

CHEAT SHEET

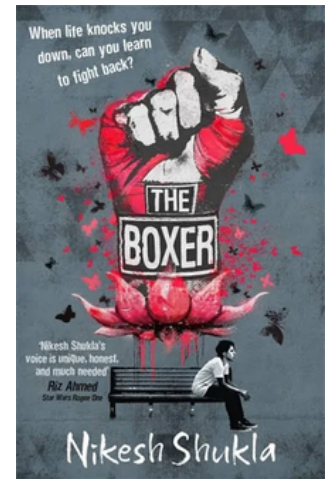
The Boxer

SUMMARY

The Boxer follows Sunny, a 17-year-old British Indian teenager who has recently moved from London to Bristol. After being the victim of a racist attack, he joins a local boxing club to learn how to defend himself and rebuild his confidence. There he finds friendship, belonging and guidance from his coach, Shobu. Sunny develops a close friendship with Keir, another boxer. However, Keir becomes increasingly influenced by far-right extremism through his family and community. As racial tensions in Bristol escalate, Sunny must navigate questions of identity, loyalty, courage and belonging. The novel is told over the ten rounds of Sunny's first amateur boxing match, with each round revealing key moments from the past that have led him to the fight. It explores racism, friendship, radicalisation and resilience in modern Britain.

CHARACTERS

Character	Summary
Sunny	The protagonist. A British Indian teenager who takes up boxing after experiencing a racist attack. Sensitive, thoughtful and determined to find where he belongs.
Keir	Sunny's closest friend at the boxing gym. A talented boxer whose vulnerability makes him susceptible to far-right radicalisation.
Shobu	Sunny's boxing coach and mentor. Wise, patient and supportive, he teaches lessons about discipline, respect and self-belief.
Sunny's Mum	Caring and protective. She worries about Sunny's safety and struggles with the challenges facing her family after moving.
Sunny's Dad	Hard-working and practical. Wants the best for his family but often finds it difficult to understand Sunny's emotional struggles.
Surinder	A taxi driver who encourages Sunny to try boxing after the racist attack, helping set him on a positive path.
Keir's Family	Their racist attitudes and links to far-right groups contribute to Keir's radicalisation and create conflict in the novel.



VOCABULARY

Prejudice	Having a fixed opinion about someone before you really know them, often based on things like their background, appearance, or identity.
Immigrant	A person who comes from a different country to live in a new one permanently.
Far Right - Extremism	The belief that people from certain races, religions, or countries do not belong and should be treated differently. People with these extreme views often blame other groups for society's problem.
Stereotype	A simplified and often unfair belief about a group of people, assuming they are all the same.
Anti Racism	Actively opposing racism by challenging racist policies, practices, and beliefs, and working towards creating an inclusive and equitable society.

T H E M E S

IDENTITY, RACISM, PREJUDICE, RADICALISATION, FRIENDSHIP, FAMILY, RESILLIENCE

KEY MOMENTS

Moment	Discussion
Sunny's dad is in a hospice, dying from cancer (pg. 7-8)	Sunny is questioning why he didn't want to visit his dad in the hospice. He concludes it's because he's scared. There is a hint that the relationship with his dad is tricky.
Students make stereotypical, prejudiced comments towards Sunny (pg. 8)	Students make comments towards Sunny saying that he smells like curry. His friend explains that whether this is good or bad is a matter of perspective.
Sunny suffers a racist attack (pg. 15)	Sunny is attacked by a boy named Sam who hits him and calls him a P***.
Sunny feels numb and references to self harm (pg. 33)	Sunny feels numb after his attack and hits his own bruises to feel something.

Moment	Discussion
Sunny is called a Jihadi (pg. 117)	When fighting with Kier and Paul calls Sunny a Jihadi.
Racist stereotypes (pg. 121)	Sunny and Kier are discussing the use of the word Jihadi and how it's derogatory and offensive. Kier mentions how 'people are always blaming straight. white men for everything'.

TRIGGER MOMENTS

Moment	SUMMARY
Sunny's mum's job (pg. 3-4)	Sunny's mum works multiple jobs as his father is unwell. As a result, Sunny has to cook for himself and he offers to clean alongside his studies. Young Carers may be able to relate to this.
Jag's (Sunny's cousin) goodbye (pg. 64)	Jag makes hurtful comments towards Sunny telling him that he is too weird to be Jag's friend. Students should discuss whether he is cruel or kind. Refer to the PP.
Sunny's mum thinks he shouldn't box (pg. 80)	Sunny tells his mum that he is learning to box and she simply thinks this is in reaction to his attack. Her and Sunny debate whether boxing is a violent sport. Refer to PP.
Kier and Sunny share their motivations for boxing (pg. 83)	Kier explains why he took up boxing. He explains his uncle was a boxer but got injured. Kier states that 'I can be the boxer he could have been'. Sunny then asks so you're doing this for other people. Kier responds 'course I am. Do anything for the people who matter innit. It's all we have'. Refer to PP.
Kier's comments about immigration (pg. 84-84)	Kier and Sunny are speaking about the latter moving from London to Bristol. Kier replies 'All the people moving from London and making everything expensive. Dad goes on about it all the time. He moans about it more than he does about immigrants'. Please refer to PP.
Sunny's relationship with his father (pg. 93)	Sunny's dad isn't nice to him. Is this justified because of his illness?
Feeling like an outsider (pg. 93)	Sunny brings Kier to a family party and he feels out of place. Sunny describes his own experience with this.

Moment	SUMMARY
Sunny's friends play a trick on Kier (pg. 102)	A member of Sunny's family play a trick on him by giving him really spicy chicken. Madhu also ignores Kier when she learns he boxes. Is Kier a victim of stereotypes here, too?
Sunny decides not to challenge Kier (pg. 121)	Sunny and Kier are discussing the incident where Sunny is called a Jihadi. Should Sunny compromise his values and beliefs to save his relationship with Kier? Please refer to PP.
Sunny goes to Kier's house for dinner (pg. 125)	Sunny goes to Kier's house for dinner and Kier's mum assumes that Sunny is Muslim so can't eat pork, so she serves him a burger. Sunny is actually Hindu so he can eat pork, not beef. But as he doesn't practise, he says it's pointless to challenge it. Students could discuss whether Sunny is right to do this.
Kier and Sunny's argument (pg. 138)	Sunny punches Kier in the boxing ring and Kier is outraged by it. When Sunny catches up with Kier, he explains that Madhu wouldn't go out with him because of his racist family. Kier and Joe fight as a result of him retelling the story of this. Please refer to PP.
Shobhu and Sunny discuss Kier attending riots (pg. 181-188)	Shobhu and Sunny discuss Kier's background and his attendance in the riots. Please refer to PP.
The Riots (pg. 194)	This is a heavy read and many of the resources we have used will lead to this. Please remind students that there are extremist views and we must not repeat this language or sentiments.
Sunny confronts Kier (pg. 224)	Sunny confronts Kier about his family attitudes. Please refer to PP.