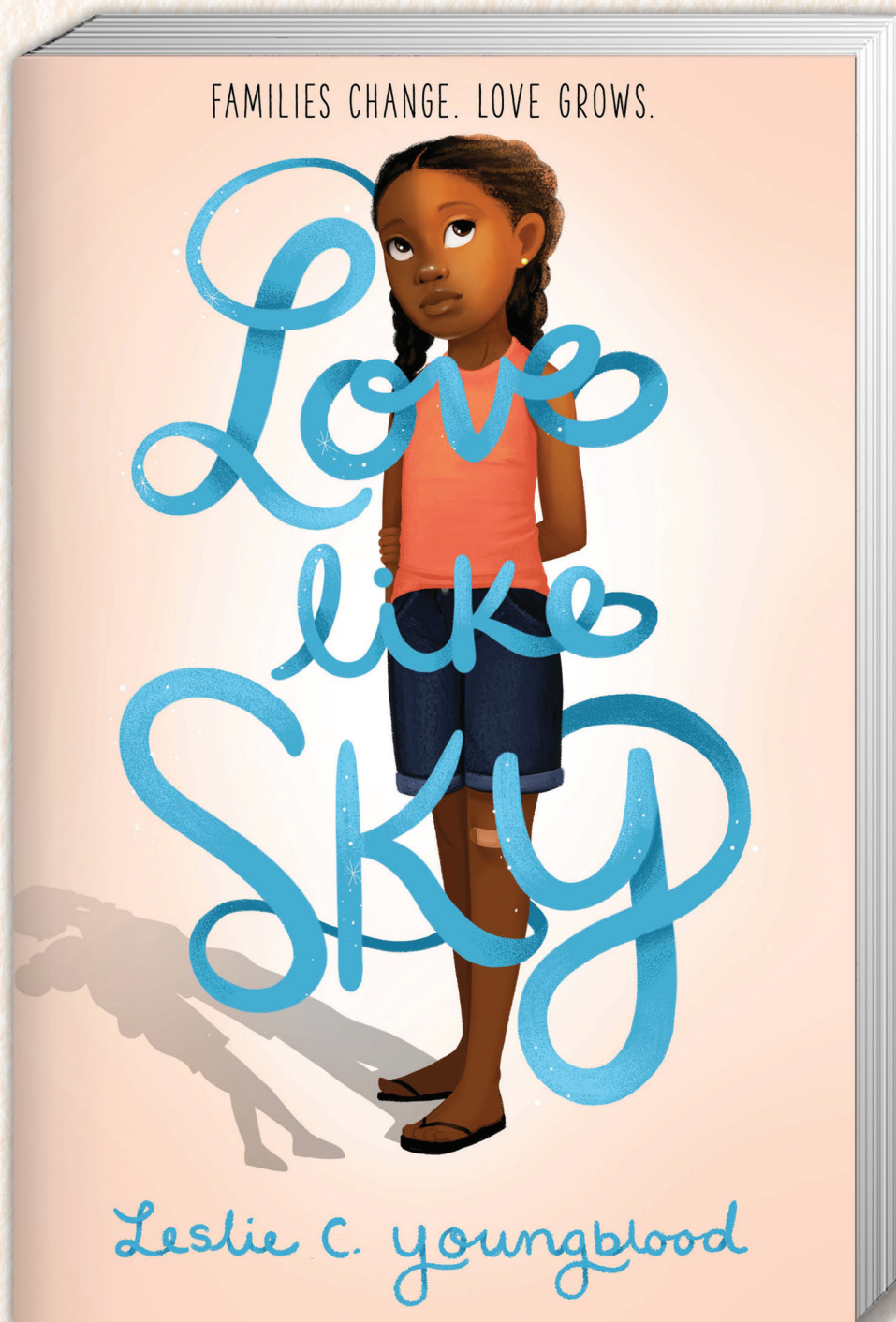


LITTLE, BROWN AND COMPANY BOOKS FOR YOUNG READERS  
classroom discussion guide | ages: 8–12





## before reading

1. What does it mean to be part of a family? Describe your family. Who are the members? What are the things that make your family unique and/or special? Traditions? People?
2. What is a “blended family”? What are the benefits and challenges of being part of a “blended family”? Can you think of ways your own family has changed over time (e.g., births, divorce, deaths, moves)? How did the changes make you feel? Why did they make you feel that way?

## while reading

1. Who are the members of G-baby’s family? How does each character embrace or struggle with being part of a “blended family”? Use story evidence to support your response. How is G-baby’s family similar to or different from yours?
2. G-baby is the narrator of the story; as you read, think about her perspective. What is her opinion of her family members and friends? How does her opinion influence the way characters or events are described? How might the book change if another character were the narrator? Use examples from the text to support your response.
3. On page 3, Peaches says, “Do you think Tangie don’t like us ‘cause her real sister’s in heaven?” How does G-baby respond to the question? What does G-baby think about Tangie? Based on the interactions, does Tangie dislike her new sisters? Why or why not?
4. When G-baby talks about love with Peaches, she explains, “It’s like sky . . .” (p21) What does this actually mean? Why is this phrase important to understanding the central message or theme of the book? Use evidence from the text to support your response.
5. What is your definition of “sisterhood”? What does it mean to be a “loving” or “good” sister? Is G-baby a good big sister? Why or why not? Is Tangie a good big sister? Why or why not? How does the relationship between G-baby, Peaches, and Tangie change throughout the chapters in the story? What events lead to the relationship changes? Use examples from the text to support your response.
6. Think about the chapter titled “‘Cause I’m Her Big Sister.” How does this chapter change the dynamic between Tangie and G-baby? How does the chapter contribute to the development of the story’s plot? Use story details in your answer.
7. Morgan is mentioned often in the text through references from other characters. What happened to Morgan? How did it impact her family? Why is Morgan an important character? What can the reader learn about sisters from Tangie’s account of Morgan? Provide textual evidence.
8. Throughout the book Tangie talks about protesting and Roderick Thompson. She says, “Something’s gotta be done. The unfair cops can’t win. For every case that makes the news, hundreds like Roderick’s don’t.” (p25) What does it mean to be “unfair”? Think about current events; why are unfair police a concern? How should people respond when they believe that something is unjust? Why?
9. Kevin understands the challenges of sick family members. What difficulties does Kevin face with his mom? How does he deal with the issues? How do other characters in the book respond to family health struggles (e.g., Alzheimer’s, meningitis, asthma)?
  - a. When G-baby is worried about Peaches, Tangie says, “You’re praying and thinking about her every day, right, Georgie?,” to which the nurse responds “That’s the best medicine.” (p108) Do you agree? In what other ways does G-baby want to help her sister? How can we help loved ones when they aren’t feeling well?



10. Mama once told G-baby that a best friend is “a relative that you make for yourself.” (p160) Do you agree? Why or why not? What makes the friendship between Nikki and G-baby special? How are the girls similar? How are they different? What types of tensions occur between them? Use examples. What types of issues arise in your friendships? How do you resolve those issues?
11. Nikki believes that Lucinda is not a bully and frequently argues on her behalf. On page 145, she says, “I ain’t never heard of Lucinda taking anybody’s lunch money, or beating up nobody.” In what other ways can someone bully? Describe types of bullying. Based on Lucinda’s actions, is she a bully? Why or why not?
12. Peaches worries, “. . . everybody was getting along ‘cause I was sick. And that it wouldn’t stay that way.” (p294) How does G-baby respond during the conversation? Should G-baby share her concern? Why or why not?

### after reading

1. Think about the story. What are the specific challenges between Mama, Frank, Daddy, Millicent, Grandma Sugar, and Tangie? How do they help one another in times of difficulty? How did the events in each chapter bring the family members together? Provide textual evidence.
2. A theme is an important message or lesson that the reader can learn from reading a book. There are many themes in *Love Like Sky*. Based on the events, what is the most important theme from the story? Why? Which details from the story support the theme?

### about the book



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HC 978-1-368-01650-6  
Also available in ebook

“Love ain’t like that.”

“How is it then?” Peaches asked, turning on her stomach to face me.

“It’s like sky. If you keep driving and driving, gas will run out, right?”

“That’s why we gotta go to the gas station.”

“Yep. But have you ever seen the sky run out? No matter how far we go?”

“No, when we look up, there it is.”

“Well that’s the kind of love Daddy and Mama got for us, Peaches—love like sky.”

“It never ends?”

“Never.”

G-baby and her younger sister, Peaches, are still getting used to their “blended-up” family. They live with Mama and Frank out in the suburbs, and they haven’t seen their real daddy much since he married Millicent. G-baby misses her best friend back in Atlanta, and is crushed that her glamorous new stepsister, Tangie, wants nothing to do with her.

G-baby is so preoccupied with earning Tangie’s approval that she isn’t there for her own little sister when she needs her most. Peaches gets sick—really sick. Suddenly, Mama and Daddy are arguing like they did before the divorce, and even the doctors at the hospital don’t know how to help Peaches get better.

It’s up to G-baby to put things right. She knows Peaches can be strong again if she can only see that their family’s love for her really is like sky.

*continued on next page . . .*



## praise for the book

A SIBA 2018 Fall Okra Pick  
A Kirkus Best of 2018 Book  
A 2018 Indies Next List Selection  
A 2019 Bank Street College of Education Best Book

"Brims with **charm** and **compassion**." —Vashti Harrison,  
*New York Times* best-selling author of *LITTLE LEADERS*

★ "Youngblood's debut is a **celebration of intergenerational family bonds**. Readers in co-parenting or blended families especially will relate to the conflicts between Georgie's loving but imperfect parents. **An openhearted, endearing, and unforgettable debut** about the challenges of friendship, growing up, and the boundless love of family." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"**Readers will fall in love** with Georgie and her 'blended-up' family as they navigate tough challenges and new family dynamics." —*School Library Journal*

"Using **beautiful** prose, Youngblood's debut explores the expansive love only siblings can have for one another, while capturing the heart and soul of what it means to be a blended family. The multilayered characters and compelling story will resonate with readers... Young readers will fall in love with these characters and gain a **new favorite author**." —*Booklist*

"Youngblood gives G-Baby's narration energy and detail, and her desperate longings for approval... are vividly and authentically preteen... The **warm and committed**... African-American family is good literary company, and **readers may hope to see more adventures from G-Baby**." —*BCCB*

## about the author



**Leslie C. Youngblood** received an MFA from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. A former assistant professor of creative writing at Lincoln University in Jefferson City, she has lectured at Mississippi State University, UNC-Greensboro, and the University of Ghana at Legon. She's been awarded a host of writing honors, including a 2014 Yaddo's Elizabeth Ames Residency, the Lorian Hemingway Short Story Prize, a Hurston Wright Fellowship, and the Room of Her Own Foundation's 2009 Orlando Short Story Prize. In 2010 she won the Go On Girl! Book Club Aspiring Writer Award. Born in Bogalusa, Louisiana, and raised in Rochester, she's fortunate to have a family of natural storytellers and a circle of supportive family and friends. *Love Like Sky* is her debut novel.