

MARK MY WORDS

A celebration of Black authors,
selected by Universal Music Group
and The Reading Agency.

Children's Activity Pack

Explore the titles and borrow the books.
Dive into history, head on an adventure,
or get lost in a mystery!



Ace of Spades


By Faridah Àbíké-Íyímídé

Niveus Private Academy is an elite school for the wealthy and privileged. A social media campaign is being undertaken to reveal some of the darkest secrets of two of the academy's students, Devon and Chiamaka. Who is it who holds the aces and who will the winners and losers of this deadly game be?

- 1. How do you think it feels for Devon and Chiamaka being the only Black students at Niveus Private Academy? How does each character cope with this?**
- 2. Which characters do you think are most and least trustworthy in the book and why?**
- 3. 'With a lot of power comes great responsibility.' (p13) What responsibilities do you think come with power? Which characters in Ace of Spades do you think hold power? What power do they hold and do you feel they use it responsibly?**

'In this Kingdom the queen doesn't inherit the crown to get to the top, she destroys whoever she needs to.' (p21)

- 4. Do you think power always comes at the expense of other people? Who does Chiamaka destroy in order to inherit her crown? 'No one asked for my permission before leaking my life to the world.' (p340) Information is very important in the book. Why do you think Chiamaka is able to be more open about her sexuality than Devon? Hold a debate with friends or classmates where you discuss:**
 - a.** What information you feel happy for people to know about you. Is there anything you want to keep private?
 - b.** Do you think it is important for people to consent to giving information about themselves?
 - c.** What are different ways in which information can be communicated to others?

- 5. 'I think about how many Black spirits have been killed by white supremacy...' (p469)**

Investigate and find out more about a Black spirit who has been killed by White Supremacy. Who have you chosen, what did they do and what happened to them?

- 6. What do you understand by the term systemic inequality which is used in the book?**
 - a.** What examples of this can you find in Ace of Spades?
 - b.** Looking at these examples, who is empowered by these systems and who is disempowered?
 - c.** Can you think of any examples of systemic inequalities in everyday life?
- 7. 'Our aim is to reform all the systems, starting with education.' (p464)**
 - a.** How do you think systems can be reformed?
 - b.** Do you think education is a good place to start? What are the reasons for your answer?

- 8. Write a script or storyboard for a promotional video to act as an advert for Niveus Private Academy. What do you think the main selling points of the Academy would be and who do you think their target audience would be? You might like to act this out and record it.**
- 9. Can you think of examples where social media has been used for good and for bad? What role do you think it can play for marginalised communities?**

If you have enjoyed reading *Ace of Spades*, you could try these other books:

If you enjoyed the use of social media in the book, you might like to try *On the Come Up* by *Angie Thomas* which explores the aftermath when a song has gone viral. For another character-led story based around a school community, you could try *Liccle Bit* by *Alex Wheatle*.

You might also enjoy the thriller, about a Black homecoming queen, *The Black Queen* by *Jumata Emill*. To find out more about systemic inequalities, read the unflinching verse novel, *Punching the Air* by *Ibi Zoboi* and *Yusef Salaam*. Another powerful verse novel about self expression is *The Poet X*, by *Elizabeth Acevedo*. You can discover more about Black History through music in *Jeffrey Boakye's* fascinating book *Musical Truth*.

