



Curriculum guide for
Love Radio
By Ebony LaDelle

About the Book

Prince Jones is the guy with all the answers—or so it seems. After all, at seventeen, he has his own segment on Detroit’s popular hip-hop show, *Love Radio*, where he dishes out advice to the brokenhearted. Prince has always dreamed of becoming a DJ and falling in love. But being the main caretaker for his mother, who has multiple sclerosis, and for his little brother means his dreams will stay just that, and the only romances in his life are the ones he hears about from his listeners.

Until he meets Dani Ford.

Dani isn’t checking for anybody. She’s focused on her plan: ace senior year, score a scholarship, and move to New York City to become a famous author. But her college essay keeps tripping her up, and acknowledging what’s blocking her means dealing with what happened at that party a few months ago. And that’s one thing Dani can’t do.

When the romantic DJ meets the ambitious writer, sparks fly. Prince is smitten, but Dani's not looking to get derailed. She gives Prince just three dates to convince her that he's worth falling for. Three dates for the love expert to take his own advice and just maybe change two lives forever.

Discussion Questions

1. What do you think about the practice of courting? What have you heard about it? In your opinion, do people still court one another? Why or why not?
2. Have you ever judged someone and been wrong about them? Have you ever been judged harshly by someone you thought you might have feelings for? How did the situation turn out? Where, in your opinion, did things go wrong?
3. Why do Destiny and Dani stop talking to each other? Have you ever had a falling-out with a friend? What did it take to bring you back together? If you didn't get back together, why not?
4. What does Prince do in order to start to earn Dani's trust? Do you think it will work? Why or why not?
5. At some point, everyone experiences trauma or disappointment in life. This can often create trust issues and cause outsized reactions or miscommunication. When is one time you or someone you know had a communication breakdown due to trust issues? What steps did they take to overcome the situation?
6. What music puts you "In a Sentimental Mood"? Name one song and how it makes you feel and why. Here is a video you may want to watch for inspiration: "Duke Ellington and John Coltrane—In a Sentimental Mood":

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sCQfTNOc5aE>

7. What do you think of Prince's assertion that "Studies show men actually fall in love faster than women. We know sooner but are just afraid. It's why we'll ghost a girl as soon as we start catching feelings." (Chapter five) Do you agree? Why or why not?
8. How do Prince and his mother care for each other? Do you have a symbiotic relationship like this with your caregiver(s)? How do caregiving roles shift as people get older? Consider your caregivers and their relationships with the people who raised them.
9. What conflict does Prince wrestle with regarding love? Why do you think he feels so conflicted? Can you relate? Why or why not? What do his thoughts reveal about his relationship with his mother and hers with his father?
10. Do you agree with Prince's friends' advice that "the fastest way to get a girl to fall for you is to ignore them"? (Chapter six)
11. What kind of reputation does Prince have, and how do you think he got it? How might hearing about it influence Dani's view of him?
12. How does Prince's decision to date Dani impact the rest of his family? Have you ever read about or been in a situation where your dating choices negatively impacted the equilibrium of your family? If so, what did you do?
13. What do you think about Dani's observations about love from watching her parents interact? Do you agree with Dani? Why or why not?
14. Why do you think it's so hard for Dani and Destiny to get along? What happened to break the bonds of trust in their friendship?
15. What does Prince discover that changes his outlook on life? Why do you think those who care for others are often reluctant to ask for help for themselves?

16. In your opinion, is it one person's job in a partnership to motivate the other to want more from life? If so, who in your life motivates you to want more for yourself? How do they do it?
17. Who is Prince named for? Look up and listen to at least one song by the artist and discuss it. Read about his name change during his career and discuss when and why it happened and the impact a stage name has on an artist or DJ's career.
18. Have you ever heard some of the songs Prince mentions in chapter thirteen, "Love Is on the Air"? What are some songs that are sampled over and over again? Do you know their origins? If not, see if you can find a few and do some research to discover them.
 - a. Here is a resource: "It Only Takes Six Seconds to Hear the World's Most Sampled Song," <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/the-most-sampled-song-of-all-time/>
19. What songs do you like that "honor the past, celebrate the present, and embrace the future"? (Chapter thirteen) Try to think of some that you know meet all three criteria.
20. Do you agree with the statement that "a good DJ should know five songs that blend perfectly with each other"? (Chapter fourteen) If so, do you know of a DJ in real life or online who knows how to do this? What has it been like to hear sounds they put together?
21. Why does Dani give Prince mixed signals? How does her past impact their present and potential future?
22. How does Dani try to protect herself from harm as she gets closer to Prince? In what ways does Dani's protection work, and in what ways does it not work? In what ways could Prince help Dani, and do you think he should? What do you think Dani needs to feel safe?

23. Have you ever been to a Black hair show? If so, what was it like? What sorts of hairstyles that originated within Black culture have been appropriated? What do you think about cultural appropriation?
- Here is an additional resource: “*Teen Vogue* Editor-in-Chief on Cultural Appropriation,” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i8Rr3L2ktmc>
24. How are Dani and Prince’s moms similar? What personality traits do they share? How do their experiences with love and harm mirror each other’s?
25. How do Prince and Dani help each other level up in life and love? Do you have anyone in your life who has helped you do either?

Extension Activities

- 1) Think about Dani’s relationship with her parents, and how it’s different from the relationship Prince has with his. In what ways are each character’s relationship with their parents different, and in what ways are they similar? Compare these relationships in a Venn diagram. Then record a vlog, Tiktok, or Flipgrid video describing the best and worst parts of your relationship with your caregivers. What lessons have you learned from them about love and romance? If you don’t want to personalize it, talk generally about lessons older adults teach young people about love through words and actions.
 - a) Here is a resource to give you some tips about vlogging. “Vlogging 101: YouTube’s Biggest Stars Show You How It’s Done” | *Teen Vogue*, <https://www.teenvogue.com/story/youtube-vlog-tips>
- 2) Using the novel’s exposition and rising action, make a two-column chart and list some personality traits and characteristics for Prince and Dani. For each entry, find *quote evidence* to support what each character thinks about the other. Label it “Perception versus Reality.” Then, after you create the chart, give a short response with your analysis of the situation. Why do you think Dani judges Prince as harshly as she does? In what ways does Prince idealize Dani?

Perception	Reality
<p>“Look, I see what’s happening here. But guys who have kids aren’t really my thing, so sorry.” (Chapter three) Dani thinks Prince is a teen dad and judges him because of it.</p>	<p>“My friend Ant has a one-year-old, and he’s a better human and a better dad than anyone else I know.” (Chapter three) Prince reveals that he was picking up books for his little brother and that teen dads can actually be amazing. He knows because one of his friends is one.</p>
<p>Analysis</p>	
<p>Sample sentence starters:</p> <p>“This (piece of evidence) shows . . .”</p> <p>“This (piece of evidence) illustrates . . .”</p> <p>“Based on this (piece of evidence), readers can conclude that . . .”</p> <p>“Based on this (piece of evidence), we understand that . . .”</p> <p>“This is significant because . . .”</p> <p>“These (pieces of evidence) are an example of . . .”</p>	

3) Create a playlist with your top songs for the stages of a romantic relationship. If you really want to go all out, include the YouTube music videos and links to the lyrics. If a playlist already exists, modify it with your own personalized selections and link to the existing one. Consider this resource when planning the order of your songs. Write a short rationale for each song on the list explaining why it matches the stage you think it matches.

a) “The 4 Stages of Dating Relationships” resource:

<https://www.mentalhelp.net/blogs/the-4-stages-of-dating-relationships/>

4) When Prince is trying to help Dani unpack what makes a successful writer, they talk about the journals she writes. She says, “I like writing in a journal too. But for me, it’s

more writing letters to writers I love. Writers who inspire me. I just keep the letters to myself.” (Chapter seven)

Choose one of the following writers and write a letter to them explaining how you feel and connecting to a work you may have read by them:

- Zora Neale Hurston
- Toni Morrison
- Sandra Cisneros
- Julia Alvarez
- Alice Walker
- Elizabeth Acevedo
- Claude McKay
- Langston Hughes
- James Baldwin
- Audre Lorde

Alternatively, you can choose songwriters you like and write to them. Choose one of the following journal prompts if you need inspiration:

- Who or what inspires you most? Why?
- What challenges do you feel are too big or too hard for you to overcome? What would you need to be able to overcome them?
- What would you do if you knew you couldn't fail?
- What is your deepest fear? Your greatest triumph?

- 5) Read Prince's description of how he feels about music. Then, go to YouTube and watch one of the Verzuz performances. What are some of the comments people have as they watch the performance? Write a short-constructed response analyzing the impact the music had on the audience.

- 6) Use an online DJ Name Generator to create a DJ name for yourself. Do you think it fits? Why or why not? Have you ever had an interest in becoming a DJ? Who is your favorite DJ and why? Here are some additional resources:

Book: *Last Night a DJ Saved My Life: The History of the Disc Jockey*

By Bill Brewster and Frank Broughton

Site: DJ Name Generator <https://www.coolgenerator.com/dj-name-generator>

Video: “This Deaf DJ Is the Beethoven of Turntables,”

<https://www.buzzfeed.com/verymuchso/this-deaf-dj-is-the-beethoven-of-turntables>

- 7) Read or listen to this interview with DJ QuestLove about his book, “Questlove spins the soundtrack of his life in ‘Music Is History’” : NPR
- a) <https://www.npr.org/2021/10/12/1045247409/questlove-spins-the-soundtrack-of-his-life-in-music-is-history>

Then write your own mini musical biography that takes someone through your life’s greatest moments with the songs that made you who you are. Use DJ QuestLove’s writing as a model.

- 8) Prince writes a love letter to Dani in chapter twenty-two that mirrors those she writes to the authors she loves. Similarly, in the movie *Love Jones*, one of the protagonists, Darius Lovehall, writes a poem to his love interest, Nina Mosely.

Watch the entire movie, or just the poem recitation here:

“*Love Jones: A Blues for Nina*,” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=byicVL_dZK0

Then compose your own love letter to someone, anyone who has transformed your life through the power of their love for you, or by force of being so loveable you couldn’t help but be changed by the process of growing your love for them. Use Prince’s letter as a model if you need to, but make sure what you write is uniquely you and true.

- 9) Songs often help us recall or enjoy certain moments or events in our lives. The author created a playlist to go along with *Love Radio*, including songs mentioned in the book and songs that inspired it, as well. Create your own playlist to accompany an important time or event in your life. Include a sentence or two about why you chose a certain song, artist, or genre.

Check out Ebony LaDelle's playlist for *Love Radio* here:

<https://tidal.com/browse/playlist/33be6e41-96ff-4544-ad01-63518b789016>

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