Group #5: High School (Girls)
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Reading Guide

Summary

Inspirational advice and wisdom for young women from the powerhouse public speaker, star of CSI: NY, and bestselling author of Letters to a Young Brother.

- Does life sometimes seem so much harder for girls?
- Do you ever feel insecure, pressured, or confused?
- Do you wish you had someone to give you honest advice on topics like boys, school, family, and pursuing your dreams?
- Do you want to make a positive impact on the world, but don’t even know how to begin?

Hill Harper shares powerful wisdom for young women every-where, drawing on the courageous advice of the female role models who transformed his life.
*Letters to a Young Sister* unfolds as a series of letters written by older brother Hill to a universal young sister. She’s up against the same challenges as every young woman: from relating to her parents and dealing with peer pressure, to juggling schoolwork and crushes, and keeping faith in the face of heartache. Hill offers guidance, encouragement, personal stories, and asks his female friends to help answer some truly tough questions. Every young sister needs to know that it’s okay to dream big and to deFINE her own destiny. This is a book that will educate, uplift and inspire.

Including original contributions from: Michelle Obama, Angela Basset, Gabrielle Union, Ciara, Tatyana Ali, Eve, Malinda Williams, Chanel Iman, and Kim Porter. *(From the publisher.)*

**Discussion Questions**

1. Do you find the words from luminaries like Michelle Obama, Cathy Hughes, Gabrielle Union encouraging? Were some of their messages more inspiring or more meaningful than others? Are these women good role models?

2. What does Harper mean by "if you fail to plan, you plan to fail"? How important is having a plan? Does a plan leave room for the occurrence of luck or chance—seizing opportunities as they come along? What about a change of mind?

3. One of Harper's themes is the need for young women to build strong relationships and surround themselves with the right people? What does he mean by the "right people"? Does this particular piece of advice have meaning in your own life?

4. What is Harper's attitude toward the social networking internet—Facebook and MySpace?

5. Do you like the format of *Letters to a Young Sister*? Why might Harper have chosen to give his advice in the form of letters and to include emails? Why not just a straight advice book?

6. How does Harper approach the absence of a father in many young girls' lives? What impact does he feel it has on their emotional and spiritual development? What role does forgiveness play in the act of healing?

7. Break the book down into major categories. Summarize the advice that Harper provides in each area. Consider such categories as
   - boys, dating, and sex
   - eduction
   - charting a future
   - physical appearance and self-confidence
8. Hill Harper is a male who has successfully written a book for young men—*Letters to a Young Brother*. Does he bring credibility to this project—as a man writing a book for young women? Why or why not?

9. Overall, do you find *Letters to a Young Sister* inspiring? Have you benefited from the advice contained between its covers? Are there areas in your own life to which it applies? If so, how might you start acting on some of the book’s lessons?

10. Does this book transcend age and race? Could young white as well as young black women benefit from this book? What about middle-aged and older women?