

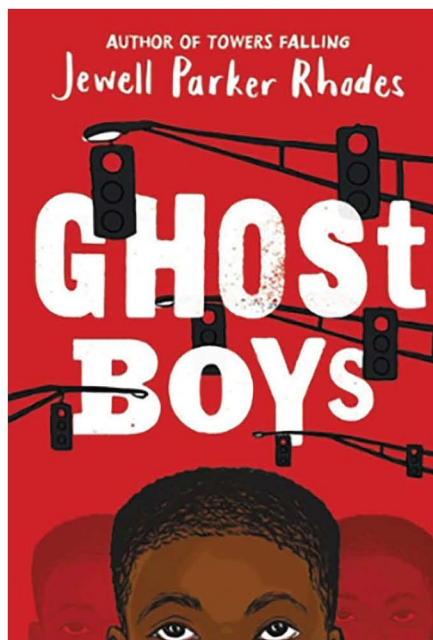
# Reading <sup>with</sup> Relevance<sup>®</sup>

Building INDEPENDENT READERS and THINKERS

YOUR STUDENT WORKBOOK FOR

*Ghost Boys*

A novel by Jewell Parker Rhodes



This workbook belongs to:

# About the Book

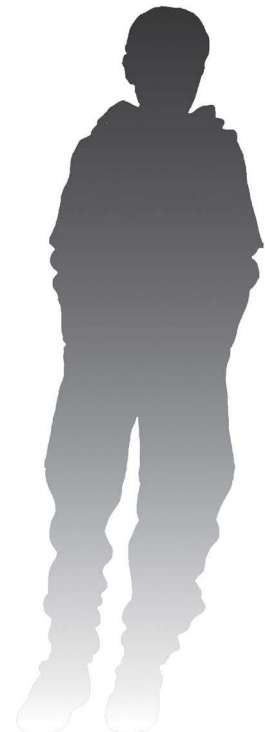
## *Ghost Boys*

### Story Summary

**Meet Jerome, a 12-year-old Black boy** who has just been killed by a White police officer, and bear witness to his powerful journey to understand his life and death. Follow along as Jerome meets and learns from the ghosts of other boys, like Emmett Till, who have lost their lives to racial violence, and explore his unlikely friendship with the only living person who can see him: the 12-year-old White daughter of the police officer. *Ghost Boys* pays thoughtful attention to some important social and emotional themes: systemic racism, telling one's story, police brutality, bullying, empathy, and understanding. You will find yourself relating to and being inspired by Jerome's journey to understand social injustice; this program will help you explore connections between Jerome's story and the injustices you've witnessed in your own life.

Dr. Jewell Parker Rhodes has written several young adult and middle grade books, including *Ghost Boys*, *Towers Falling*, and the Louisiana Girls trilogy *Ninth Ward*, *Sugar*, and *Bayou Magic*. She is the winner of multiple awards for children's literature. *Ghost Boys* was named #1 Kids' Indie Next Pick and a New Atlantic Independent Booksellers Association Book of the Year. She has also written six books for adults, including *Voodoo Dreams* and *Magic City*. She grew up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and now lives in San Jose, California.

### About the Author



# Session 3

## Theme: **Anger**

**Guiding Question:** What do you do when you feel angry? How do you process and cope with this feeling? How can anger be a catalyst for positive change?

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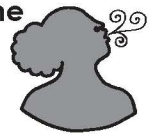
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## Vocabulary

Write a complete sentence for each of the following vocabulary words. Use the definitions provided to make sure you are using these words correctly!



**preliminary** (pg. 49): adj., introductory

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**clammy** (pg. 49): adj., sweaty

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**hysterical** (pg. 59): adj., very upset

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## Session 2 Recap

Jerome watches as his family reacts to his death: his sister reads, his father yells angrily, and his mother cries. His grandma is the only one who seems to sense Jerome's continued presence. Jerome meets another ghost, an unnamed boy, who tries to offer him some comfort. The story flashes back to describe the day Jerome met Carlos. Both Carlos and Jerome were easy targets for the bullies in their class. Jerome shows Carlos the best hiding spot in the school, but they are still found by Mike, Eddie, and Snap. In the fight that ensues, Carlos pulls out a gun.

# Read pages 49-70

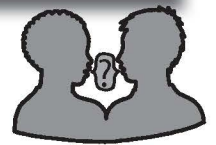


As you read, keep track of unfamiliar words, inspiring quotes, and questions you have.

**Reading Context:** Consider researching this social justice movement to learn more about their motivations and platform for action.

**Black Lives Matter** (pg. 52): Someone in the courtroom shouts "Black lives matter!" in support of Jerome and in memory of the other boys who have lost their lives to racial violence. The phrase Black Lives Matter can refer to both the social justice movement and the rallying cry of many Black people and allies fighting for justice.

## Discussion Questions



Write your response to each question below using a complete sentence.

- Do you think it matters if Officer Moore is sorry? Why or why not?

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- Sarah is the only living person who can see Jerome. Why do you think this is?

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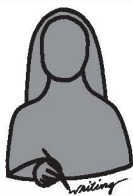
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- How does Sarah's perspective about the police differ from Jerome's? What do their identities have to do with this difference?

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Choose one of these prompts to respond to in at least one full paragraph of writing.

### ANGER

Jerome is angry. He is angry that his life was brought to such an early and violent end. He is angry that he is powerless to comfort his family in their grief. He is angry that Officer Moore lies at the preliminary hearing. And he is angry at Sarah because of her privilege, and her defense of her father's unjust actions.

**Write about a time when you felt angry about injustice.**

- » What happened to make you feel so angry? What was so unjust?
- » How did you respond to this feeling? What did you do about this injustice?
- » How can anger fuel us to make positive change in our lives and communities?

### PERSPECTIVE

At the end of today's reading, Sarah confronts her father about Jerome's death, asking him if it's true that Jerome was the same age and same height as her. Her father slams the door before she can ask if he made a mistake.

**How has meeting Jerome begun to impact Sarah's perspective on what happened?**

- » What must it have felt like for Sarah to confront her father about what happened?
- » What are the differences Sarah has seen between Officer Moore's story and Jerome's?
- » Jerome tells Sarah that his death was not a mistake, that Officer Moore killed him on purpose. Why does Jerome feel this way? What do you think about this?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Quote:

What this quote means to me:

Quote:

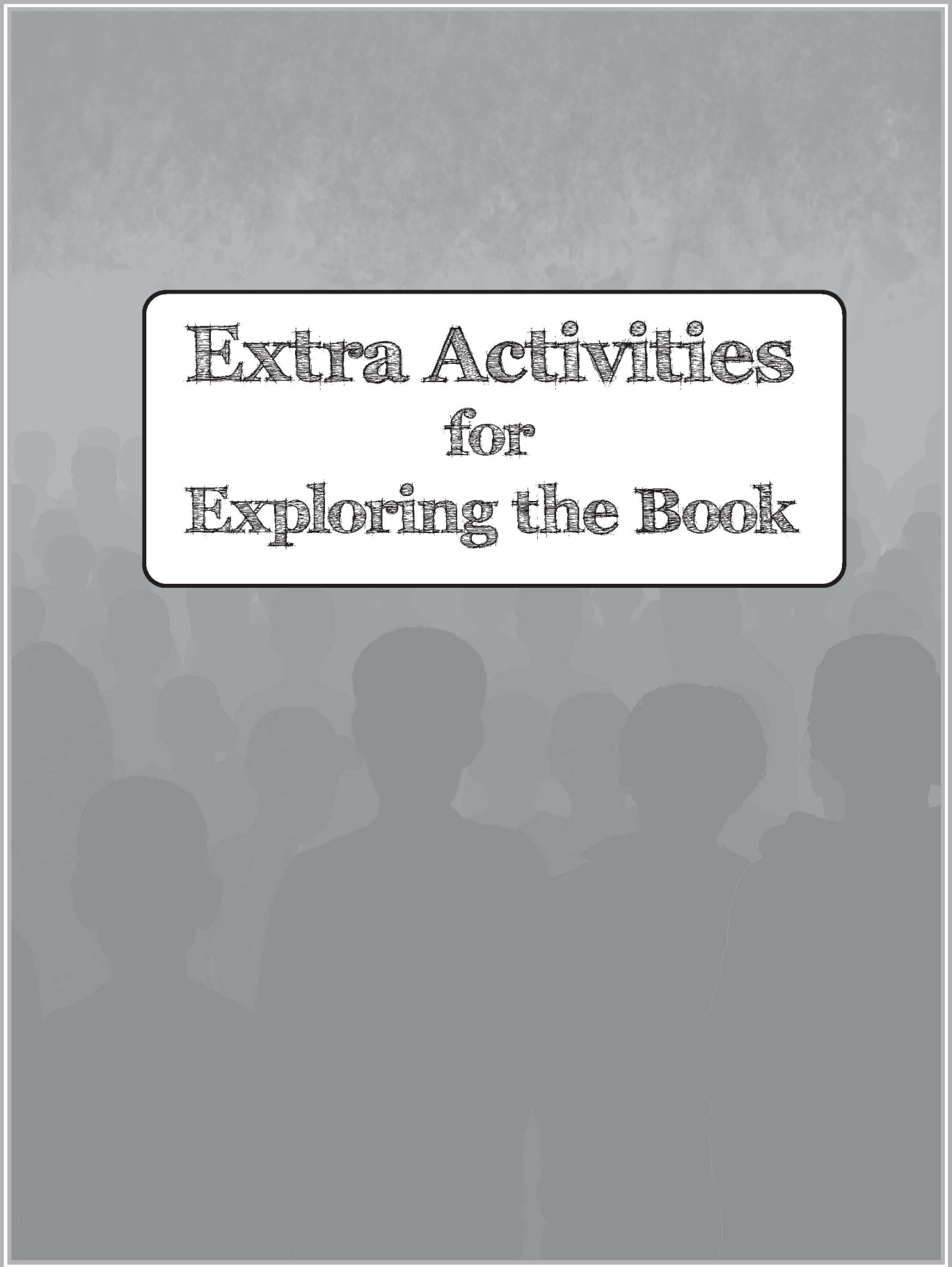
What this quote means to me:

Quote:

What this quote means to me:

Scan through the parts of the story you've read so far, and select three meaningful quotes from the text. Then, describe what each quote means to you, and how it relates to the book.

## Quote Connector

The background of the page is a grayscale image of a large crowd of people, mostly seen from the back or side, creating a sense of a large gathering. In the center, there is a white rectangular box with a thin black border and rounded corners. Inside this box, the title is written in a stylized, textured, hand-drawn font.

# Extra Activities for Exploring the Book

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Item Number	Item	Yes (0 points)	No (1 point)	Points (0 or 1)
1	When I go to the store, people believe that I am trustworthy and I will not steal something. People in the store do not follow me around.			
2	As a boy, I can play with dolls or as a girl, I can play with trucks without anyone questioning my choice.			
3	I can walk after dark in public places without fear. I am not taught to fear walking alone after dark in most public spaces.			
4	When I am taught about American history or about contributions made, I am sure that I will see and hear stories about people who look like me.			
5	The majority of the staff at my school look like me.			
6	My school has plenty of books in the library, computers for students, and additional resources for students and teachers.			
7	I will not be teased because of my last name.			
8	I am encouraged to excel in every subject in school.			
9	When a question about my race is asked, I am not the only one singled out to answer or speak my opinion.			
10	When I watch television, there are a lot of people in positive roles that look like me.			
11	My intelligence is not questioned because of the way I speak.			
12	Using public bathrooms and going up and down the stairs in public spaces are easy for me.			
		<b>Total Points</b>		

How did you feel about this activity?  
What emotions did you experience while responding to the prompts?

As you were reading the questions, can you think of other questions that should have been asked? Why do you think these questions should be included in a privilege survey?

How does your score compare to those of other students in your class? Why do you think the scores are different? What does this say about your own experiences with privilege?

*Ghost Boys* is about racism, and it is also about privilege. In this activity, you will have the opportunity to explore how privilege has impacted your own life and experience. Review the list of prompts; respond to each with a Yes or No, giving yourself a point for each Yes response, and adding up your point total after you've responded to all 12 prompts. Then, reflect on your experience by answering the guiding questions about the activity.

## Privilege

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

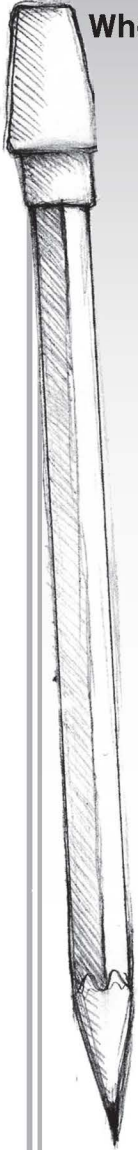
*Oscar Grant  
Michael Brown  
Philando Castile  
Freddie Gray*

*Eric Garner  
Tamir Rice  
Sandra Bland  
Alton Sterling*

*Breonna Taylor  
George Floyd  
Ahmaud Arbery*  
**Or  
select your own name**

**The person I chose is:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What I learned about their life and story:**



Jewell Parker Rhodes was inspired to write this novel after 12-year-old Tamir Rice was shot and killed in 2014 by police in Cleveland, Ohio. *Ghost Boys* tells the story of Jerome, but also of the many generations of Black people who have lost their lives to racial violence. In the book, Sarah's dawning awareness of racial injustice inspires her to research and learn more about this history, and in particular, the life and death of Emmett Till. Today, you will do your own research and writing to reflect on the life of a victim of racial violence.

## **Say Their Name**