays?
4. When does the newbie dinner happen every year?
5. Who did Ghost tell Coach bought the silver bullets for him?

Answer Key

1. Shamika Wilson.
2. Everything Sports.
3. Long run.
4. First Friday of the season.
5. His mom.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS & TEXT ANALYSIS

1. Read and analyze: "...the value of a dollar." (Ch. 5, pg. 77)
 - Why do you think money is so important to Ghost's family?
 - Does a dollar have a different value for different people? Why?
 - How would Ghost's cutting of shoes affect his mother?
2. Reread the embarrassment Ghost felt when everyone saw his "low tops" (Ch. 5, pg. 81).
 - What figurative language is used during this passage? Identify the examples.
 - How does the use of the language add to the story? What does it say about Ghost?
 - How do you describe the mood or the tone of the scene? How does the author's word choice help create that tone?
- ♥ 3. Read and analyze: "I needed the shoes to be a better runner... to be a better basketball player. Be better so nobody could say... anyway." (Ch. 5, pg. 87) Also, consider Ghost running after stealing the shoes.
 - Why was Ghost so paranoid when running from the store? Would you run? Why/Why not?
 - Reread how Ghost describes his environment: What mood or tone is associated with this scene?
 - Do you think Ghost's justification of why he stole the shoes make sense? Why?
 - What could be another reason Ghost steals the silver bullets?
- ♥ 4. Read and analyze: "Let me guess, sunflower seeds?" (Ch. 5, pg. 88)
 - Why does Ghost always go to Mr. Charles's store? What does that tell you about Ghost?
 - What can readers infer about their relationship?
 - What do sunflowers symbolize in their relationship?
 - How would the story be different if Mr. Charles wasn't in Ghost's life?

SECTION 3
GHOST

CHAPTERS/PAGES:

Chapters 5-6
Pages 76-109

FOCUS:

- Fear
- Theft
- Sports

♥ 5. Reread the lesson Mr. Charles teaches Ghost (Ch. 5, pg. 91).

- What does Mr. Charles tell Ghost about his family? Does this change your view of Mr. Charles? Why/Why not?
- What do Ghost and Mr. Charles have in common? How are they different?
- What moral lesson have you learned from their conversation?

6. Closely read the last few pages of Chapter 5 and beginning of Chapter 6, making sure to pay attention to the author's use of figurative language.

- How does Ghost's flashback help develop his character and internal conflict? Use text evidence.
- Have you ever felt confined? How did it make you feel?
- "Like this place, this weird little room that had saved my life, now felt like it was gonna take it." How can a place have two different meanings? Give another example in the book where something has two meanings.

See Research Topic—Claustrophobia.

♥ 7. Consider all the team practices so far in the book and Thursday's practice.

- What tactics does Coach use to teach his team life lessons? What lessons has he taught? Are the tactics successful in doing so? Why/Why not?
- How does Ghost's guilt of stealing the shoes affect his running? Use text evidence.

See Writing Prompt--Sport Analysis.

WRITING PROMPTS

♥ Fear

Is Ghost scared of the stockroom itself or the memories it brings? Use specific evidence in your writing.

Sports Analysis

Explain why sports are beneficial for teenagers, not just physically but emotionally as well. Students can research this and compare it to Ghost's gain from track. If students believe sports aren't beneficial in some ways, they may also mention that in their writing. Use evidence in your writing.

RESEARCH TOPICS

1. Claustrophobia

Research:

- What is Claustrophobia?
- What are the symptoms? List at least five
- What are the causes? List at least 3
- What are the multiple treatments? List at least 3

Discuss: Teachers should call on a few students to answer these questions

- Have you ever experienced claustrophobia? When? How did you feel?
- Do you think Ghost is Claustrophobic? Why/Why not?

2. Running Shoes

One of the central conflicts in the novel involves Ghost's desire to acquire an expensive pair of running shoes. Research the development of running shoe technology.

Research:

- What types of shoes are on the market?
- What features are important in a running shoe?
- Which brands have the highest ratings? Why?

Discuss with a partner:

- If you had to choose one pair of running shoes, which would you choose?
- What features helped you make your decision?
- What is the shoe's value? And why is value more important than cost? Compare it to your partner's choice.

PROJECTS

Shoes

Teacher's Instructions: Students should work on this for the week. On the poster, both drawings of the shoes should be present, as well as their respective paragraphs.

Materials Needed: A poster, colors (markers, color pencils, crayons), supplies from home

Ghost's shoes represent much more than the fact that they are merely a pair of shoes. Re-create Ghost's no name brand pair and the silver bullets. Make sure you clearly state what each of those shoes mean to him and how they are represented. Think of this choice as an advertisement. Be creative!

See Supplemental Texts & Media-- Do brands rule our lives?

SUPPLEMENTAL TEXTS & MEDIA

1. Article:

"Stealing in Children and Adolescents"

www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/FFF-Guide/Children-Who-Steal-012.aspx

2. Website:

"Do brands rule our lives?"

www.groupdiscussionideas.com/do-brands-rule-our-lives/

SECTION 4 GUIDE

READING CHECK

Use these simple comprehension questions to check that your students have completed their reading assignment for this section and understand what they read:

1. "I told you, kid. You're one of the world's greatest." Who said this to Ghost?
2. What does Coach make everyone do before they can eat at the newbie dinner?
3. Why was Patty given up for adoption?
4. How does Ghost feel after telling his teammates about his father?
5. How does Ghost feel about the newbie dinner?

Answer Key

1. Mr. Charles.
2. Share a secret.
3. Her mother had no legs because of Diabetes and couldn't take care of her.
4. He felt good.
5. He feels like he is part of the team.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS & TEXT ANALYSIS

♥ 1. Read and analyze: "I don't know why because he totally deserved to be roasted, but I guess I felt kinda bad for the dude." (Ch. 7, pg. 112)

- Why does Ghost feel bad for Brandon? Would you feel bad? Why/Why not?
- What does Ghost's sympathy towards Brandon reveal about his character?
- How is Ghost different from the rest of his classmates?

2. Re-read Ghost's thoughts about the stockroom in Mr. Charles's store (Ch. 7, pgs. 113-14).

- How does Ghost re-associate his dad's gun's bullets with a good thing?
- What memory did the stockroom trigger? Was it negative or positive?
- Can you forget memories? Why/why not?

See Supplemental Texts and Media— Swap bad memories for good at a flick of a switch

3. Consider the way that the author contrasts Glass Manor with Sunny's neighborhood (Ch. 7, pg. 119).

- How does this contrast help you understand Ghost?
- Re-read the description of Ghost's community (Ch.7, pgs. 115-16). What does the author want readers to infer based on this description?
- What does the basketball court symbolize in Ghost's neighborhood? In Sunny's?
- Do you think people would prefer to live in Ghost's or Sunny's neighborhood? Why? Which neighborhood would you prefer? Why?

♥ 4. Read and analyze: "He said we showed promise. Well, that was something I have never heard before." (Ch. 8, pg. 125)

- How do you think Ghost felt when Coach said this?
- Why is this the first time someone tells Ghost about his potential?
- Why doesn't Ghost believe in himself? What/Who made him that way?

SECTION 4
GHOST

CHAPTERS/PAGES:

Chapters 7-8
Pages 110-135

FOCUS:

- Trust
- Secrets
- Community

♥ 5. Consider the secrets told by Lu, Sunny, and Patty (Ch. 8, pgs. 127-31).

- Compare and contrast Ghost’s and his teammates’ stories. How are they alike? different?
- How does this dinner impact their relationships with one another?

See Writing Prompt—Secrets.

♥ 6. Read and analyze: “And it felt good to feel like one of the teammates. Like I was there— really there as me, but without as much of a scream inside.” (Ch. 8, pg. 135)

- Why are teams important?
- What has being on the team taught Ghost?
- Why hasn’t Ghost been able to show his true self around others?
- Analyze: “Like I was there—really there.” Why does the author repeat “there” twice? How does this help the readers understand Ghost’s feelings?

WRITING PROMPTS

♥ Secrets

How do Lu’s, Sunny’s, Ghost’s and Patty’s secrets make them who they are now? Use text evidence for each character. Write at least four paragraphs.

♥ Trust

Throughout the novel, Ghost has a number of adults who act as advocates for him: Mr. Charles, Coach, his mom, and even Principal Marshall. Consider the importance of each of these figures in Ghost’s life. Then write an essay or prepare a speech to be presented to the class about a trusted adult in your own life. How did they gain your trust?

RESEARCH TOPICS

Communities

To expand student’s knowledge about how the diversity/non-diversity of a community affects the youth

Students should be split into groups of four. Research two different cities/communities in Texas. Find out their average housing prices, crime rates, demographics (racial diversity, estimated population) and middle school performance. Within your groups, pair up and research one community and the other pair the other community.

Within the group, share your findings and discuss which community you would rather live in and why.

PROJECTS

Neighborhood Compare and Contrast

Teacher’s Instructions: Throughout the class period, students should work on two-flap foldable comparing Lu’s and Ghost’s community. The final project could be a concrete and colored foldable. This is an independent work study.

Materials Needed: light-colored sheet of paper, coloring pencils and scissors

1. Fold a piece of cardstock in half horizontally (like a hamburger). Students may also use a bigger sheet of paper

Cooperative Learning Strategy

Try this Kagan cooperative learning strategy to encourage student participation in creative ways and support intra-student communication!

- Teachers should randomly pair their students together
- The pairs should share something secretive/special about themselves
- Teachers should debrief by calling a few pairs to share what they learned about their partners to the rest of the class (without disclosing the actual secret unless the student says it’s okay).

2. Fold it in half again horizontally (like a hamburger).
3. Unfold the paper (just once so that it is still folded in half) and cut up the valley (along the edge of the paper at the center where you can see the crease) to the mountain top.
4. Draw and Label Sunny's neighborhood and Ghost's neighborhood on the outside flaps. On the inside compare and contrast the home of these two characters. Use text evidence.
5. On the back of the foldable, explain how their upbringing connects to where they live.

SUPPLEMENTAL TEXTS & MEDIA

1. Article:

"Swap bad memories for good at the flick of a switch"

www.newscientist.com/article/dn26113-swap-bad-memories-for-good-at-the-flick-of-a-switch/

2. Website:

Importance of having strong communities

dunmorepa.gov/news/importance-strong-communities/

SECTION 5 GUIDE

READING CHECK

Use these simple comprehension questions to check that your students have completed their reading assignment for this section and understand what they read:

1. What do they do on Mondays at track practice?
2. What do the Defenders' uniforms look like?
3. What happened to Coach's Olympic medal?
4. What did Ghost's mom cook for breakfast the day of the race?
5. Who was Ghost shocked to see on the line at the track meet?

Answer Key

1. Fartlek Runs
2. Electric blue with gold letters
3. His father sold it for his last high
4. Bacon and eggs
5. Brandon Simmons

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS & TEXT ANALYSIS

1. Re-read the fight between the newbies and the older players (Ch. 9, pgs. 138-39)
 - The image of Ghost stepping in front of Sunny represents what theme?
 - Ghost would have stood up for Sunny before the newbie dinner. True or False? Why?
 - Why is there a division between Curron and the newbies?

See Writing Prompt--Defender.

2. Consider the weekday practice routine the defenders go through (Ch. 9, pgs. 142-43).
 - How does a repetitive routine help Ghost improve in track?
 - What are some techniques Ghost gains from running each day?
 - Based on the complaints Ghost makes each day, do you think he enjoys track yet? Why?
- ♥ 3. Read and Analyze: "It's not that I was scared of being punished or getting in trouble with my mom. I was, but that's not why I was begging. I just didn't want to add to the problems." (Ch. 9, pg.151)
 - Based on this quote, what can readers infer about Ghost? His mom?
 - What "problems" is he talking about?
 - Is Ghost begging Coach out of guilt or respect for his mom? Why?
- ♥ 4. Gradually, Coach reveals things about his own past to Ghost (Ch. 9, pg. 154).
 - What does Ghost find out about Coach's childhood and relationship with his father?
 - How do these revelations develop Ghost and Coach's bond?
 - What are some similarities between Ghost and Coach?
 - Does this change Ghost's perspective on Coach? Why and how?

See Supplemental Texts and media--The importance of a strong coach-athlete relationship.

SECTION 5
GHOST

CHAPTERS/PAGES:

Chapters 9-10
Pages 122-165

FOCUS:

- Connections
- Character Development
- Change

♥ 5. Read and analyze: “*You can’t run away from who you are, but what you can do is run toward who you want to be.*” (Ch. 9, pg. 155)

- How does Ghost try to run from who he is?
- What kind of person does he want to be?
- How has finding his team helped him start to become that person?
- How does his nickname (Ghost) add to the theme of running away from fears?

♥ 6. Read and analyze: “*But I could tell Coach also missed his pops. He loved him.*” (Ch. 9, pg. 162)

- How can someone love despite all the negativity they brought?
- Can you love someone without loving all of them [loving only some aspects of their personality]? How and Why? Give an example of this in your life.

♥ 7. At the end of Chapter 9, Coach pays for the shoes after Ghost apologizes to the store clerk for stealing them.

- How do you think Ghost feels about this?
- How do you think his feelings for the “silver bullets” may have changed?

See Supplemental Texts and Media—The power of apology.

8. Consider Ghost’s walk to Martin Luther King park with his family (Ch. 10, pgs. 170-72).

- Why does the author describe what his aunt, mom and cousin are wearing?
- How does Ghost feel about his family coming to his first track meet? How would you feel?
- How is the location of Mr. Charles’s store significant to the plot? If the location were changed, how would that affect the story?

♥ 9. Re-read the moments before Ghost started running (Ch. 10, pg. 179).

- “*I could feel my insides turning colors...not red...something different.*” How has Ghost changed? What did he feel before?

See Writing Prompt—Reason to Run.

WRITING PROMPTS

Reason to Run

The cover of Ghost includes this question: Running *for* his life, or *from* it? Explain the role running has in Ghost’s life. Why does he start running, how does his reason for running change?

Alternative Ending

Ghost ends with a cliffhanger. What do you think the outcome of the book will be? Finish Chapter 10 with your own novel ending. Stay true to the author’s voice, use of dialogue and use descriptive imagery. Readers should feel as though they are continuing to read the book.

Defender

Consider the connotations of the word defender. What does it mean to be a defender? Choose a character and explore the ways that embody the idea of them being a defender. The prompt must be presented to the class in the form of a speech and from the perspective of the character chosen.

RESEARCH TOPICS

♥ Family Support

Research:

1. In what ways can families give their support?
2. What is a supportive family?
3. What other qualities do you see in a good family?

Discuss with a partner:

- Is your family supportive towards what you do? Why/Why not?

PROJECTS

Major Events

Teacher's Instructions: For the week, students should construct an illustrated timeline of at least eight major events in Ghost. Projects should be independent and colored.

Materials Needed: Poster and coloring materials

On the poster, each event has to have a caption or short description with each colored drawing.

Collage

Teacher's Instructions: For the week, students should make a collage for one of the characters in the book. This is an independent/partner work and the poster must be 100% covered.

Materials Needed: Poster, coloring materials, newspapers/magazines, glue, scissors, construction paper and any other decorative items.

1. Start with a base for your art. You can use paper or cardboard. The base must have a colored background or the newspaper/magazines cutouts must cover the entire background. No white spaces!
2. Cut or tear images that relate to the character you choose, images like: what they believe in, what they do and how they act.
3. Layer and arrange the images based on how you want your art to look. Then, glue into place, with either hot glue, liquid or stick glue.
4. You can add accent pieces, extra drawings and materials to embellish your art and finish it off.

SUPPLEMENTAL TEXTS & MEDIA

Article:

"The Importance of a Strong Coach-Athlete Relationship"

www.nfhs.org/articles/the-importance-of-a-strong-coach-athlete-relationship/

Article:

"The power of apology"

www.psychologytoday.com/us/articles/200207/the-power-apology

WORDS ALIVE VOLUNTEER FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

WARM UPS

♥ Warm up: Game of Four Corners

1. Students are given four choices.
2. Students record their answers on a sticky note/sheet of paper.
3. The teacher designates one corner for each choice.
4. Students travel to the appropriate corner.
5. Students pair up and discuss answers.

Questions to ask:

- Which is most important to you: school, family, food, or religion?
- Who is closest to you: mom, dad, best friend/s, or teacher/coach?
- How would you deal with someone bullying you: fight them, tell an adult, do nothing, find a way to get revenge?
- Why do people bully: they want to feel better about themselves, they are bigger than you, they secretly like you, they're jealous?
- What is your favorite sport: football, basketball, track or other?
- Which newbie do you relate to the most: Ghost, Lu, Patty or Sunny?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

♥ 1. Think about the consequences Ghost faces as a result of his decision to steal a pair of running shoes. (Ch. 9, pg. 152-157).

- Do you think that the way Coach punishes him is fair?
- What would the consequences have been if Ghost had been stopped by the police instead?
- What would the consequences have been if his mother had discovered the theft?
- What would have happened if Ghost had not been caught? Why might it have been better for him to get caught? What would his conscience be telling him?

♥ 2. Think about Ghost's relationship with his Coach/ team.

- When do you think was the turning point of the story that caused Ghost to trust his Coach?
- How are people transformed through their relationship with others?
- How do our personal experiences shape our view of others?
- What did Ghost bring to the Defenders and how did they influence him?
- If you could run, would you like to be part of the Defenders' team? Why?

3. Consider Ghost's dream to set a world record.

- Why do you think Ghost wants to set a world record?
- How do you think Ghost's fascination with world records began?
- How does the ideal of a world record show what type of person Ghost aims to be?
- Would you want to set a world record? Why? Does your reason relate to Ghost's?

♥ 4. Ghost mentions his community multiple times in his book.

- How does his thoughts about his community reveal what he thinks about himself?
- Why are some people ashamed about where they live? Should they be?
- Are you ashamed about where you live? If so, what would you do to change the environment? (Students should share only if they want to)

FACILITATION
BEST PRACTICES

Create a safe space to share opinions.

Don't fear silences. Give students time to think.

Validate students' responses with reflective listening.

Ask follow-up questions.

Keep the session engaging & fun.

STUDENT
FACILITATION

Let students take the lead!

Give students time to write down questions they wonder about the book. Then, give each student an allotted amount of time to ask their question(s) and facilitate the feedback from their peers.

- Can a community be all positive or all negative? Why? What are some pros and cons of Ghost's community?

♥ 5. Ghost changes throughout the story.

- Explain Ghost's changes from beginning to the end of the book. (emotions, actions)
- What caused Ghost to develop through the book?
- Who provided a steady place of comfort for Ghost? How did that person influence change in his life?
- Consider Ghost's past: Would Ghost be a different person if he didn't have to experience his father's absence at a young age? How?

WRITING PROMPTS

♥ 1. Identity in a Nickname

Castle gave himself the nickname Ghost. Which name suits him best: Ghost or Castle? How does his nickname connect with who he is? If you gave yourself a nickname, what would it be? Have others given you a nickname. If so, does it properly reflect who you are?

2. Bedroom Changes

Think about the importance of Ghost's bedroom throughout the novel and what it means to him. How does Ghost feel about his room at different points during the plot? Do you think his feelings change as the plot progresses? Using specific examples from the text, explain how the symbol of Ghost's bedroom shows the reader how he is feeling throughout *Ghost*? (pbslearningmedia.org)

3. Role of Running

The role of track plays a significant part in Ghost's life. Does Ghost use running as an escape? If so, from what? Using specific examples from the text, explain how running plays a different role in the lives of Ghost, Lu, Sunny and Patty.

♥ 4. Wear the Character's Shoes

Write a letter to Ghost explaining how you would have reacted to his father trying to hurt him and his mother. The letter should be heartfelt and show compassion and sympathy. Also, mention that you are proud of who he has become and try to connect with him through a situation you have experienced.

♥ 5. New Meanings

Ghost often associates bad memories with objects that have a different meaning to him. For example, sunflower seeds were eaten by his jail-ridden father, but is now a common connection between Mr. Charles and Ghost. Think of something you've given a new meaning. What did it mean to you before and what does it mean to you now? How has it changed your life?

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PROJECTS

Ghost's Roadmap

Materials Needed: Poster, coloring materials (markers, coloring pencils), ruler, construction paper, scissors, glue Instructions: Students will be creating Ghost's timeline on a roadmap (example picture listed below). Since students don't actually know this future they will have to predict who he will become. Students don't have to include dates, but have to label the time periods as past, present or future.

1. Draw a road (straight or curvy) on your poster; it must take up at least 50% of your poster.
2. Cut out squares of construction paper that will fit on the road; the number of squares must be more than four.
3. Write your events into the squares, making sure to label it past, present or future. Once you are done, put them in chronological order, following the direction of your roadmap.
4. Glue the squares of events on your road and make sure that the project is titled.
5. Decorate the background of your poster to limit the amount of white space with drawings that relate to the events, important words or even a quote. Be creative!

What a roadmap looks like: [roadmap](#)

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