

Welcome to a new year of Girls Leadership Book Club for 2nd and 3rd grade girls! In this first meeting, your group will get to know each other (if you don't already), you'll pick a group name, and, most importantly, you'll share your thoughts about this month's book, *Izzy Barr, Running Star*.

For any newcomers (or anyone who'd like a refresher), let's go over the nuts and bolts of book club. Girls might want to read books independently, read to a grown-up, or listen as a grown-up reads the book to her. Any of those options are totally fine, as long as both the grown-up and girl read the book. In my experience, reading together provides the opportunity to discuss as you go, and can help some people feel more prepared for the group discussion. Even if you don't read together, it could be helpful to discuss prior to the book club meeting.

We do our best to select books that are well-written, age-appropriate, and thematically connected to the Girls Leadership mission. However, if the title we've suggested for the month doesn't work for your group for any reason, feel free to change it up. If you'd like ideas for other titles, you could check out the alternate titles we list at the end of every discussion guide, or look through the Girls Leadership book suggestions from other grades or previous years. You could also check websites like A Mighty Girl (amightygirl.com/books), or talk to your local children's librarian.

Most clubs meet in members' homes on a rotating schedule. Girl & grown-up pairs should take turns leading the meetings. This will involve choosing discussion questions to start off the meeting, drawing out quieter voices, and keeping an eye on the time. Don't worry too much if some participants are hesitant to share during this first meeting. Some people need one or two meetings to warm up.

This month, you might find yourself thinking back on a time when you, like our main character Izzy, had a hard time asking someone for what you wanted. Maybe you even said you wanted the opposite of what you really, in your heart,

needed. Many of us, young and old, struggle to find the words to ask for support and help.

You also might find yourself reflecting on the things in your life that make you feel most content, excited, and energetic. Izzy loves to play all kinds of sports. She has fun, feels successful, and pushes herself to be better all the time. What do you do to feel successful and have fun? Do you enjoy sports, too? Is there something you've been wanting to try but haven't yet?

On the following pages, you will find some suggestions for how your book club meeting might go. Feel free to use whichever of these questions and tips works for your club, and substitute as you wish. The best book discussions develop organically as people listen closely and respond to each other.

Munch 'n' Chat, 20-30 minutes

As grown-ups and girls arrive, think about allowing some time for snacking and introductions or catching up. Snacks don't have to be fancy; it can be as simple as a picnic blanket in the backyard, or sitting around the coffee table eating popcorn and lemonade.

Ice-Breaker, 10-15 minutes

Girls and grown-ups might ask each other questions, for example: **“What is one place in the world you would love to visit?”** Give five minutes for pairs discussion. Then, give 5-10 minutes for grown-ups and girls to introduce each other and share a bit about each other's answers. It might sound something like, “This is my mom. Her name is Shannon. She would love to go to Costa Rica because she loves hot weather, beaches, and nature.”

If this is your first meeting together, gather the group for a quick **Book Club Mad Libs** activity (download on the toolkit page). This will help get club members on the same page about expectations, particularly about privacy, and will also help you give your club a fun name.

Book Discussion, 30 minutes or so

You might decide to start the discussion with every member saying her favorite part of the book before reading discussion questions. Some groups might have time to get to all of these questions, but many groups will pick one or two questions and spend the whole meeting discussing those. Feel free to come up with your own discussion questions, or bring up any ideas that came up while you were reading.

- Why do you think Izzy likes playing sports so much? What does this tell us about the kind of person she is? What's something that *you* really love to do?
- What's Izzy's relationship with her half-brother like?
- How does Izzy feel when her dad doesn't make it to her softball game?
- Why do you think Izzy tells her dad not to come to field day? What does she hope will happen?
- Why do you think Izzy puts her brand new sneakers on the shoe tree?
- What are some ways that Izzy's friends support each other? How do you and your friends support each other?
- How does Izzy finally tell her dad what she needs? What do you think about that part of the book?
- Can you think of a time when it was hard for you to ask someone for what you needed? Did you figure out a way to ask? How did it go?

Leadership Goals, 15 minutes

Is there something you can think of that you would like to ask someone for? Perhaps you want to ask for more time to do something you love, or you'd like your teacher to help you with a problem. Whether or not you can think of something right now, try to make a plan for how you will find the courage to ask for what you need.

Participants can talk to each other in pairs or as a whole group. What are some strategies for asking for what you need? For instance, you might write down what you want to say first, or practice asking in front of the mirror. Consider setting a goal for the next month. Maybe you will ask for something you need three times. This goes for grown-ups, too! Report back to the club next month.

Closing, 5 minutes

Before everyone goes off their separate ways, make sure you've chosen a date for your November meeting. Happy reading!

Further Reading

If you really loved this book, and you'd like to read more books like it, here are some suggestions. If there are other books you would like to recommend, we'd love to hear them! Please share them on our **Girls Leadership Book Club Facebook Group**, so our community can keep growing our list of great titles.

Wilma Unlimited: How Wilma Rudolph Became the World's Fastest Woman by Kathleen Krull - This beautifully illustrated picture book tells the inspiring story of Wilma Rudolph's journey from polio to the Olympics.

The *Sylvie Scruggs* series by Lindsay Eyre is a series of short humorous chapter books about a sporty girl name Sylvie dealing with problems in sports and life.

The *Jake Maddox Girl Sports Stories* by Jake Maddox is a series of many short chapter books featuring girls playing all different kinds of sports, from baseball to basketball to ice hockey and horseback riding. Each one tells a fast-paced story having to do with a challenge in that particular sport.