

### ***The Stars and the Blackness Between Them Discussion Questions***

1. Queenie and Afua act as guides for the main characters. Recall a time in your life where you were supported and guided by someone older. What did they teach you? What lessons can the adults in your life take from this book?
2. Sources of healing take many forms in the book: nature, foods and music, to name just a few. How do these types of healing help Audre and Mabel ease and survive their experiences of trauma? What healing practices are important to you and your community?
3. Afua experiences his last moments of being a human on Coney Island in handcuffs, surrounded by armed guards. He represents one of millions of people who live their lives behind bars in America, a population that is disproportionately Black. What are your thoughts on incarceration in the US? What is the role of our justice system?
4. Audre's mother is not accepting of Audre's queer identity. What impact does her mother's reaction have on Audre? What is a time that beliefs associated with your culture(s) were at odds with your identity?
5. What was the author's intent for Afua and Mabel at the end of the book?

*These questions were inspired by the educator guide shared by Penguin and the Great Stories Club discussion questions published in partnership with ALA.*