



# YOU SHOULD SEE ME IN A CROWN BY LEAH JOHNSON

## DISCUSSION GUIDE & CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

Liz has always believed she's too Black, too poor, too awkward to shine in her small, rich, prom-obsessed midwestern town. She hopes to become a doctor and has a plan that will get her out of Campbell, Indiana, forever. But when the financial aid she was counting on unexpectedly falls through, Liz's plans come crashing down . . .

A dynamic, funny, highly entertaining read placing a Black girl's experience at the heart of a traditional high school romance narrative.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. 'The place in which I'll fit will not exist until I make it' (James Baldwin)  
Leah Johnson uses this quotation at the beginning of *You Should See Me in a Crown*. Having read this at the beginning of the book, what do you expect for Liz's story?
2. Liz Lighty's town is obsessed with the tradition of prom, and students at Campbell County High School stage elaborate 'promposals'. How would you react to a dramatic promposal?
3. *You Should See Me in a Crown* 'celebrates the beauty of individuality' (School Library Journal). Do you agree? If so, what makes this book a celebration of individuality?
4. Campbell Confidential is a social media app used at Liz Lighty's school. Do you think Campbell Confidential is a force for good or bad? Would you use an app like this if it were popular at your school?
5. Liz's brother Robbie suffers with sickle cell anaemia, and they lost their mother to the same illness. Why do you think Leah Johnson chose to highlight this illness in *You Should See Me in a Crown*?
6. Who would you cast in a film adaptation of this book?
7. Consider Liz's relationships with other characters in the book, especially Jordan, Robbie, Mack and Gabi. What does this book teach us about friendship, family and love?

### CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

1. Britt designs eye-catching posters to support Liz's campaign for prom queen which includes an image of Liz holding her clarinet. Imagine you are running for prom king or queen and design your own poster – don't forget to include items that are special to you!
2. Search 'promposal' on Youtube and watch a few videos of these romantic gestures. Discuss how you would stage a promposal for a friend.
3. Jordan's girlfriend Emme is absent for most of the story, but returns during prom in the final chapter. Write a one-page story about prom from Emme's point of view.