

About RUN

Terrified of being targeted by bullies for being overweight, Lionel tries to go through Grade 8 attracting as little notice as possible. But he discovers something about himself: he's fast. And Lionel takes up running. That leads to joining a running group, and being recruited for the school track team. But being on the track team and getting more attention brings him closer to the bullies he's been avoiding, and makes him a target.

“Lionel’s stumbling steps will be an inspiration for anyone looking to start down a new path ... [his] determination to go the distance will inspire others to take their marks.”

—*Kirkus Reviews*

“A must-read for all.” ****/4

—*CM Magazine*

Nominated for the 2018 Red Maple Award

About DAVID SKUY

David Skuy is the author of award-winning books for young readers. His books focus on the issues young people face, and he uses sports as the vehicle to tell their stories. His work has included the Rocket Blues and Undergrounders series of hockey-themed novels, and the Striker series, which focuses on soccer. Skuy lives in Toronto.

Curriculum

Grade 5, 6, 7, 8 Health and Physical Education (Healthy Living, Living Skills)

Grade 5, 6, 7, 8 Language (Reading, Writing)

Student Objectives

After reading *Run*, students should be able to:

Grade 5-6:

- Use self-awareness and self-monitoring skills to help them understand their strengths and needs
- Make healthier personal food choices
- Explain how a person's actions can affect their own and others' feelings, self-concept, emotional well-being, and reputation
- Analyse texts and explain how various elements in them contribute to meaning

Grade 7-8:

- Assess the impact of different types of bullying or harassment on themselves and others, and identify ways of preventing or resolving such incidents
- Demonstrate an understanding of personal and external factors that affect people's food choices and eating routines
- Explain how stress affects mental health and emotional well-being, and demonstrate an understanding of how to use a variety of strategies for relieving stress and caring for their mental health
- Develop and explain interpretations of texts using stated and implied ideas from the texts to support their interpretations

Getting Started

1. Discuss with students what knowledge they may already have regarding anxiety and how bullying can affect how they feel about themselves.
2. Link mental health/emotional well-being with physical health.
3. Ask the students how much physical activity they get in a given day. How much time do they spend in front of a TV, computer, or other electronic device?

Discussion Questions

1. Should Lionel have ignored the things Brent said about him? (Page 12)
2. Which strategy to combat bullying do you think is more effective? (Page 22)
3. What can Lionel do to prevent himself from feeling anxious or overwhelmed? (Page 44)
4. What causes Lionel to be so hard on himself? (Page 59)
5. Lionel decides not to play video games or watch TV. Why? (Page 98)
6. Why does Lionel feel so guilty about cleaning out the room at Binny's Café? (Page 104)
7. How has Lionel changed since his first encounter with Binny? (Page 115)
8. Lionel keeps telling people he's not a runner, but runs almost every day. Why won't he let his friends call him a runner? (Page 119)
9. Why is the distinction between the way Nick acts with his friends and the way Afonso and Deepak act with each other important? (Page 125)
10. Lionel finally reads his story to his English class. He says it is for Kiana, but can you name some other reasons? (Page 136)
11. Why do you think Lionel "lets himself fall" and what makes him get back up? (Page 144)
12. Is Kiana right about Lionel being too modest? (Page 154-155)
13. Should Lionel have handled Nick's taunting at Rashmi's party differently? How so? (Page 159)
14. Georgina says she changed herself to fit in at her new school. Was this the right thing to do? (Page 172)
15. Why do you think Lionel believes Nick about the "bet"? (Page 180)

* Page numbers are in reference to the First Edition, ISBN 978-1-77086-488-7, published in 2017.

Class Activities

Grade 5-6:

- Have students form groups of two or three and list the skills or positive qualities that each group member possesses.
- Have students create goals for themselves and check in on their progress once a week.
- Discuss the various ways of dealing with bullying.
- Discuss Lionel's previous diet of burgers, pizza, and Coke. How does this affect his health? What happens after he starts eating healthier?

Grade 7-8:

- Have students discuss some of their personal goals and why those goals are important to them. How do they feel after accomplishing a goal?
- Have students compare Nick's "friendships" to Lionel's friendships and discuss why they are healthy or unhealthy.
- Discuss the impact that Lionel's father has on his self-esteem and self-worth. What are some ways that self-esteem and self-worth can be increased?
- Discuss what endorphins are, where they come from and how they affect a person's emotional state.