

This guide was created by Tracie Vaughn Zimmer, a reading specialist and the author of *Reaching for Sun*, from Bloomsbury Children's Books. Visit her Web site at [www.tracievaughnzimmer.com](http://www.tracievaughnzimmer.com) for hundreds of guides to children's literature.



Tr. ed. 1-4231-0032-8  
ISBN-13: 978-1-4231-0032-4  
\$15.99



**Jump at the Sun**

An imprint of Hyperion Books for Children/Disney Book Group  
114 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011-5690  
[www.jumpatthesun.com](http://www.jumpatthesun.com)



**TEACHER'S GUIDE**  
**JUMP AT THE SUN**

## About the Book

Queen is a royal pain in the neck! Her Highness treats everyone as though they were her loyal subjects. That's why all the kids hate her and why it's hard for her to make friends. To make matters worse, Queen knows that she is smart. But her teacher thinks she's a spoiled know-it-all, and that keeps Queen in hot water.

When a new kid appears at Queen's school riding a broken bike and wearing broken-down shoes, he immediately becomes the butt of everyone's jokes. Queen's parents insist that she be nice to Leroy, because history has never been kind to queens who forget how to be humble. But Leroy isn't just smelly; Queen thinks that he tells fibs, too—whoppers, in fact—and when he says he's an African prince from Senegal, sparks begin to fly. And Queen is determined to prove that Leroy is an impostor.

But Queen is surprised by what she learns from Leroy: what true friendship and happily ever after *really* mean.

## About the Guide

This guide includes discussion questions intended to be thought-provoking and to provide insight into the themes of the book, which include friendship, truth, growing up, the majesty of Africa, how to treat people, and family relationships.

## Prereading

What do you think the title means? Who do you think the queen might be?  
What do queens expect from their subjects and their lives?

## Discussion Questions

- 1 How does Queen get along with other children? Why? Would you want to be her friend? Why or why not?
- 2 What do the other children think of Queen? Why do they pick on her? Does she contribute to her own problems with her classmates and teacher? How?
- 3 Describe Leroy. How does Queen end up spending so much time with him at her house? Would you want to be friends with Leroy? Why or why not?
- 4 Where does Leroy say he's from? What other places does he describe? Do you believe his stories or not? Why?
- 5 Why do you think kids tease one another so much? Do they mean to be cruel or not? Does this kind of teasing happen at your own school? What do you do to avoid being teased? How can you help someone who is being picked on at school or home?
- 6 How do Queen's parents treat Leroy? Why do they treat him this way? Would you feel jealous if you were Queen? What do her parents hope to show Queen?
- 7 Who is Queen's best friend? Do you think Queen is a good friend to Symone or not? What makes someone a "best" friend? What big argument do the girls have? How do they work it out?
- 8 How do Leroy and Queen end up in the principal's office? What does Miss Sprits do? Do you believe Leroy's stories when you see the proof he shows everyone? Why or why not?
- 9 How does Symone's leaving really change things for Queen? What advice does Symone try to give Queen about friendship? Does Queen listen to her friend? Is it good advice?

- 10 Queen wants to reveal the truth about Leroy's fibbing. Why does this become so important to her? What steps does she take to prove that she's right?
- 11 Describe Queen's relationship with the adults in her life. How does she get along with her parents and her teacher, Mrs. McBride? Do you think treating Queen like royalty her whole life has been a good idea or not? What does Queen's mother try in order to teach her in the end?
- 12 What does Queen discover about Cornelius? How does this discovery change her perspective on other people and even herself? What does she learn?
- 13 How does Queen's friendship with Leroy change by the end of the book?



## Projects

### Reading

Fill out the following graphic organizer as you read the novel. As readers, we learn about characters by what they say, what they do, and the ways others treat them. Find specific examples to show what you know about them, and be sure to include the page number on which you found out the information.

	What they SAY	What they DO	How others treat them
Queen			
Leroy			

## Writing

Keep a journal as you read the novel in which you pretend that you are Queen. Write at least four entries and try really to sound as if you were Queen, reacting to the major events that happen along the way.

## Art

Create a collage inspired by the novel. Find, or create your own pictures from magazines, representing the main characters, their hopes, dreams, and fears. Explain your piece in a brief journal that you turn in with the collage.

## Drama

Queen's mother helps her act out and practice things Queen can say to other children to become their friend. As a class, or in pairs, brainstorm situations that are common in school, on the playground, or in the neighborhood.

Here are a few to get you started:

- Three girls are playing jumprope. How can you join them?
- Kids on the bus are teasing you about your new boots. What can you say or do to stop them?

## Music

Pick a piece of music for either Queen or Leroy. Explain why you think this song best fits their story. If you can, bring in the music or the lyrics, to share and then write a letter to the character explaining why you picked this song and why you think Queen or Leroy would like it.

## About the Author



**Sharon G. Flake** won the Coretta Scott King/John Steptoe New Talent Award for her first novel, *The Skin I'm In*, and is a two-time Coretta Scott King Honor Book winner. Beloved by children and adults, critics and booksellers, librarians and teachers, she is the author of a middle-grade novel and five books for young adults that have sold more than half a million copies. The mother of a college-age daughter, Flake writes full-time from her home in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

### Other Books by Sharon G. Flake:

- *The Skin I'm In*
- *Money Hungry*
- *Begging for Change*
- *Who Am I Without Him?*  
*Short Stories About Girls and the Boys in Their Lives*
- *Bang!*

