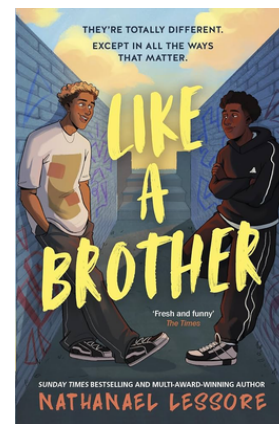


CHEAT SHEET

Like A Brother



SUMMARY

Like a Brother follows Owais, a funny, popular Year 9 boy whose relaxed life changes when his estranged cousin Abass comes to live with his family after difficult circumstances. Abass is angry, defensive and often gets into trouble, making life difficult for everyone around him. At first, the two boys constantly clash because they have very different personalities and outlooks on life. However, as Owais learns more about Abass's past—including his grief, unstable home life and lack of positive role models—he begins to understand that Abass's behaviour is driven by pain rather than malice. Over the summer, both boys grow emotionally, learning about empathy, responsibility, friendship and what it truly means to be family. Despite many setbacks, they gradually develop a relationship that becomes more like that of brothers.

CHARACTERS

Character	Summary
Owais	The narrator. Funny, confident and well-liked, Owais initially finds Abass frustrating but gradually becomes more compassionate and mature as he learns to understand him.
Abass	Owais's cousin. Angry, impulsive and defensive because of his difficult upbringing, grief and unstable family life. Over time he learns to trust others and begins to change.
Lara	Owais's younger sister. Bright, observant and caring, she often brings humour to the story and provides emotional support within the family.
Savio	Owais's close friend (and cousin in some editions' descriptions). Loyal, supportive and confident, he models kindness and acceptance and challenges prejudice when he sees it.
Owais's Mum	Warm, patient and nurturing. She believes in giving Abass a safe home despite the challenges he brings.
Owais's Dad	Fair and responsible. He tries to support both boys while encouraging them to take responsibility for their actions.
Abass's Dad	An unreliable influence whose parenting has contributed to Abass's difficult experiences and mistrust of adults.

VOCABULARY

Prejudice	Having a fixed opinion about someone before you really know them, often based on things like their background, appearance, or identity.
Derogatory	Language or comments that are disrespectful or insulting, often used to put someone down.
Homophobic	Showing dislike, fear, or hatred towards people who are gay or part of the LGBTQ+ community.
Stereotype	A simplified and often unfair belief about a group of people, assuming they are all the same.
Multiculturalism	The view and practice of giving equal value and voice to different cultures, races, and ethnicities within a single society
Social Class	Social class is a grouping of people within a society based on factors such as income, wealth, occupation, education, and social status. It often influences people's opportunities, lifestyles, and access to resources. E.g. upper, middle and working class.

T H E M E S

FAMILY, IDENTITY, EMPATHY, FRIENDSHIP, BELONGING, GRIEF AND TRAUMA. MASCULINITY, PERSONAL GROWTH, FORGIVENESS, RESILIENCE, SEXUALITY, PREJUDICE.

KEY MOMENTS

Moment	Discussion
Discussion of Homosexuality (pg.15-16)	Why is this not showing true understanding or acceptance? Are they accepting Savio as a person or stereotype? What other labels do we know? Has anyone ever defined you with a label? Refer to PP.
Owais is frustrated with his dad's evasive nature about Abass (pg. 73)	Can you empathise with Owais here? Is he right to feel this way about Abass? Refer to PP.
Confrontation between Abass and Savio about homosexuality (pg. 122-126)	What is LGBTQ+ and why is it important? Refer to PP. Owais questions 'what does it change?' This could be something to explore further with students, making links to the previous discussion of homosexuality.

Moment	Discussion
"I am not saying he's blameless, but he's a product of his sources." (pg. 128)	Owais' father says this about Abass. Students could explore the importance of influence vs own choices and autonomy. Please refer to PP.
Chloe and Owais discuss social class and expectations (pg. 220)	Chloe and Owais discuss markers for different social classes. Owais believes that life is less challenging for those in middle and upper classes. Chloe disagrees and states that life – and facing pressure– is difficult regardless of social class. Please refer to PP.

TRIGGER MOMENTS

Moment	SUMMARY
A funeral (pg.1)	The story opens with the funeral of a distant family member. Owais is being tongue in cheek about it and it is making fun of family traditions as opposed to being disrespectful.
Discussion of Homosexuality (pg.15–16)	This explores how having a friend who is a homosexual is seen as an 'accessory' and acceptance of this is tokenistic. Possible discussion around how we can show authenticity towards others.
Homophobic bullying and violence as a result (pg 29–30)	Description of Savio's experience, how he was treated and how it was resolved in school. A discussion around how we manage dealing with bullies and whether it's enough to just be 'anti-bullying'. What's the right way to deal with bullies who demonstrate intolerance towards others?
Abusive parents (pg. 44)	This mentions how Owais's dad was physically abused when he was younger. This comes up again later in the novel. Please signpost Sarah Dow and the safeguarding team if students need to talk about this further. It's an interesting discussion (particularly linking to the above) and how two people can react differently to a situation. Is one better than the other?
Death of Abass' mum (pg 74)	Only a mention that Abass' mum has died at this point but it comes up later in the novel.

Moment	SUMMARY
Generalised and stereotyped discussion around 'getting a girl.' (pg 99)	Abass and Lara discuss girls and Abass explains how he 'gets' a girl. Lara challenges this.
Confrontation between Abass and Savio about homosexuality (pg. 122-126)	Savio is hosting a fundraising event for the LGBTQ+ community. Abass finds this uncomfortable and Savio challenges his misconceptions and stereotypes.
Abass thinks his mum's pillowcase is gone (pg. 131-137)	An emotional scene where Abass thinks that Owais has stolen his pillowcase. We learn this pillowcase is one thing that Abass has from his mother. Abass reacts by trashing the bedroom but then breaks down to his aunty.
Abass' Dad (pg. 160-172)	Abass' dad comes for dinner. We see that he is emotionally abusive towards Abass and holds offensive and intolerant views towards gender, sexuality and family life.
Parental pressure and divorce (pg. 220-222)	Chloe and Owais first have a discussion around the differences between working and middle class. They later talk about pressure and expectations of them. Chloe reveals that her parents are divorced.
Lara's emotions (pg. 224)	Owais describes Lara's 'crash out' which seems to be when she is very emotional and heightened and reacts (sometimes physically in a destructive way).