

BLUE Classroom Discussion Guide

Chapters 1 – 5

1. Blue begins the story rehashing all the “ifs” that led to her current situation and dreading the “ifs” she’s facing with Maya coming back to school. It’s natural to feel frustrated or anxious in this situation, but what are some ways Blue can redirect her thoughts in a healthier direction?
2. Devon tells Blue that no one gets to read his story until he “kills the villain.” What do you think he meant by that?
3. Blue has not visited Jack during his incarceration. Do you think Blue’s mother is justified when she pushes Blue on the subject? Why do you think it might be difficult for Blue to have to spend time with Jack?
4. What are some of the factors that are adding to Blue’s level of misery?

Chapters 6 – 10

5. Maya has essentially drawn a target on Blue and is determined to hurt her because she is hurting, and she can’t get to Jack. Blue wants to be a bigger person, but she struggles with the unfairness of not being able to retaliate the way she wants to. Have you ever been in a situation where you felt you were treated unfairly? Have you ever retaliated against someone who attacked you in some way – only to have it backfire?
6. Is there a better way that Blue could have handled the situation with Maya during the classroom fight?
7. Despite his optimistic attitude, Devon clearly has some demons of his own. What are some ways that Blue can reach out to him without making him feel like she’s prying?

Chapters 11 – 15

8. Maya discusses some of the struggles she’s had fitting in as a scholarship student at Audubon Academy. What sort of assumptions have classmates and teachers made about her? How do you think that affects her interactions with all of them?
9. Blue and Maya both have mothers that push them to do better, but not necessarily with the same motivation. What makes them different?
10. After Jack’s letter, Blue revisits the night of the accident. How do you think Blue got from initially being supportive to distancing herself from her brother? What needs to happen for them to reconnect?

Chapters 16 – 20

11. The death of Maya’s father set off a chain of events that affected her in addition to her grief. What extra burdens were added to her day-to-day life as a result of her father’s loss?
12. Blue’s best friend, Jules, has a lot of opinions—and they’re not always helpful. Do you think she’s really supporting Blue? Or is she doing more harm than good?

13. Blue offers to help Maya with the birthday party. Do you think she's doing it for Maya, or for herself?

Chapters 21 – 25

14. Blue won't use a favorite book for the book project because she likes to read romance novels. Reading can be a valuable form of escape, but does that make a book worthy of preservation? Why or why not?
15. Maya and Blue both reveal hidden secrets during their confrontation in the parking lot. For Maya, it seems she's got even more to deal with because of the fallout from the accident. What extra burdens does her father's secret put on Maya?
16. Blue's awareness of her own privilege begins to expand as she and Maya connect. What are some subtle and not-so-subtle things that give Blue an advantage in her life?
17. Devon seems to be avoiding Blue's questions about his life, and it all comes to a head on Valentine's Day. Do you think Blue had a right to demand that Devon share more about his past and his home life? Or should she have trusted him to share when he felt comfortable doing so?

Chapters 26 – 30

18. Blue takes a chance and reaches out to Maya about her father and his secret. Do you think she was out of line to make any comment on Maya's situation? Or did her vulnerability help the situation?
19. Maya repays Blue's advice with some of her own. How did Maya's insight into Blue's family situation change Blue's perspective? And how has Maya's perspective evolved as she's gotten to know Blue?
20. Jack made a poor choice that completely changed his life. How did the fallout of that choice affect everyone else?
21. Blue makes an effort to reconnect with her parents. Do you think they really want to be closer as a family? What sort of obstacles have kept that from happening?

Chapters 31 – 33

22. What do you think of Blue's selection for the book project? Why do you think the book was meaningful for her? What book would you choose to preserve?
23. Devon used his own grief as a way to empower his life. What new things did he try? What are some skills or habits you'd like to learn?
24. Grief processes differently for everyone. What are some of the differences between the way Maya and Devon have handled their own tragedies?
25. Blue starts the book in a very different place emotionally from where she ends. What were the key steps that moved Blue forward and out of her bubble of misery?