

When life gets complicated, Jade’s instinct is to step away. Over the course of the story, her mom, mentor Maxine, and friend Lee Lee help her to understand that making things better requires hard work and determination. Walking away, quitting... those might be easiest in the moment but they won’t make anything better.

Jade takes their advice and begins to change her attitudes. When she has the opportunity to engage in challenging conversations about race with her friend at school, she does so. When she is disappointed about not being invited on a service trip abroad, she brings it up with her teacher. Most importantly, when she realizes that she’s not getting the support she needs from her mentorship program, she takes her concerns to the group leaders and helps to orchestrate a change.

The more she forces herself out of her comfort zone, the more confident she becomes.

It’s worth asking ourselves how we can push ourselves a little out of our comfort zones. It’s not necessary to “conquer our fears” before being brave. It’s just necessary to decide not to let fear and nerves get in our way. What is fear stopping you or your girl from doing? Raising a hand in class? Giving a presentation? Starting up a new club? Introducing yourself to someone new?

How might you do the thing that excites and interests you, anyway? How might you support your girl taking bold, brave action? The more we practice taking actions that scare us, the more our confidence grows, and the easier it is to be brave next time!

I hope you enjoy this month’s book and that your club’s conversation takes you in many interesting directions. I’d love to hear your thoughts on the Girls Leadership Book Club Facebook page! [bit.ly/GLbookFB](https://bit.ly/GLbookFB)

### **Munch ’n’ Chat, 20-30 minutes**

As grown-ups and girls arrive, allow some time for snacking and catching up.

### Ice-Breaker, 10-15 minutes

Imagine you are about to give a speech in front of a big audience. Someone impressive (perhaps Oprah?) is introducing you to the crowd, listing your most well-known and important accomplishments. What do you imagine she says?

Everyone pair up and tell your partner the one thing you would most like to be famous for and why. Then, if there's time, go around the group and give an opportunity for each person to "introduce" her partner and their famous trait. For example, you could say something like,

"Everyone, I'd like to introduce you to Shannon, the famous storyteller. Shannon is famous the world over for her stories, especially the ones for kids!"

### 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.

- How does Jade feel about the St. Francis School? Why was it so important for her mom that Jade get to go there?
- Why is it easier for Jade to be friends with Lee Lee than with the kids at her school?
- How does jade feel about being invited to participate in the mentorship program?

- What purpose does art play in Jade’s life? What do her collages say about her?
- What brings Sam and Jade together?
- Sometimes Jade feels that people - like Mrs. Parker and Maxine - want to make her into someone different than who she is. What does Jade want? Who does she want to be?
- How do you define yourself?
- What are the good things about the mentorship program? What are the negative/hard things about it? What made Jade decide to stay in the program?
- Jade tells Sam she’s disappointed about not going on the trip to Costa Rica, and she’s honest about her experiences with prejudice. Why do you think Jade has these uncomfortable conversations with her friend? How does Sam respond? Was there a time when you decided to be honest with a friend, even though the conversation was uncomfortable?
- How do you know which friendships are worth fighting for and when to walk away?

### Leadership Goals, 15 minutes

Since this is the last official Girls Leadership Book Club meeting of the year, it might be nice to take time to reflect on how the club went this year. Ask the girls to lead this activity. A few suggestions:

- Everyone could say what they enjoyed about book club this year, or her favorite book
- Everyone could name one new leadership skill she tried (or plans to try).
- Or, take inspiration from Jade and think of ways you could make book club even better next year. Remember that the only way anything gets better is when people do the work.

## Closing, 5 minutes

Make sure there's time for all the participants to thank each other for their commitment to having a wonderful book club this year.

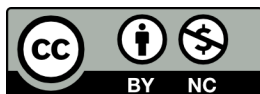
## Further Reading

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** [bit.ly/GLbookFB](http://bit.ly/GLbookFB) so our community can keep growing our list of great titles.

*The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas - Starr Carter lives in a poor neighborhood but attends an elite private high school. When her friend Khalil is shot, Starr has to figure out how to respond. If you haven't read this book yet, I highly recommend this powerful story.

*Watch Us Rise* by Renée Watson and Ellen Hagan - Friends Jasmine and Chelsea start a Women's Rights Club at their high school, but when their work attracts harsh criticism, the principal instructs them to quit. How far will these two young women go - and what will they risk - to make sure their voices are heard?

*Calling My Name* by Liara Tamani - Taja Brown is trying to figure out who she is, and who she wants to become. With all the people trying to tell her who they think she is, it's getting tough to hear the voice that matters most.



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