



## Discussion Questions for *We are Big Time*

### ***Part 1***

1. *We are Big Time* gets into the conflict of the story right away. Aliya and her family are moving from Tampa, Florida to Milwaukee, Wisconsin. How does Aliya feel about this move? What do you think is most challenging for her?
2. What else do you know about the setting of the novel? When and where is most of the action taking place?
3. Aliya has two brothers—Ameen and Ismail. What does Aliya envy about Ameen? Why?
4. In a graphic novel, the artist uses colors, images, and words to show the story to the reader. How does the illustrator show that Aliya is day dreaming or thinking about the past (flashback)?
5. What do you notice about when Aliya wears her head covering? Why do you think this is?
6. Aliya is introduced to her new basketball coach who is not Muslim but is coaching at a Muslim school. How would you describe the coach?
7. On p. 68-69, Aliya's little brother asks why she cares so much about basketball. What are her motivations for working so hard to be a better player?
8. On p. 80-81, the coach suggests a motto for the team: "More than the Score." What does this mean? Do you think it's a good motto for this team? Why or why not?
9. On p. 82-82 Aliya mentions some aspects of Wisconsin that aren't so bad. What does she like about Wisconsin? Is it beginning to feel like home to her?
10. After another hard loss, the coach takes the team to the Milwaukee Culinary Institute to bake together. Why would she take the time to do this? What was her goal?



## Part 2

11. On p. 102-103 the team plays against a new school. Why does the other school laugh at them? How do you think it would feel to walk into a school dressed differently from everyone else?
12. Aliya is a hard worker. Find three pieces of evidence from the story that show this fact. Include page numbers.
13. If you were to list Aliya's priorities, what order would you put them in? Be sure to include basketball, school, friends, and family.
  - a. What do her parents say is most important from the above list?
14. How do the girls feel about wearing their head scarves?
15. What helps Aliya become more popular at school?
16. What bothers Aliya about the questions the interviewers ask her?
17. How does Aliya's family react to her tv interview?
18. Why does Aliya cry after their big win at Greendale?
19. What does Aliya learn from her coach in their one-on-one meeting? (p. 170-172)



### **Part 3 (Conclusion)**

20. On page 206, the team is getting discouraged about losing their first playoff game. What do they do to live out their motto, “More than the Score”?
21. What team award does Aliya win? What do you think Aliya did to earn the award?
22. What lessons does Aliya learn by the conclusion of the novel? List three.
23. How has Aliya changed from the beginning of the novel to the conclusion?
24. What are some similarities and differences between you and Aliya? Consider family, friends, goals, and challenges.
25. What were your favorite parts of this graphic novel? Why? Consider the pictures, colors, characters, and conflicts in your response.

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