



Ghost

By Jason Reynolds

Read Together Guide

For Families, Friends, and Classrooms

About the Author and the Story

Book Summary

Running. That's all Ghost (real name Castle Cranshaw) has ever known. But Ghost has been running for the wrong reasons—it all started with running away from his father, who, when Ghost was a very little boy, chased him and his mother through their apartment, then down the street, with a loaded gun, aiming to kill. Since then, Ghost has been the one causing problems—and running away from them—until he meets Coach, an ex-Olympic Medalist who sees something in Ghost: crazy natural talent. If Ghost can stay on track, literally and figuratively, he could be the best sprinter in the city. Can Ghost harness his raw talent for speed, or will his past finally catch up to him?

Visit <http://www.jasonwritesbooks.com/> for more details.

About the Author

Jason Reynolds (born December 6, 1983) is an American author.

He 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 Mayland,, Reynolds found inspiration in rap and began 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. He published several poetry collections before publishing 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.

Ghost (2016) started his [New York Times best-selling](#) Track series, which later included *Patina* (2017) and *Sunny*(2018).

About Read Together Guides

Read Together Guides are meant to help young readers find ways to enjoy and appreciate literature. They are written not to address standards but to encourage readers to connect to a story's characters, understand the major themes, and think about how what they are reading relates to their own lives. Embedded in these guides are activities that ask readers to share their opinions but also evaluate the actions of the characters they are reading about. Many of the questions that are posed in these guides are meant to be shared and discussed with family members, friends, book clubs, or classmates. These guides are perfect to inspire a young reader during summer vacation or as a supplement during the school year. They also work well to guide Book Clubs or Library Reading Groups. Teachers may find them a welcome and enjoyable addition to their classrooms as well.

Visit www.readtogetherguides.com to find more guides and learn more about how to use these guides.



Before You Read

World Records

The main character in *Ghost* is a big fan of world records. With an adult's permission, go to <http://www.guinnessworldrecords.com/> and check out the world records there.

In the box to the right, write and then draw one world record that you think is amazing.

In the other box, write and then draw one world record that you think you could break if you practiced.

An Amazing World Record:

A Record I Could Break:

Nicknames

PART ONE: The main character chooses his own nickname, Ghost, based on an experience in his life.

Do you have any nicknames? Pick one and write a short explanation that includes who calls you that name and why they chose this nickname for you.

Your Nickname: _____

Who Calls You This:

Why Do They Call You This Name?

PART TWO: If you could pick your own nickname, what would you like others to call you? Why?

Your Chosen Nickname: _____

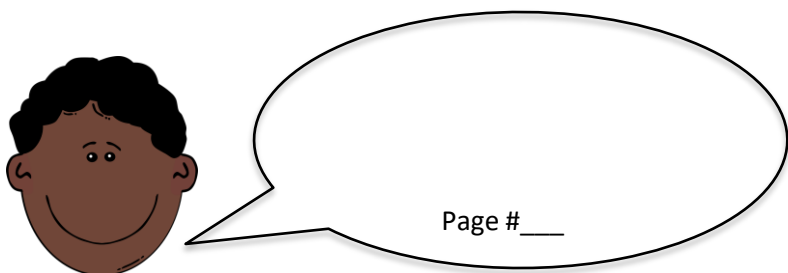
Why Do People Call You This Name?



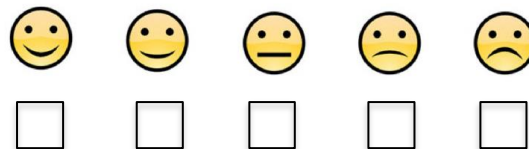
As You Read

CHAPTER 1:

The author writes this story as if he is actually talking to the reader. Find one sentence from the story that has a casual, conversational tone and write it in the speech bubble below.



Do you like the narrator of this story? Check the box under the emoji that best illustrates your feelings.



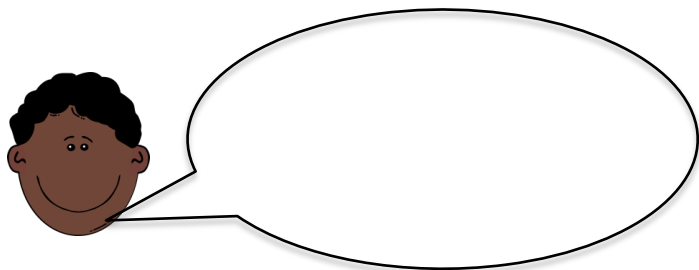
Pick on thing Ghost has said or done that led you to this rating.



What does fear feel like? Share your thoughts with an adult or friend.

CHAPTER 2:

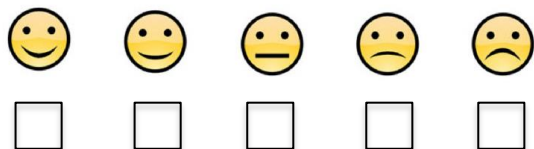
Why do you think Ghost decides to race Lu? In the speech bubble below, write as if you were Ghost explaining your decision.



Is there something you wish you were REALLY good at? Draw or write it in the box below.



Do you like Coach? Check the box under the emoji that best illustrates your feelings.



What qualities make someone a good coach? Share with an adult or friend.

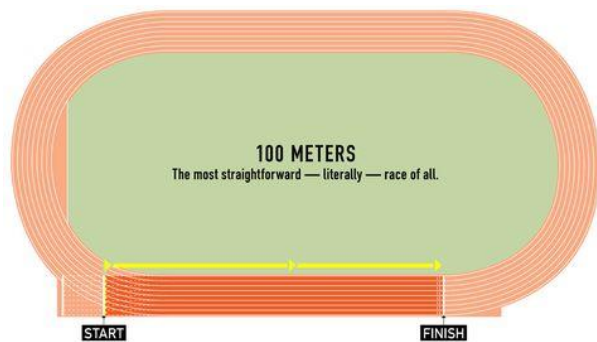
Pick on thing Coach has said or done that led you to this rating.



As You Read

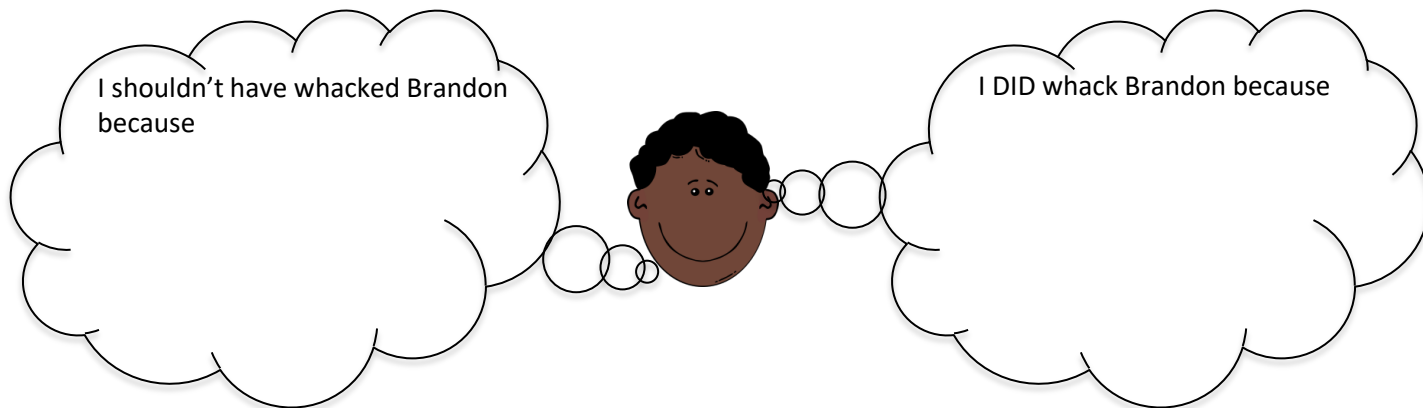
CHAPTER 3:

If you can, ask an adult to take you to a track at a school or a park nearby. Using the diagram at the right to help you, mark off one hundred meters on one side of the track. Ask an adult to time you as you run the 100 meters as fast as you can. Write your time in seconds on the line below.

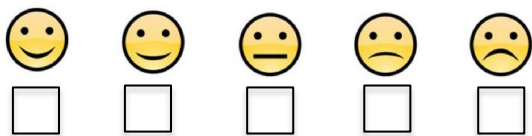


My 100 meters dash time: _____ seconds

In this chapter, Castle (Ghost) whacks Brandon across the head with a plastic tray after Brandon makes fun of him. Fill in the thought bubbles below with your thoughts.



Was Coach's punishment a good one? Check the box under the emoji that best illustrates your feelings.



On page 40, Castle says to his principal, "You ain't never been pushed before, to the point you just couldn't take it?"

How much can you relate to what Castle is saying? Mark your score with an X below.



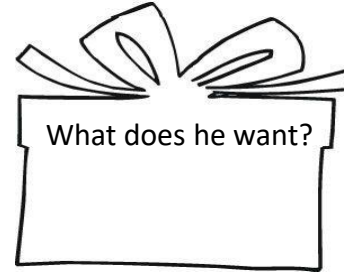
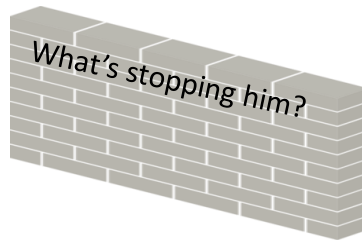
On page 51, Castle says, "I guess the only person I'm really scared of, maybe . . . is me." Can you be afraid of yourself? Share your thoughts with a friend or an adult.



As You Read



STORY CHECK: Fill in the graphic to show what Castle wants and what is standing in his way.



CHAPTER 4:

In this chapter, Ghost and Coach argue about whether Michael Jordan or LeBron James is the better basketball player. With an adult's permission, research a little about both of these players on the Internet. Fill in each basketball below with what you learn.



VS



Michael Jordan
Championship Rings:

LeBron James
Championship Rings:



Who would you choose as the better basketball player: LeBron or Jordan?
Share your thoughts with a friend or adult.

Do you think Ghost is making a good decision by cutting up his shoes? Check the box under the emoji that best illustrates your feelings.





As You Read

CHAPTER 5:

Ghost describes his legs as feeling if they had been “cut off in my sleep, stuffed with dynamite and hot peppers, and then reattached.”

Is this a good description? Why?

Can you relate to this feeling? Describe that time and why your legs felt like this.

Try to sketch this description in the box shown.



Stop at page 82

On page 82, Ghost says, “That’s when the best idea ever popped in my head.”

What has Ghost done so far to make you doubt him when he says this?



Stop at page 87

How do you feel about Ghost at this moment in this book?

Check with box you agree with more.

- Ghost should NOT have stolen the shoes.
- Ghost should NOT have stolen the shoes, but I understand why he did it.
- I’m not sure I understand why Ghost stole the shoes.



Have you ever been laughed at? Is there anyone you know who you think has NEVER been laughed at? Share your thoughts with a friend or adult.

Often, authors try to communicate a theme or message using characters in the story.

Read the statement made by Mr. Charles in the box to the right. Decide if you agree with it. Then, decide what you think the author might be telling his readers.



Don’t ever let someone call your life, your dreams, little.—Mr. Charles (page 92)

I agree

I disagree

I think the author is trying to tell readers that



What is trust? How do you decide if you trust someone? Share with a friend or adult.

Do you trust Mr. Charles? Mark your thoughts on the Trust-O-Meter.





As You Read

CHAPTER 5 Continued:

Why does Ghost panic when he gets locked in Mr. Charles's back room?

If you were to pick a color to describe his emotions at that moment, what would you pick? Color the head shown and then explain your choice.



Where do fears come from? Share your thoughts with a friend or adult.

CHAPTER 6:

On page 101, Ghost says that Coach having him do a long run on the day that he hadn't eaten and stole the shoes was just a coincidence.

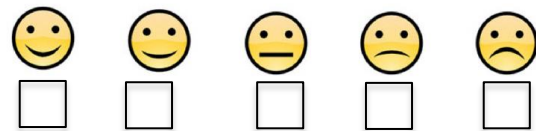
What is a coincidence?
Do you think this is really a coincidence?

Ghost says, "[W]ho really understands moms?"
Do you agree with this thought?

I agree I disagree

Think of something moms do that you don't understand.

After reading Chapter 6, how do you feel about Ghost and the decisions he's making? Check the box under the emoji that best illustrates your feelings.



Pick on thing Ghost has said or done that led you to this rating.

CHAPTER 7:



Why do some memories stay with us and others don't? Share with a friend or adult.

On page 119, Ghost talks about picking up Sunny on the "other side of town." What does he mean when he says this?

Do towns have dividing lines we don't see?

If so, who makes those lines?








As You Read

CHAPTER 7 Continued:

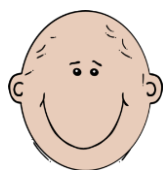
How has Ghost's relationship with these three other runners changed? Complete each statement with Ghost's thoughts.

When I first met Patina, I thought	Patina 	Now, I think Patina is. . . .	Lu 	When I first met Lu, I thought	Now, I think Lu is. . . .
		When I first met Sunny, I thought	Sunny 	Now, I think Sunny is. . . .	

Which of Ghost's three new friends do you like the most?

CHAPTER 8:

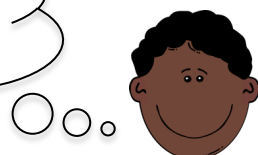
Why do you think Coach has the four new runners each share something personal about themselves? Fill in your answer in the speech bubble below as if you were Coach.



I wanted these kids to share something about themselves because

Why does Ghost feel good about sharing what he did? Fill in your answer in the speech bubble as if you were Coach.

I feel good about what I shared because





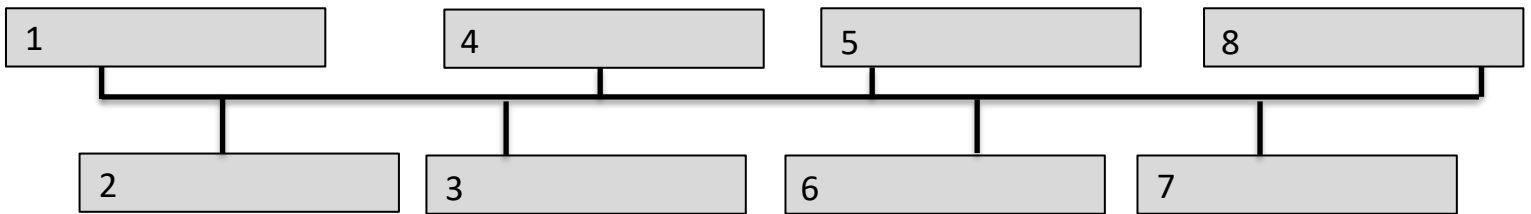
As You Read

CHAPTER 9:

On page 140, Coach orders the runners to act like a team. What does he mean?

What qualities do you think are MOST important for a team to be successful? Rank the following qualities by writing them on the spectrum below with the LEAST IMPORTANT on the left and the MOST IMPORTANT farthest right.

Friendship	Trust	Respect	Talent
Loyalty	Communication	Leadership	Cooperation



Does Ghost deserve the punishment that Coach is giving him for stealing the shoes? Mark if you agree or disagree and explain why you chose your answer.

I agree I disagree
I think this because

Do you agree with Ghost's reason for stealing the shoes? Mark if you agree or disagree and explain why you chose your answer.

I agree I disagree
I think this because

**[Y]ou can't run away from who you are, but what you can do is run toward who you want to be.—
Coach (page 155)**

I agree I disagree
I think the author is trying to tell readers that

This chapter is divided into roughly three scenes. For each of the three scenes below, find a color that you would use to describe that scene. Then, pick one word that you think captures the mood, or feeling, of the scene.



Color
Word:



Color
Word:



Color
Word:



As You Read

CHAPTER 9 continued:

In the diagram below, fill in what Ghost wanted to do, be, or get since the beginning of the book. Then, write in what he wants to do, be, or get now. Has it changed?



CHAPTER 10:

Why is Ghost now able to go into his room and remember the night that his dad chased him and his mom out with a gun without feeling fear?

Through the course of this story, we learned that Ghost lost his dad. But both Coach and Mr. Charles act like his dad at different times in the book.



Can a person have a father or a mother who is not related to them? Share your thoughts with a friend or adult.

Why do you think the author chose to have Brandon show up as a runner at the track meet?



PREDICT

What happens in the race?
What happens next?

How has Ghost changed in the story? Fill in the statements below from his perspective?

Before I met Coach and ran track,
I was



Now, I am

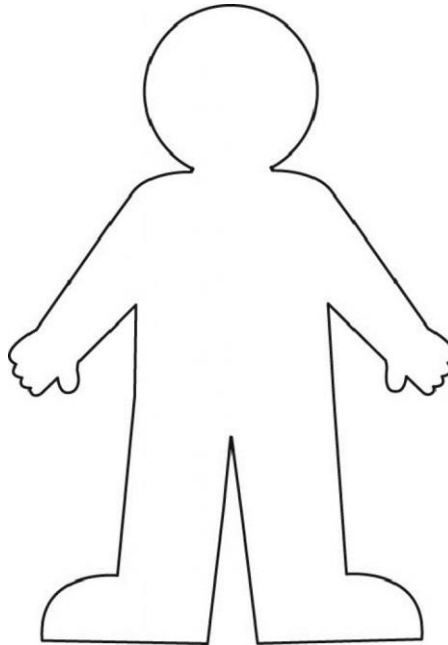


After You Read

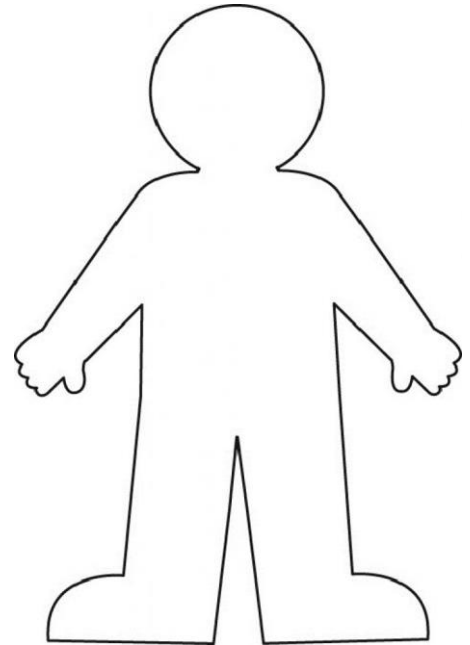
Who Are You?

When Ghost asks Coach what he thinks track can do for him, Coach says, **“Show you that you can’t run away from who you are, but what you can do is run toward who you want to be.”**

In the outlines given, draw or write something that shows who you are as well as who you want to be.



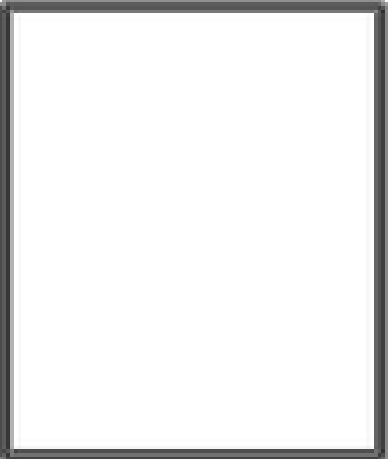
Who You Are



Who You Want to Be

Record Breakers

With an adult’s permission, use the Internet to search for a person who has broken a world record, either in sports or for Guinness World Records. Fill in the information below as you read more about them.

	<i>The facts:</i>
	Broke The World Record In
	Set A Record Of
	Trained For This Record By
	Is Amazing Because
	<i>By:</i> _____



After You Read

A “Newbie” Tradition

Coach invites all of his runners to dinner. Before they can eat, they have to share one thing about themselves that very few people know. Think about what you would have shared if you were at that dinner. In the dinner plate below, draw or write something that very few people know about you.

