

Marshmallow and Jordan
Discussion Guide
Grades 4-6

Before Reading: to activate schema, build background knowledge, and set a purpose.

- Before reading, have a class discussion to activate prior knowledge about Indonesia and Hindu folklore
- Frontload vocabulary (see vocabulary list)

During Reading: to engage students, check for understanding, and make connections.

- Why did Jordan have to coach the team instead of play?
- Why did Jordan take the elephant home?
- How did Jordan come up with the name Marshmallow?
- How did Jordan's grandma convince her parents to keep Marshmallow?
- Why did Jordan's friends think she was acting differently?
- What influence does Jordan have over Marshmallow?
- How was the accident changed things for Jordan?
- Why can't Jordan play at regionals?
- What did Marshmallow do for Jordan? What clues did the author give us?
- How did Marshmallow's actions impact Jordan's ability to play?
- How did her friends make it so they were all on an even playing field?
- What solution does the coach propose for Jordan?
- How did the water polo team welcome Jordan?
- How does the water polo team view Jordan?
- How does the basketball team feel when Jordan starts spending more time with the water polo team?
- How does Kamala treat Jordan at practice?
- Why does the basketball team ignore Jordan?
- What do you think Jordan will do to repair the relationship?
- How does Jordan feel after overhearing the bathroom conversation?
- What do you think Jordan will do from the conversation?
- How did Lynn change things for Jordan?
- How does Jordan's basketball friends help her?
- Describe what happened at the water polo game?
- What was Dea's plan?
- How does the drought affect each of the girls?
- Why did Marshmallow have to go home?
- How did Marshmallow fix the drought?

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After Reading: to summarize, question, and reflect.

- What's Your Problem*: Finding the problem through story elements and how the characters surrounding influence the problem. There could be more than one problem based on the connections.
- How did Marshmallow help keep Jordan's spirits up? Did you know there was anything special about Marshmallow? What clues did the author give us?
- Why is Kemala unkind to Jordan initially?
- How are water polo and basketball similar? How are they different? What skills did Jordan already have that indicated she might excel at water polo?

If your students enjoyed this book...

- Encourage them to continue to discuss it and refer to it in other lessons and conversations.
- Let them explore more about the topic by reading other books with similar themes, structure, characters, or content.