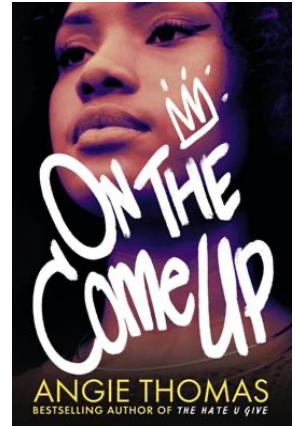


On the Come Up

by Angie Thomas

This is the story of 16-year-old Bri, an aspiring rapper, daughter of a murdered father, living in a tough American neighbourhood. At school, she's been defined as "trouble" and her mum (a former drug addict) is struggling to pay the bills after losing her job. Life is tough and when Bri records her first rap full of anger it goes viral for all the wrong reasons. How can Bri be a success as well as really true to herself, her friends and her family?

This is Angie Thomas's second novel, coming hot on the heels of the multi-award-winning *The Hate U Give*. *On the Come Up* is a classic in the making, an inspiring coming-of-age story that gets right to the heart of what it means to overcome life's obstacles and the struggle not to become what everyone expects you to be.



Hip hop and fame

- Why is Bri so drawn to hip-hop? What does she hope to get from hip-hop success?

- The rap that makes Bri famous is a direct challenge to a stereotype - that she must be some kind of dangerous thug - but how is it seen by the general public?

- What are the consequences of Bri's fame? What is the price she is expected to pay?

- What is the relationship between music and protest?

Family and friends

- Bri is surrounded by a family of very well-drawn characters, and her relationship with each one is both loving and complicated. How would you describe her relationship with her mother/brother/aunt/grandparents?

- Jay says to Bri, 'Who are you? Work on figuring it out. I think it will give you more answers than you think.' How does Bri answer that question for herself towards the end of the novel?

Prejudice and stereotyping

- Think about the different advice given to Bri about how to deal with the prejudice and stereotyping she experiences. Who do you think gives the best advice? Trey / Jay / Aunt Pooh / Supreme / Malik / Curtis / Shana?

- What is Bri's own approach at the beginning of the novel and how has she changed and matured by the end?

Social themes

- Bri has had, and continues to have, a lot of stress in her life. Think about some of the things she has to deal with, how they affect her and what helps her to cope.

- Bri lives in a world of extreme inequality, prejudice and systemic racism - it's a tough life. But against that backdrop, many readers have found the book surprisingly full of joy - what do you think?