

Education Guide for **RUNNING** by **Natalia Sylvester**

Comprehension Questions:

Before Reading:

- Have there been times in your life when you have used your voice to create change? When?
- What does privacy mean to you? Why is it important to you?
- When was the last time you participated in a form of activism specifically, and what was it? How did participating make you feel?
- What do you think are the most important issues facing the world right now? Do you think your parents would be concerned about the same issues, or different ones?

During Reading:

- Throughout the book, Mari reflects on how her dad is different at home with his family than how he is when he's presenting as a politician and public figure. How does Mari categorize and explain his differences at the beginning of the book? How does this change as the book progresses?
- Mari is a teenager, but she's subject to much of her private life being on display as the child of a presidential candidate. What do you notice about the way Mari reacts to having her privacy invaded during a political campaign?
- When the word progressive is used, Mari says, "I don't really go by labels" (page 184) and thinks to herself that she's still trying to figure out what she believes in. What do you think is useful about labels, and how can they sometimes miss the nuances of how people's values and actions align?
- How would you feel if you were in Mari's situation?

After Reading:

- Have you ever disagreed with your parents on politics? If so, how did you handle it? What do you think of the way Mari handled the situation with her own father?
- Mari undergoes an internal journey that ends with her overcoming her stage fright. What are ways you can think of to get involved or use a platform for good without necessarily having to speak in public?

- It's important to Mari's journey that she is too young to vote and finds other ways to use her voice. Can you think of other groups besides minors who are unable to vote, or who face barriers to voting?
- Did this book make you think about ways you can effect change in your community? If so, in what ways?

Follow-up Activities:

Based on the book, **CREATE** a list of ways that one can participate in activism. What do these opportunities for activism have in common? Reflect on what different types of activism have in common and the many ways that someone can effect change even if they are unable to vote or want to get involved beyond voting. What values do you think an activist has?

CREATE a space where you can share and express your own views and use your voice to stand for cause(s) you believe in. You don't need to share this space publicly, it can be anything from a blog to a video series to social media signs to in-person or virtual protests. Think about the cause(s) most important to you right now and consider how you might be able to effect change.

Further Reading:

If you liked *RUNNING*, you should try:

[*Banned Book Club* by Kim Hyun-Sook & Ryan Estrada](#) (YA)

[*Efrén Divided* by Ernesto Cisneros](#) (MG)

[*From the Desk of Zoe Washington* by Janae Marks](#) (MG)

[*Light It Up* by Kekla Magoon](#) (YA)

[*Moxie* by Jennifer Mathieu](#) (YA)

[*My Year in the Middle* by Lila Quintero Weaver](#) (MG)

[*One Crazy Summer* by Rita Williams-Garcia](#) (MG)

[*Punching the Air* by Ibi Zoboi and Yusef Salaam](#) (YA)

[*The Voting Booth* by Brandy Colbert](#) (YA)

[*This Is All Your Fault* by Aminah Mae Safi](#) (YA)

[*This Is My America* by Kim Johnson](#) (YA)

[*Yes No Maybe So* by Aisha Saeed and Becky Albertalli](#) (YA)