Different Sides of a Story Activity

In *All American Boys* by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely, Rashad, a black high school basketball player, is attacked by Paul, a white police officer, leaving Rashad badly injured. The incident is spread on the news and on social media, and soon everyone knows about what had happened. In the novel, every character seems to be on a different stance when it comes to what happened, who was at fault, why it occurred, if it was right or wrong, or what people of color or white people or police officers or bystanders or victims should behave or do in situations like this.

The concept of police brutality, maltreatment, and prejudice against people of color, systematic racism, privilege and rights, and so many more facets come into play when approaching the theme of people of color and the police. Some characters in the book have a pretty firm idea of what a person of color should do when they are a victim of police brutality. Others believe that officers should know where the line is drawn and know not to cross it. And some aren’t quite sure where they land, but they definitely have some sort of feeling when it comes to how the police brutalize of people of color. Regardless of where we stand, our opinions and beliefs combine into the discussion. Every person is a piece of the conversational puzzle.

On the blank puzzle, there are twelve spaces. In each puzzle piece, you will jot down a character of your choice. With each character, you will label how they relate to the incident between Rashad and Paul. Then, in a few short sentences, explain what their stance seems to be, using some evidence from the book.