

## COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS AND RESPONSE JOURNAL TOPICS

### CHAPTER ONE:

1. Picture Winston in your head. What words (adjectives) would you use to describe him? For each adjective, tell the event in the story that made you describe him this way.
2. List the reasons you think Winston has for running away.

Response Journal Topic:

In what ways is Winston similar to or different from you?

### CHAPTER TWO:

1. What do you notice about the way Winston's mom and dad speak to each other?
2. Winston's mother asks his father to take him for a few days. What is Winston's father's reaction to this?
3. What does Winston mean when he says, "It seemed like my mom was working hard to get rid of me, while my father was working just as hard not to take me. It felt special to be so wanted"?

Response Journal Topic:

Think of a situation where you felt you weren't wanted. Describe how it made you feel.

### CHAPTER THREE:

1. Winston is annoyed and doesn't want to speak with his father. His father says, "Then it's probably wise to stay quiet." Why would this be good advice for Winston to follow?
2. How would you describe Winston's father? Why would you describe him this way?

Response Journal Topic:

What advice would you give to Winston about how to deal with his father?

### CHAPTER FOUR:

1. Winston's father tells him that "the only people who don't make mistakes are those who are too timid to try new things. Stay bold, take chances . . . Little people make little mistakes. Big people make big mistakes." Do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answer.
2. When his father leaves to go for a drink, Winston says, "I'll take care of myself. I'm good at that." In your opinion, what do you think Winston means?
3. What does Winston consider doing when his father leaves to go for a drink? How does Winston think his father would react if he did it? Why would Winston want his father to feel this way?

Response Journal Topic:

Describe a time when you were upset about something and wanted to make someone else feel bad too. Why do you think you wanted to do that even though you knew it wasn't a very nice thing to do?

## CHAPTER FIVE:

1. When Winston's father tells him about the story he is going to cover, Winston is surprised at what Terry Fox is attempting to do. Explain why he is surprised.

### Response Journal Topics:

1. Winston's father does not think that Terry can run across Canada. Do you believe that he can? Why or why not?
2. Describe a time when you decided to try something that others thought you would not succeed at. Did their opinion make you change your mind?
3. Winston's father plays Frank Sinatra's music in the car. Winston hates it. Give an example of something that you like that your parents don't.

## CHAPTER SIX:

1. Explain what Terry means when he says, "I had to convince myself [the Marathon of Hope] was possible before I talked to anybody else about it."
2. What is the difference between a victim and a survivor? Look both words up the dictionary and write their definitions in your own words. Why is Terry annoyed when Winston's father calls him a victim?
3. In what ways do you think running across Canada could help those who have cancer?
4. When Winston's father asks Terry why he is running across Canada, Terry says, "By running like this I let people know that cancer can be beaten . . . that life can go on . . . that you define people by their ability and not their disability."

Look up the word *disability* in the dictionary. Define *disability* in your own words. In your opinion, why does Terry want people to recognize his abilities and not his disability?

### Response Journal Topics:

1. Running across Canada is not an easy thing to do. Terry explains that he didn't wake up from his surgery with the ability to run a marathon every day. He first had to learn how to walk with crutches, then a cane, then with an artificial leg. When he started running, it was only one lap at a time on a track, and even that was hard. Before starting the Marathon of Hope, he trained every day for fourteen months. Compare Terry's struggle with a time when you tried to do something that was hard. Did you refuse to give up like Terry?
2. Terry's best friend, Doug, immediately agreed to put his life on hold to help Terry with the Marathon of Hope. Describe a time when you did something that was more than what was expected in order to help a friend in need.
3. Imagine you are a reporter like Winston's father and you were asked to interview Terry Fox. List the questions you would have asked him.

## CHAPTER SEVEN:

1. Winston asks his father if he has changed his mind about whether he thinks Terry will be able to run across Canada. His father believes that there is a chance Terry will succeed. He says, "There's something in that kid's eyes." Describe what you think Winston's father sees in Terry's eyes.
2. Winston's father speaks honestly to Winston about what kind of a father he thinks he's been. What clues does this give you about why Winston has been running?

Response Journal Topics:

1. What kind of a person do you think a hero needs to be? List six adjectives that could describe a hero.
2. Winston's father is writing another article about Terry. Imagine you are a reporter. Write a paragraph describing what you've seen and learned about Terry Fox and the Marathon of Hope.

#### CHAPTER EIGHT:

1. In Winston's father's article, he writes, "If you look at him—and you have to look very closely—you can see a slight twinge on his face when that artificial leg hits the ground. I know it must hurt. I also know he doesn't want people to see that in his face." In your opinion, why doesn't Terry want people to see that he is in pain?

Response Journal Topic:

Winston's father writes, "He's a hero. Terry would tell you different. He'd tell you he's no hero. I'm telling you he is." Do you think that Terry is a hero? What makes you believe that he is or is not?

#### CHAPTER NINE:

1. In his article, Winston's father writes that Terry is a hero, but he is not really sure that he is. Doug explains to Winston's father that at the end of every day Terry marks the spot where he stops with a plastic bag held down with a rock. One time the bag could not be found and Terry ran an extra three miles. Explain in your own way what this says about Terry's character. Do you believe this will change Winston's father's opinion of Terry?
2. Winston's father is skeptical about what Terry is doing in the Marathon of Hope. Look up the word *skeptical* in the dictionary. What does *skeptical* mean? Write the definition in your own words. List the reasons Winston's father gives for being skeptical of Terry.

Response Journal Topic:

Winston's father has a hard time believing that Terry is completely honest about what he is doing. Describe a time when someone questioned your honesty or your intentions about something you were doing.

#### CHAPTER TEN:

1. Terry asks Winston whether his school gives him extra work when he is away. Winston says no and hopes that Terry will drop the subject. He doesn't want to tell Terry that he was suspended. "It wasn't something that I was proud of." How does that tell you that he is beginning to change?
2. When Terry shows Winston his artificial leg, he explains that many years ago an amputee could not have done what he is doing because artificial legs were heavy and awkward. Terry says, "I think that people didn't even consider that somebody could lose a leg and still want to be athletic, want to play sports and compete." This is a preconception that is common about people who have disabilities. Look up the word *preconception* in the dictionary. What does it mean? Write the definition in your own words. Explain how Terry was changing this preconception.
3. In grade eight Terry made the basketball team. Why was this a really hard thing for him to do? Look up the word *determined* in the dictionary. What does it mean? Write the definition in your own words. How does making the basketball team show you that Terry is a very determined person?
4. What do you think Winston means when he says, "I realized what [Terry] was staring at when he was running—he was seeing the other side of the country"?

Response Journal Topic:

Describe an important goal of yours that you can see yourself accomplishing even though you are still working toward it.

CHAPTER ELEVEN:

1. Doug does a lot more than drive the van for his friend Terry. List a few of the things that he does to help Terry with the Marathon of Hope.

Response Journal Topic:

Describe a time when a friend of yours did something extra special for you.

CHAPTER TWELVE:

1. When Winston misses the net while playing basketball with Terry, he blames the ball and the net. In response to his excuses, Terry says, "A poor workman blames his tools." Explain what you think Terry means by this.

Response Journal Topic:

While playing basketball, Winston accidentally knocks Terry over. After this, Winston backs off a bit and allows Terry to score a basket because he is afraid he will do it again. Terry wants to be treated equally. He says, "You should play to win. I'm playing to win." Describe a time when you were not treated equally. How did it make you feel?

CHAPTER THIRTEEN:

1. Winston's father believes that Terry's story is becoming less interesting and that it won't become really big until he stops running. Winston defends Terry by expressing his faith in him. "They should want to read about it. What he's doing is important! He's going to do it," he tells his father. How do these statements show that Winston is changing?

Response Journal Topic:

Describe a time when you stood up for a friend and defended him or her against things that others were saying about that friend.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN:

1. Terry and Doug are fighting and this worries Winston. What does Terry tell Winston about his friendship with Doug to try to make him feel better?
2. Winston's father asks Winston to keep his eyes open for any "interesting" information about Terry and Doug that he can make into a story. Doug asks Winston to keep a secret about Terry's leg bleeding and how it hurts when he runs. Winston promises not to tell. Predict whether or not Winston will keep his promise. Defend your prediction.

Response Journal Topic:

Describe a time when you were asked by a friend to promise to keep a secret. Did you keep your promise? Did you find it difficult to keep?

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN:

1. Winston shares some personal feelings with Terry. Winston says “knew that he really wanted to hear what I had to say.” What does this show about the relationship between Terry and Winston?
2. Terry explains that he is not running *away* from anything. He says, “I’m running *to* something. I’m running to my home in Port Coquitlam [British Columbia], running to help all those people, all those kids, who can’t run. I’m running to raise money to find a cure for cancer.” Compare Terry’s running with Winston’s running. Why is running the right thing for Terry to do and the wrong thing for Winston to do?
3. In your opinion, what does Terry mean when he says that being alive is something that people take for granted?

### Response Journal Topic:

Terry says to Winston, “Besides, we both know that you can’t run away from your problems.” Describe a time when you ran away from a problem. Explain why you decided to run away instead of face it.

## CHAPTER SIXTEEN:

1. Why do you think Winston is not glad to be going home?
2. Winston’s father writes an article about Terry and Doug fighting. Winston questions his father’s integrity. Look up the word *integrity* in the dictionary. What does it mean? Write the definition in your own words. What does Winston mean when he says, “Whether it’s true or not doesn’t change the fact that it is wrong. You just shouldn’t be writing about it.”
3. Winston is not the only one who is changing. When Winston runs away, his father sends him a message through Terry—there is going to be a hole in tomorrow’s paper. What does this message mean and how does this show that Winston’s father is changing?

### Response Journal Topic:

Describe a time when you had a fight with a good friend. Explain how you worked out the problem and became friends again.

## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN:

1. Both Winston and his father are working toward becoming better people. What are they doing to achieve this goal?

### Response Journal Topic:

Everyone can do something to make themselves better. What could you change about yourself to help make you a better person?

## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN:

1. When Winston meets Terry in Toronto, he asks him to run twelve miles with him. Winston is unsure that he can do it. Doug says to him, “Don’t think of it as twelve miles. Just take it one step at a time . . . one corner at a time . . . one mile at a time. That’s the way Terry does it.” Explain how this is a good way to achieve any difficult goal.
2. In your view, explain what Winston means when he says he was happy to be a part of something bigger than anything that he could imagine, “Even bigger than the width of this whole country.”

Response Journal Topic:

Set a goal for yourself that you would like to accomplish this school year. List the steps that you will take to accomplish it.

#### CHAPTER NINETEEN:

1. After running 5373km in 143 days (13,432 laps around a track!), Terry is forced to quit running. Why does he have to stop?
2. Terry calls himself a dreamer. Do you believe that his dream came true? Explain.

Response Journal Topic:

What lesson(s) did you learn from Terry and his dream?

#### CHAPTER TWENTY:

1. Terry says to Winston, "I need you to know that I had to stop running right now, but I haven't quit. And I need you not to quit either." What does Terry not want Winston to quit doing?
2. Create a Venn diagram comparing Terry and Winston at the end of the story. How are they alike and how are they different?
3. Why do you think that the author wrote a book for kids about Terry Fox?

Response Journal Topic:

In what ways are you similar to Terry Fox? In what ways would you like to be more like him?

Resources:

Dates, times, places, and other registration information on the annual Terry Fox Run, as well as information on organizing a Terry Fox Run at your school can be found at the website [www.terryfoxrun.org](http://www.terryfoxrun.org).

Free promotional materials, including audiotapes, videotapes and posters, are available.

Bibliography:

Scrivener, Leslie. *Terry Fox: His Story*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 2000.

## CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

A very important aspect of this book, which is not curriculum related, is the potential to use *Run* to examine, teach, or strengthen values and ideas such as heroism, strength, perseverance, determination, courage, potential, abilities and disabilities, prejudices, stereotypes, preconceptions, equality, empathy, dreams, faith, hope, friendship, loyalty, helping others, overcoming adversity, facing problems, goal setting and achieving goals, integrity, working towards becoming a better person, and the gift of life.

Below are specific curriculum connections.