

# Reading is Fun

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**epep.at**

**Reading is fun:** Getting started  
Storytime for beginners  
Bookmaking basics

## **Reading diaries**

Examples from lower school  
Examples from upper school  
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**Reading activities for narrative texts**  
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(sample story: basis for reading project)

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# Reading is fun!!!

- Make reading an everyday topic. Reading is fun. Reading is cool. WE all read.
- Read stories in relaxed atmosphere. Read stories as a special treat after hard work.
- Create a class library: Good bookshops are:  
<http://www.Amazon.de>  
Wolfgang Steinhauser's bookshop <http://www.thebookshop.at>  
English Bookshop, Graz [enquiry@english-bookshop.com](mailto:enquiry@english-bookshop.com)  
The Austrian bookshop homepages are not exciting; e-mail them if you need help or recommendations...)
- Start reading whole books (picture books, stage 1 readers) as early as possible.
- Use reading logs and reading diaries to keep track of Ss reading.
- Give credit to book reports and reading
- Invite students to present books regularly, reserve space for book recommendations on pin-board.
- Create reading circles to discuss books.
- Use books for active vocabulary expansion.

**You don't have to know every single word in a text.**

Task:

1. Read the text and try to understand the *general meaning* of the story. (All the words in italics are nonsense words.)

A country girl was walking along the *snerd* with a *rosgele* of milk on her head. She began saying to herself. 'The money for which I will sell this milk will make me enough money to increase my *irrud* of eggs to three hundred. These eggs will produce the same number of chickens, and I will be able to sell the chickens for a large *wunk* of money. Before long, I will have enough money to live a rich and *fallentious* life. All the young men will want to marry me. But I will refuse them all with a *ribble* of the head - like this . . . .'

And as she *ribbled* her head, the *roggle* fell to the ground and all the milk ran in a white stream along the *snerd*, carrying her plans with it.

Now look at the nonsense words again. Can you guess what they might mean?  
Would you feel comfortable to read a text with as many unknown words?'

**The 5 Finger Rule:** Students read the first and second page of a book and use their fingers to count the number of unknown words that they cannot easily guess from the context. If the number exceeds 5 unknown words per page, the text is probably too difficult for joyful reading.

## **Improving students' confidence:**

Encourage "top-down" reading skills rather than focusing on every unknown word:  
Fast reading activities help students gain confidence and focus on content and gist.

**Fast Reading:** Basically skimming, give Ss 30 seconds to "read" text, collect info on board. Give them 2 - 3 minutes to read the text again (1 page), collect inf. on board. Ask Ss to write a 50 word summary of the text (in groups). Only then allow them to read the text slowly!

*that brought grave and enormous damage to me, Orazio Gentileschi, painter and citizen of Rome, the poor plaintiff, so that I could not sell her painting talent for so high a price.'*

I hadn't wanted anyone to know. I wasn't even going to tell *him*, but he heard me crying once and forced it out of me. There was that missing painting, too, one Agostino had admired, and so he charged him.

'How much squeezing?' I asked.

'It will be over quickly.'

I didn't look at any faces in the crowd gathering at the entrance to the Tor. I already knew what they'd show – lewd curiosity, accusation, contempt. Instead, I looked at the yellow honeysuckle blooming against stucco walls the colour of Roman ochre. Each colour made the other more vibrant. Papa had taught me that.

'Fragrant blossoms,' beggars cried, offering them to women coming to hear the proceedings in the musty courtroom. Anything for a gulio. A cripple thrust into my hand a wilted bloom, rank with urine. He knew I was Artemisia Gentileschi. I dropped it on his misshapen knee.

My dry throat tightened as we entered the dark, humid Sala del Tribunale. Leaving Papa at the front row of benches, I stepped up two steps and took my usual seat opposite Agostino Tassi, my father's friend and collaborator. My rapist. Leaning on his elbow, he didn't move when I sat down. His black hair and beard were overgrown and wild. His face, more handsome than he deserved, had the colour and hardness of a bronze sculpture.

Behind a table, the papal notary, a small man swathed in deep purple, was sharpening his quills with a knife, letting the shavings fall to the floor. A dusty beam of light from a

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## The Sibille

My father walked beside me to give me courage, his palm touching gently the back laces of my bodice. In the low-angled glare already baking the paving stones of the piazza and the top of my head, the still shadow of the Inquisitor's noose hanging above the Tor di Nona, the papal court, stretched grotesquely down the wall, its shape the outline of a tear.

'A brief unpleasantness, Artemisia,' my father said, looking straight ahead. 'Just a little squeezing.'

He meant the *sibille*.

If, while my hands were bound, I gave again the same testimony as I had the previous weeks, they would know it was the truth and the trial would be over. Not my trial. I kept telling myself that: I was not on trial. Agostino Tassi was on trial.

The words of the indictment my father had sent to Pope Paul V rang in my ears: *Agostino Tassi deflowered my daughter Artemisia and did carnal actions by force many times, acts*

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high window fell on his hands and lightened the folds of his sleeve to lavender. 'Fourteen, May, 1612,' the notary muttered as he wrote. Two months, and this was the first day he didn't have a bored look on his face. The day I would be vindicated. I pressed my hands tight against my ribs.

The Illustrious Lord Hieronimo Feicio, Locumtenente of Rome appointed as judge and interrogator by His Holiness, swept in and sat on a raised chair, arranging his scarlet robes to be more voluminous. Papal functionaries were always posturing in public. Under his silk skullcap, his jowls sagged like overripe fruit. He was followed by a huge man with a shaved head whose shoulders bulged out of his sleeveless leather tunic – the Assistente di Tortura. A hot wave of fear rushed through me. With a flick of a finger the Lord High Locumtenente ordered him to draw a sheer curtain across the room, separating us from Papa and the rabble crowded on benches on the other side. The curtain hadn't been there before.

The Locumtenente scowled and his fierce black eyebrows joined, making a shadow. 'You understand, Signorina Gentileschi, our purpose.' His voice was slick as linseed oil. 'The Delphic sybils always told the truth.'

I remembered the Delphic sibyl on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. Michelangelo portrayed her as a powerful woman alarmed by what she sees. Papa and I had stood under it in silent awe, squeezing each other's hands to contain our excitement. Maybe the *sibille* would only squeeze as hard as that.

'Likewise, the *sibille* is merely an instrument designed to bring truth to women's lips. We will see whether you persist in what you have testified.' He squinted his goat's eyes. 'I wonder what tightening the cords might do to a painter's

## ***Simple Tasks for Beginners:***

**Story Tree:**

**Letters and Postcards:**

**Opinion Page:**

**Story Pie and All-Star Book Report:**

**Crayon Conversations:**

**SWBS: The Plot Chart:**

**One Person Show:**

**Problems and Solutions:**

# Reading Activities for Narrative Texts

## Pre-reading Activities

- **Pictures:** Show a picture related to the text. Students guess what the text might be about. For books: show book-cover only. Ss imagine story (plan for a few minutes, then Ss mill around exchanging their invented stories. Can also be done in carousel format. To make it even more exciting: Divide class in 4 groups, show each group a different picture from the book. Then crossgroup- Ss exchange what they've seen and discuss what the story could be about.
- **Kim's game:** Show Ss a picture for about 1 minute (best done on OHT), they jot down all the details they remember. This can also be done at a later stage in the story.
- **Titles, Headlines:** Give title. Have students guess what the story might be about. They might start like this: I think ... is going to...// I hope ....// I don't want .....
- **Select 4-5 words:** Write these words on board. Ask students for associated words. What might the story be about?

## Reading Tasks and Activities

- **Matching:** • text and pictures
- **Ordering pictures:** For picture books, copy picture pages without text (1 set per group), read story. Ss find matching pictures, put them in correct order. Then compare.
- **Ordering jumbled sentences or paragraphs:** Cut into strips if possible
- **Two in one stories:** cut up two short texts, mix. Ss sort and reconstruct the two stories (Works well with the short texts from children's books)
- **Text Market:** Cut text into N (e.g. 5) pieces . Provide enough cut copies of the text for each student to be able to put together one complete version. Hand out pieces randomly. Each student has N pieces, some of them might be the same. In order to complete their text they will have to exchange those that are surplus for those that they need. In order to do this Ss sell their unwanted pieces as if they were in a market. They walk around describing their pieces, shouting out offers... The only rule of the game is that **text pieces must never be shown before they are exchanged.** Students can even lie about the content of their pieces.  
When the students have bought all N pieces of the text they sit down and reconstruct the text.  
Note: may be quite chaotic at first, noise dies down as more Ss have bought all the pieces. Fast Ss can then help others.
- **Gapfilling:** any short text, leave out words or phrases. Leave space where the word is missing

- **Gapfinder:** Leave out words but don't leave any empty space (more difficult). Ss have to find out where a word is missing and write it in. Print texts with double line spacing for this exercise or leave a margin where Ss can write the missing words.
- **C-test:** print first half of each word, Ss complete the text.
- **Picture corrections:** Separate the picture and the text. Change the text so that it represents things slightly differently from the picture. Students spot the mistakes and correct the pictures!!
- **Draw a picture:** Listen to the story, imagine the scenes in detail, then draw or paint a scene...
- **Carousel:** Divide your story into 6 to 8 short pieces. Copy sets on different colors, enough pieces to serve the whole class. Distribute the pieces randomly. Students with the same color go together, then meet another group of a different color. The two groups build two concentric circles. (Do this in the hallway or any open area) Then the two students facing each other exchange their story bits (they must not show the cards). After one minute (more or less, depending on the length of the texts) the students in the outer circle move one person to the left. The new partners now exchange the content of their pieces... Do this until the students have heard the content of all the pieces.
- **Answer questions:** Students write questions for another group
- For further ideas (esp. ideas for novels) see "**Ideas for Book Presentations**"

## TEXT MARKET

### Potatoes

retold by S. E. Schlosser

Teacher instructions: Use for TEXT MARKET. Copy one sheet for each student, cut up. Hand out titles and task boxes to everybody. Shuffle all other cards and hand out 4 to each student. Ss must not show their cards to others. They buy and sell cards as described in the TEXT MARKET activity. (Reading Activities sheet)  
Students who have got all 4 parts then glue the slips on a worksheet in the correct order and do the follow-up tasks.

We here in Idaho are right proud of our potatoes. Our fields are so chock full of potatoes that you can hear them grumbling when you stick your ear on the ground. "Roll over, you're crowding me," they say.

Potatoes grow bigger in Idaho than anywhere else. Once, a greenhorn asked me for a hundred pounds of potato. I set him straight real fast. I don't believe in cutting into one of my potatoes. "You buy the whole potato, or you take your business elsewhere," I told him.

Why do our potatoes grow so big? Well, it's because we feed them like family. Cornmeal and milk every day for breakfast, lunch and dinner. You should taste my wife's mashed potatoes! They are the creamiest mashed potatoes in the whole United States. It's all the milk our potatoes drink while they're growing. Makes them so creamy that all my wife needs to do is just boil them and mash them up.

Sometimes, the size of our potatoes creates a problem for the farmers. One fellow I know got trapped for eight hours beneath a potato. His wife came looking for him when he was late to dinner. She had to get the neighbors to help roll it off. But that's just they way it goes when you're farming potatoes in Idaho.

How does the storyteller describe potatoes in Idaho?

Idaho potatoes are:

Design an ad for Idaho potatoes. Be creative. Use your computer or handwrite and draw your ad. Decorate it nicely.

## GAPFINDER

### Frozen Dawn

retold by  
S. E. Schlosser

Gapfinder: Some words have been lost in this text. Write the missing words in the margin and put numbers to indicate where the words should go.

Example:

One winter, it was so (1) that the dawn froze solid. The sun got caught two ice blocks, and the earth iced up so much that it couldn't turn. The first of sunlight froze halfway over the mountain tops. They looked like yellow icicles dripping towards the ground.

Now Davy Crockett was headed home after a successful night hunting when the dawn froze up so solid. Being a smart, he knew he had to do something quick or the earth was a goner. He had a freshly killed bear on his back, so he whipped it off, climbed right up on those rays of and began beating the hot bear carcass against the ice blocks which were squashing the sun. Soon a gush of hot oil burst out of the bear and it melted the. Davy gave the sun a good hard kick to get it started, and the sun's heat unfroze the earth and started it spinning again. So Davy lit his pipe on the sun, shouldered the bear, slid himself down the sun rays before they and took a bit of sunrise in his pocket.

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### Quantifying the story // Half the story

Dictate the following story to the class. Stop several times and ask the students to visualize/describe or quantify the sentences. Ss write their answers. Then pairs or small groups compare their versions.

#### The Farmer

A curious tourist, after passing a huge field of carrots alongside the road, stopped and asked the farmer what he did with his large crop.

How large is the field? Describe what you see. Amount of carrots?

'Well,' said the farmer, scratching his chin, 'I'll tell you what we do.'

Describe the farmer.

'We eat what we can and what we can't eat we can.'

The man went back to his car with a puzzled look on his face and said to his wife, 'I think he must be crazy.'

Describe the man.

'He said they ate what they could and what they couldn't they could.'

#### Exploiting texts for vocabulary expansion:

Choosing vocab: Students choose 3-5 new phrases that they want to remember and write them on vocab cards.

Lexical Furniture: put the new phrases in suitable places in your house/home. E.g: the verb "to separate" would go into the kitchen, under the sink, because there I separate my waste....

Connect a Pair  
Sensible Words  
Word Webs  
Acrostic Puzzles  
Personal Properties  
Wordcycle  
Word Search  
Crosswords

see the following pages for details

Vocabulary List: Choose 2 phrases from your picture book and write them on the board. We will use them to try out some of the vocab.activities.

### Connect A Pair

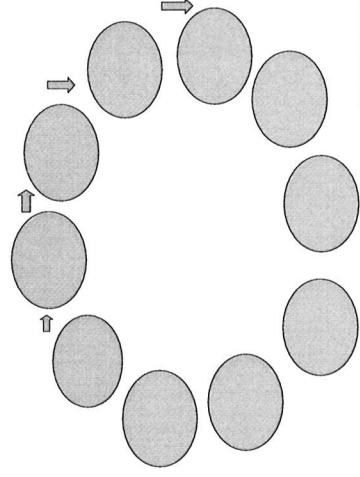


Select 10 phrases from your vocab-collection. Write them in the first column. Then form 5 pairs that have some connection. Explain your connecting idea in the second column.

1 a gloomy old place	+3: this gloomy old place had a high fence, the gates were padlocked.
2 he sat about grumbling all day	+4: maybe the grandfather was grumpy and sat about grumbling all day while Granny was working hard and was worn out with all the work...
3 the gates were padlocked	✓
4 Granny was worn out with all the work	✓
now add your own...	

### Word Cycle

Select 10 words from your collection. Write one of them in the first circle. Find a connection with another one of your words and write it into the second circle. Make a short note of their relationship. Then connect word 2 with another word on your list. Continue around the circle. Make up crazy connections between the neighbors-- but make sure all your words fit in somewhere. It is not necessary that all your words fit into one "story" -- just form connections between the neighbors.







## Tips for keeping a reading diary



Effective readers connect with, reflect on, and challenge the text. On your way to becoming such an effective reader use your response journal to try out some of the following tips and techniques.

Read slowly and carefully. Try to imagine the scenes as vividly as possible and try to see life through the main characters' eyes. After reading sit back and think about it for a while, then write a personal response.

Decide how much time you want to commit and stick with it (10 – 15 minutes!)

Write quickly, without worrying about spelling, punctuation, grammar.... Do not pause to think, just keep writing. As you write, follow your thoughts and ideas, do not worry about good organization and coherence. Just let your ideas flow.

Consider some of the following questions:

- Do you enjoy reading this novel or story? Why? Why not? What emotions does the book invoke: laughter, tears, smiles, anger? Record some of your reactions.
- Does the book or its characters remind you of any real life situations or people you know?
- Are the characters interesting and believable? Who is your favorite character? Why is he/she special to you? Is there a character you don't like at all? Why don't you like him/her? Would you like to be one of the characters (acquire a personality trait)? Which of the characters would you become, if you could? Why?
- What are your favorite lines/quotes? Copy them into your reading diary and explain why these passages caught your attention.
- Which are your favorite scenes in this novel? Explain why you enjoyed them.
- Make predictions: What do you think is going to happen next?
- Is the author able to hold your interest throughout the entire novel? How did he or she manage to do this? Or are you bored at times? What exactly makes the chapter/scene boring?
- Is there an idea in the book that makes you stop and think, or prompts questions? Identify the idea and explain your responses.
- Does the book leave you with questions you would like to ask? What are they? Would you like to direct your questions at a particular character? What questions would you like to ask the author of the book?
- Are you confused about what happened (or didn't happen) in the book? What events or characters do you not understand? Does the use of language in the book confuse you? What changes, if any, would you have made in this novel?
- Are there any symbols, symbolic acts or names in the novel?
- Think of the main themes of the novel? What might the author be saying?
- Who else should read this book. Should anyone not be encouraged to read this book? Why?
- Would you like to read more books by this author? Have you already read other books by the author?



## Sample Responses: years 7 and 8

Below you find a number of extracts typically found in response journals:

**Affective responses** are a kind of raw emotion or a 'gut reaction' you have after reading, such as anger, love, jealousy, indignation, contentment, sadness....

e.g.: *I was furious when reading the Battle Royal scene. How can these people be so mean and treat a human being like that. I felt like stepping out and hitting them, or scaming or I don't know what. I was also shocked at how the main character didn't even find it so terrible. (He doesn't have a name! Maybe that has something to say as well, he is invisible and nameless???) He certainly didn't like being treated like that and was frustrated but not as angry as I was. For him this seems to be quite normal. That makes me even more angry! I really hate these fat politicians, they are the worst hypocrites I have ever seen...*

**Associative Responses** are analogies or associations you have when reading. There are no true and false associations, everyone has their own!!! Let your mind wander, relax (as described in the free-writing technique), this will open the doors for all your associations to flow in.

Look, for example, at the following response of a student to a line from a poem.

... "Something there is that doesn't love a wall." (line 1)

...

*I remember when I was young and how I was always sent to my room for punishment of something I had done wrong. I hated being sent to my room, not in the beginning, of course, because I always thought I'd get even with my Mom and show her that I could have a lot of fun in there. As the hours went by, though, I usually ran out of things to do and therefore I would always try to think of a good story to tell sweet ole Dad about how mean Mom had been to me. I just hated those four blank walls; I guess that's because I saw them so often.*

or:

*Little Richard's behavior reminds me of this story I read in the newspaper last week. A little boy had played with matches and then hid in the closet because of his bad conscience and fear. Wow, that's dangerous if little kids react like that. I guess it also has to do a lot with the fear of punishment. These kids must be fit a lot!*

You might also note things that strike you as **strange** or just **interesting** such as for example this response to the beginning of the novel *Song of Solomon* by Tony Morrison.

*It's strange that so many characters have Biblical names: Pilate, Magdalena, First Corinthians, Mercy hospital... (p.18). What does this mean?*

...

*There seem to be a lot of symbols in the book: Watermark (p.11), Red velvet (p.10). I don't know their meanings yet, maybe it'll become clearer later.*

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Also note your impressions of the **structure of the text**. For example:

*The author is constantly jumping back and forth in the lives of the characters. Slowly their history is becoming clear. It's sometimes difficult to follow. I have to read a page or two until I realize who she is dealing with now! I wonder why she does this!*

...

*It's getting worse. I am getting angry with T. Morrison. I feel she is teasing me! Why can't she just organize her material better? There must be some artistic reason or is it just to be different from the others???*

Most of the time your response will be a **mixture of all of these approaches**. Even the examples above usually include more than just one aspect. Don't let yourself be stifled by trying to stick to one aspect. Just let your ideas flow! Don't forget to write down page numbers, so you can later find exact quotes if you need them.

#### **Technical Tip:**

It's a good idea to leave a **margin** in your response journal. When going over your material later, you can make little comments in the margin that help you organize your writing. Depending on your reading and topics you might, for example, mark all the "references to religion" in the margin, or you might want to mark all the places where you got angry with a certain character or all the instances where your main character was cheated by someone....

### **Free Writing:**

**Harlem** by Langston Hughes

**Harriet Beecher Stowe** by Dorothy Parker

What happens to a dream deferred?

The pure and worthy Mrs. Stowe

Does it dry up

Is one we all are proud to know

like a raisin in the sun?

Or fester like a sore--

As mother, wife, and authoress--

And then run?

Does it stink like rotten meat?

Thank God, I am content with less!

Or crust and sugar over--

like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags

like a heavy load.

Or does it explode?

**Barbie Doll** by Marge Piercy

This girlchild was born as usual  
and presented dolls that did pee-pee  
and miniature GE stoves and irons  
and wee lipsticks the color of cherry candy.  
Then in the magic of puberty, a classmate said:  
You have a great big nose and fat legs.

She was healthy, tested intelligent,  
possessed strong arms and back,  
abundant sexual drive and manual dexterity.

She went to and fro apologizing.

Everyone saw a fat nose on thick legs.

She was advised to play coy,

exhorted to come on hearty,

exercise, diet, smile and wheedle.

Her good nature wore out

like a fan belt.

So she cut off her nose and her legs

and offered them up.

In the casket displayed on satin she lay

with the undertaker's cosmetics painted on,

a turned-up putty nose,

dressed in a pink and white nightie.

Doesn't she look pretty? everyone said.

Consummation at last.

To every woman a happy ending.

From: Patricia C. Mc Kisseck  
The Dark-Thirty

## The Chicken-Coop Monster

The final story in this collection is different from the rest, because it is semi-autobiographical. I was shattered when my parents divorced, but fortunately I had a loving grandmother and grandfather who helped me through that very difficult time; I've tried to recapture a sense of that relationship here. A West African proverb from the Benin culture—"Fear is the parent of monsters"—has been used as the story's foundation, but there is a Jewish saying that is its capstone: "Love drives out fear."

**T**HE YEAR I turned nine, my parents' ten-year marriage ended in divorce. The grownups never talked about it around me, but I knew what was going on. Mama and Daddy didn't love each other anymore. So where'd that leave me?

As soon as school was out, they shipped me off to the Tennessee

boonies to stay with my grandparents, Franky and James Leon Russell. I didn't want to go, but no one was listening to me.

A monster lived there. I knew it the minute I set foot on their farm. I was the president of the St. Louis chapter of the Monster Watchers of America, and I was an expert on spotting monsters.

It lived in the chicken coop—the tingling in the back of my neck was strongest when I passed by there. Its hot, mean eyes watched me as I played on the back porch. Sometimes I chased my ball too close and smelled its foul breath. This wasn't an ordinary in-the-closet fright or an under-the-bed scare. I'd come upon something really terrible.

I needed help with this one, so I wrote to my friend Jay, who was in charge of the MWA over the summer. Jay and I had been best buddies since we'd started the MWA the year before. By enclosing fifty cents and six box tops from Crinkle cereal, we'd sent away for and received an official MWA Club starter kit, complete with six badges, six glow-in-the-dark ID cards, and a manual containing ten monster rules and everything else we needed to know about creepy stuff. We'd invited Nora, Jeff, Latisha, and Alandro to join us.

Writing to Jay made me feel better. Meanwhile, I had to be careful not to break any monster rules, because that would make the thing stronger and bolder.

One evening Ma Franky called me to the kitchen. "Missy, I forgot to throw the latch on the chicken coop. Go lock it for me, please."

The sun had set, but there was a little light left in the sky. The backyard was already engulfed by a blanket of darkness, but I could see the silhouette of the old chicken shack against the sky.

I stood on the back porch, a statue of fear. This is what the

monster had been waiting for. I heard the whisper of its tail swishing in the straw.

"Melissa?" My own name startled me. "Why haven't you done what I asked you to do?" Ma Franky's voice quavered with impatience.

She was asking me to break monster rule number five: *Get in the house before dark and don't go out by yourself.*

"There's a monster in your chicken coop," I blurted out. "So I'm not going out there."

Of course Ma Franky had other ideas. "Girl," she said, "if you don't stop this foolishness!" She gave me a little push. "Go on, now. Go close the door, or something will get in the coop and scare my setting hens."

Her hens? What about me? "I hate to tell you this, Ma Franky, but something's in the chicken coop already. That's why I'm not going out there."

"Yes you are, this very minute."

Obviously this monster had fourth-level power, because it'd put a spell on Ma Franky. Why else would she fall for the oldest trick in the book? *Monsters make helpers out of unsuspecting victims.*

"But—" I started to say.

"No buts!" And the next thing I knew, my own grandmother had me by the hand and was pulling me toward the chicken coop. "I want to show you there's nothing out here."

I looked into her eyes. "No!" I screamed. "Don't you see? It's made you a helper." I jerked away from Ma Franky and ran into the house. Even though I was breaking monster rule three—*Never let a monster see you crying*—I couldn't stop the tears.

Then I felt big, strong hands wiping my face with a cool wash-

## THE DARK-THIRTY

cloth. "Oh, sweets," Daddy James whispered softly. "There's nothing round here to fear." His eyes smiled. The monster spell hadn't gotten to him. "No need to fret. I closed the door for you."

DARK THOUGHTS flee in morning light. But the old wooden coop was surrounded by permanent shadows, a sure sign that it was occupied by a hateful thing. I had to be very careful. It would do anything to lure me into its evil hole.

"Bring me my clothespins off the porch," Ma Franky called.

Just as I passed the coop the door creaked open slowly. Sunlight pushed away the darkness just long enough for me to see something large and shapeless. But the monster leaped back into the shadows before I got a really good look at it. I must have screamed, 'cause Ma Franky came running.

"What is it? What is it?"

"I saw the monster. It pushed open the door."

Ma Franky said nothing but walked purposefully into the coop. I wouldn't look, *couldn't* look as she disappeared behind the darkness. I never expected to see her again. But within a few seconds out she came holding a tiny little chick.

She gently transferred it from her hands to mine. "But that isn't the monster," I cried.

"I know. There isn't one. Period!"

Poor Ma Franky. She really believed that, I'm sure. "Won't you come in and look around?" she asked. "Come see where the chickens set on their eggs and hatch little chicks like this one."

It was another monster trick, and I wasn't going for it. "No! I'll never go inside!"

Ma Franky sighed and shook her head. "Whenever you're ready,"

she said, and went back to hanging out her wash. My back was turned, but I could feel the creature laughing at me.

DURING THE WEEK, separate letters came from Mama and Daddy. I wrote them back right away—Mama's went to our old house, Daddy's to a new address. Mama wanted to know all about my new friends. Daddy was happy I could swim in deep water and had caught a fish. But I still hadn't heard from Jay, so I wrote to him again.

First I told him about my new pet chick, Tissy, and how she followed me everywhere, answering my voice and eating the feed I threw out to her. Then I told him about the creature. "I feel it's stronger now, because I've broken a couple of monster rules. It's a tricky one, but I'm watching out for myself. Write soon. Missy."

Following rule nine, I didn't go near the thing's lair. In fact I didn't even play in the backyard. But late one afternoon I missed Tissy. I felt she was in danger. Sure enough, the chick was out back, heading straight for the coop. And the door was open!

Tissy belonged to me. The monster knew it. Monster rule six clearly stated: *Watch out for those you love. If monsters can't get you, they will get the ones closest to you.*

If little Tissy went inside, she was a goner! I had to do something—and fast.

"Here, biddy-biddy-biddy." I imitated Ma Franky calling her hens. Tissy heard my voice and stopped. That was the split second I needed. Dashing forward, I scooped up my little chick and swerved to keep from plunging headlong into the monster's den.

No tears this time. I was mad, so I foolishly broke rule ten—*never let the monster see you angry.*

"Hey, Chicken Neck! You're a real creep, Creep! Why pick on a little bitty innocent chick? Mess with somebody your own size!"

Like who did I have in mind? How dumb could I get? My anger had made the monster swell with fresh power. If I kept breaking rules like that, the creepy thing was going to get me for sure.

AT LAST a letter came from Jay.

July 18, 1960

Dear Missy,

Never got your first letter. The monster must have eaten it. Beware!

The MWA met today. I read your letter to them. We all agreed you're okay as long as you don't break rule one: *Don't face a monster alone!*

The MWA went to see *The Werewolf Returns* five times. We're going again today. We miss you. Come home soon.

Your friend,  
Jay

P.S. Are you going to bring Tissy with you?

Hearing from Jay and my friends helped ease my mind a little. The MWA was right. Nothing could happen to me unless I made the number-one mistake. So I stayed on my guard, ready for any tricks.

That evening the six Harper kids came down to play hide-and-seek. Mae Lizabeth, who was my age but three times my size, smelled like lilac talcum powder all the time. She had a likable way about her that made me feel comfortable. During the summer we had become almost friends.

"Come be my partner and hide with me," I said.

Mae Lizabeth pulled me along behind her. I suggested we hide behind the shrubs along the front porch.

"Come on," she said. "Let's hide in the chicken coop!" I jerked away. "No! Don't . . ."

"Why? It's the perfect place to hide." Suddenly my almost-friend rushed toward that dreaded spot.

I could feel the monster's excitement. My warnings didn't stop Mae Lizabeth from going inside. When she disappeared into the darkness, I started screaming. At the same time Mae Lizabeth let go a bloodcurdling cry. I knew without a doubt my friend had been devoured.

Daddy James, moving like a man half his age, reached the backyard first. Ma Franky puffed along behind him fussing, "We're too old to be going through this, James."

Mae Lizabeth staggered forward, terror and pain twisting her face. She was holding her arm. Blood oozed from a deep gash and trickled down her hand.

Well, the monster hadn't swallowed Mae Lizabeth, but he'd taken a good-size bite out of her arm. Actually, I felt relieved. Now everybody would know that I'd been right all along.

Ma Franky scooted me off to the house to get the first-aid kit. "Seems this nail scratched you," she was saying when I got back. And Daddy James looked and nodded his agreement.

A nail? Oh, no! They couldn't be faked out by that old monster trick. No nail had attacked Mae Lizabeth. I moved in close to get a good look at the wound. "It was the monster!" I shouted. "I bet he did this with his sharp claws. Tell them, Mae Lizabeth. Tell them!"

Mae Lizabeth's eyes opened wide. "Huh? Oh, yes, I saw it . . . It got me."

The monster was hiding deep in the shadows, but I felt it stir. Oh, no, I thought. I was breaking monster rule seven: *Never lie about seeing a monster*. I hadn't lied, but I'd made my friend lie.

"Stop, Mae Lizabeth. You didn't really see anything, did you?" said Daddy James.

The girl shook her head.

"And neither did you, Missy," Ma Franky put in. "Tell me the truth. Have you ever really *seen* anything in that coop?"

"No," I answered, but hurried on to add, "That's how they fool you."

"Hush! Hush this minute," Ma Franky said sternly. "There's nothing in that old coop to hurt anybody."

"Oh, yeah?" I sassed back. "Well, what's that running down Mae Lizabeth's arm? Tomato juice?"

Daddy James pulled me behind him. "Don't speak to your grandmama that way," he said in a stern voice.

"I'm sorry for sassing Ma Franky." And I really was sorry. Lies. Sassing. None of this was me! That thing in the coop had made my summer miserable. I wanted to hate it, but that would break rule eight.

The Harper children stared in wide-eyed amazement while Ma Franky bandaged Mae Lizabeth's arm. Then Daddy James and I walked them home.

"It's a water moon," he said on the way back, pointing out how hazy the full moon looked. "It'll rain 'fore morning."

Most of the time Daddy James was right about things like that. He had his own way of understanding the world, and he'd taught me how to see things differently, too.

For a while we walked in silence. "Missy," he said at last. "Tell me about the monster in your grandmama's chicken coop."

What? Was my very own grandfather a believer? I tested him.  
"Ma Franky doesn't think it exists."

"I know. But monsters are sneaky like that," he said. "They want people not to believe in them."

How lucky could a kid get? My grandfather knew about monster tricks. He listened while I talked about Jay, the MWA, and all ten monster rules.

"I've never really seen the thing in the coop, but I can feel it. And once this summer I saw its shadow. It was big! Since it lives in a chicken coop, I bet it looks a lot like a big chicken."

"Makes sense."

"I imagine it's got two big yellow eyes that glow in the dark, razor-sharp scales, and three-fingered claw hands and claw feet. It stinks like a sewer."

"That sounds like a pretty powerful monster," he said, chuckling softly. "It was a long, long time ago, but a monster like that lived in the crawlspace under my house."

"Really?"

"The thing had me so scared I couldn't even play in my own yard. Then one night I decided to face my monster."

"You broke monster rule one?"

Daddy James laughed. "Is that the rule that says you shouldn't face a monster alone?" I nodded. He went on. "Spec I did. But to keep that ol' slimy, slimy thing from beatin' me down, I had to take it on face to face."

"Was it ugly?"

"It was all the way ugly!"

"Was it mean?"

"Oooo-weeee. It was mean like a snake. But I found courage that night long ago."

"Tell me what happened!"

"I called that monster out, and when it came, I stood flatfooted and looked at it straight in the face."

"Weren't you scared?"

"At first. But as I held my ground I got stronger and it got weaker. Then I said, 'I'm not afraid of you. Now git gone!' Next thing I knew, it had run off hollering."

"Did it ever come back?"

"Oh, every now and then one tries to scare me. But that monster long ago must have told all its friends that I wasn't easy to scare, 'cause I ain' been bothered too much down through the years . . . till now, that is."

I was so excited. Daddy James was a monster fighter. "Good! Then will you chase the creepy thing in the chicken coop away?"

"I could. But it ain' troubling me. If I run it off, it'll just come back and devil you some other way. To be rid of it forever, you must call it out and face it by yourself."

"You mean break monster rules one and two? That'd be like facing Dracula in his castle, at night, all by myself! I wouldn't have a chance."

"You can do it. You're my granddaughter, and that makes you very special."

The short walk home had taken over an hour. Ma Franky had homemade peach ice cream waiting. I didn't feel much like eating, knowing what was before me.

Mustering my courage, I hugged Ma Franky and Daddy James, just in case I didn't get back. "There is no fear in love," he whispered.

Breaking every rule in the monster manual and trusting my grandfather completely, I went to face the creature within.

## THE DARK-THIRTY

"You Chicken Creep. Come out and face me."

Heat lightning zippered across the sky. Thunder grumbled in the distance. Slowly the coop door creaked open. The monster's foul odor sprang at me from its dark hole. The wind picked up, sending wind eddies scampering in the dust. All at once a scratchy moan followed by an awful commotion chilled me to the bone. "Ssss-flip-kkkkk-flop, ssss-flop-kkkkk-flop!" The thing was at the door. I waited breathlessly, not knowing what to expect. Running crossed my mind, but Daddy James's words helped me stand firm. And I did.

What a surprise to see Ma Franky's rooster flap and flutter out of the dark hole with one of his feet stuck in a tin can.

"Another trick," I said boldly. "You can't distract me."

The wind whipped and churned the trees. The thing's anger roared out of the dark gaping hole. It wanted to get me. Why wouldn't it come? Suddenly I realized it couldn't! I was getting stronger and it was getting weaker.

Armed with the powerful weapon my grandfather had given me, I yelled over the whistling wind, "I'm not afraid of you. You're just a lot of hot stinky air."

I heard scurrying about inside the darkness. I waited and waited, hardly noticing that it had started to rain.

Then calling upon the growing courage within me, I turned my back on the monster, saying with confidence, "I am the oldest granddaughter of James Leon Russell. He loves me, and I know it!"

And that's when I knew that my monster was gone!





## 5. Reading Circle Activities

1. Get together in your reading group and decide who is going to be the **Language Police** and **Group Leader** today? Remind your friends to use English only in their discussions and to stay on track (= not digress from the topic). In case of disagreements make sure that your friends argue their point politely.
2. **Sharing Reading Diaries:** Read each others' reading diaries and discuss your reactions to the story.
3. **Work with the small Discussion Prompt Cards.** Sort the cards by color and put the piles face down on your desk. Take a card from the top of a pile and read it out to your classmates. If the card doesn't apply to your book at all, put it back and take a new one. Do the task carefully in your group. Write all your answers into your reading diary. When you have completed a task, take a new card from a different pile. Take turns reading out the tasks and leading the discussion. Do as many tasks as you can but do them carefully and thoroughly.
4. **Workshop and Homework Tasks:** You will find a large selection of A4 task cards on the teacher's desk. Draw 6 cards of different colors, read them briefly and ask yourself whether they apply to your book. If a task does not apply at all, put it back and draw another one. Please enter your name and the card numbers in the list on the box and return the cards in the next lesson. Do 3 of the activities at home. Write all your answers into your reading diary. Always write clear headings (number and name of activity).
5. **Reading on: Read chapter(s) .....** by ..... by ..... by ..... by ..... by ..... and write a 5-minute non-stop entry into your reading diary.
6. **Vocabulary Work:** Collect good phrases and write 20 new vocab cards for the whole book. Hand them in with your reading diary.

<p><b>Task 1: Language Police</b></p> <p><b>English please!!!</b></p> <p>In this activity you are responsible for reminding your group to speak only English. Whenever you catch somebody using German show them this card.</p>	<p><b>Task 3: Character Detective</b></p> <p>List all the characters that you have met so far. What do you know about them? Who are they? What is their role in the story? What mood are they in? Do you like/dislike them? Do you trust/mistrust them?</p>
<p><b>Task 2: New Expressions Expert</b></p> <p>Ask each of your friends to find one new phrase or expression that they would like to remember. Highlight these phrases in your book and write them on vocab. cards.</p>	<p><b>Task 4: Where and When?</b></p> <p>Where and when does your story play? Find a passage in your text where the setting (place and time) is described. Highlight it and copy a few important details into your reading diary.</p>
<p><b>Task 5: Asking questions</b></p> <p>Ask each of your friends to write down one question that they have in mind now. What is it they would like to know about the book? Share your questions and write them into your reading diary. Maybe you can answer them later or ask your teacher.</p>	

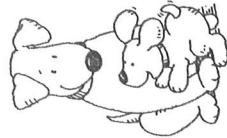
# Book-Groups 3a

## 1. SWBS: The Plot Chart

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
**SWBS: The Plot Chart**



What happens in a story from the beginning until the ending is called the plot. In every story there is SOMEBODY who WANTED something, BUT something got in the way, SO the character had to solve the problem.  
 To finish the plot chart, think about your story and ask yourself the questions below. Then write your answers on the chart.



1. Who is the SOMEBODY in my story?
2. This character WANTED something. What was it?
3. BUT something prevented the character from getting what he or she wanted. What was it?
4. SO the character solved the problem to get what he or she wanted. How did the character solve the problem?

Book title \_\_\_\_\_ Author \_\_\_\_\_

SOMEBODY S	
WANTED W	
BUT B	
SO S	

From: Christine Boardman Moen, Better Than Book Reports, Scholastic, 1992

## 2. Sum It Up

Make a sum-it-up card for your book. Fill in the blanks below.

Title:.....  
 Author:.....  
 Write a summary that tells the main idea.  
 Summary:  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 Three important facts:  
 1. ....  
 2. ....  
 3. ....

Bookgroups3a.doc

## 3. Book-Fair:

Walk around and read all the posted SWBS and SumItUp sheets. Find 3 books that have something in common with your own.

## 4. Grouping Books Together

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
**Grouping Books Together**



Sets of books, or books that belong together, are books that are like each other in some way. Fill in the chart below to show how the books in your set are alike and different.



1. Write the names of the books in your set across the top of your chart under the word "Book."
2. Think about how your books have some of the same and some different ideas, people, places, and things. Write these ideas, people, places, and things in the spaces on the left.
3. Mark an X in the spaces under each book title if that book has the idea, person, place, or thing named on the left.

The name of my book set: \_\_\_\_\_

Ideas, people, places, things from the books	Book:	Book:	Book:

From: Christine Boardman Moen, Better Than Book Reports, Scholastic, 1992

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## 5. Creative Catalogues: Design three A5 catalogue pages.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Creative Catalogs**

Catalogs are a lot of fun to read and to look through. Now is your chance to create a catalog of your very own!

1. In the box below on the right, draw a simple picture of what you want to sell in your catalog. It should be something important from your book. Write the name of the item in the space below the box.

2. On the lines to the left, write a short description of the item. Use facts from your book. Don't forget to add the price!

Book title \_\_\_\_\_ Author \_\_\_\_\_

Name of catalog \_\_\_\_\_

Item 1

Item 2

Item 3

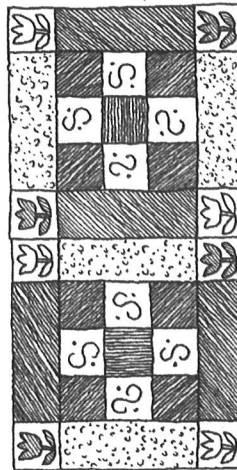
From: Christine Boardman Moen, Better Than Book Reports, Scholastic, 1992

## 6. Vocabulary Quilt

Choose one of your favorite new expressions from your book and write it on a piece of colored paper. Write a short, typical sentence and decorate the paper in a suitable way. Your paper must include:

- the new word written in big letters
- a typical sentence
- a drawing that will help you remember the new phrase.

We will put all our word cards together to make a Vocabulary Quilt. Please design your cards nicely.



# Ideas for Book Presentations

The best and most interesting book presentations will result from intensive group-discussions with the help of the discussion prompt cards and the homework task cards. Every group member should do a different task, possibly from a different area (plot, setting, character...) To make this easier for the students, these different areas are copied on colored cards. The students choose different colors.

A wonderful collection of tasks can be found in the following books, all available at Amazon.com

Laura Robb, *52 Fabulous Discussion-Prompt Cards for Reading Groups*, Scholastic, 2000  
ISBN No. 0-439-22722-4

Janice Szabos, *Reading- A Novel Approach*, Good Apple Inc. 1984.  
ISBN No. 0-86653-186-6

Susan Van Zile, *Awesome, Hands-on Activities for Teaching Literary Elements*, Scholastic, 2001.  
ISBN No. 0-439-16355-2

**Sample Ideas** that have worked very well:

## Plot:

- Present an alternative book cover and blurb: Be sure the illustration relates to an important aspect of the book. Use appropriate colors to evoke the atmosphere created by the book. (Older Ss can also be asked to print out different book covers from the internet. Amazon.com usually has different editions. Ss then present the different cover designs and their own version. The class chooses their favorite one. (Very good way to discover underlying themes and the tone of a novel.)
- Plot on the line: Write the main events on separate sheets. Add simple drawings and decorations. Use clothes-pegs and hang them up on a string. Don't give away the ending.
- Plot mountain: write main events on paper strips (key-words). Stick them on a plot diagram mountain. (draw mountain, slope = rising tension and conflicts, peak = climax, descent = resolution)
- Plot diagram: draw a "fever curve" of the ups and downs in the novel. Peaks of suspense or conflict...., label the curve. Gives a very good overview of the important events in a book.
- Make a plot mini-book (concertina or origami)
- Act out a scene of your choice.

## Setting:

- Make a setting pop-up or a painting that shows the most important place(s) in the book.
- Setting murals: several paintings glued together
- Draw a simple map of the locations in your novel. Make sure the map is large enough for us to read it clearly. Attach a legend to your map. Write a paragraph that explains the importance of each location indicated on your map.

## Characters:

- Identity bags/ character suitcase: Bring a bag full of objects that are somehow important to the main character of your book. Show them and explain their relevance.
- Paper-chain characters: Cut out a set of paper-chain figures, one for each of the main characters in your book. Decorate them: Name, favorite quote(s), looks, favorite activities, likes/dislikes... Use packing paper or flip-chart paper to make your characters big enough for the class to read.
- Character T-shirts: design a T-shirt (picture and slogan) for one of your book's characters
- Character collage: (pictures and words from magazines)
- Prepare a "bubble sheet" (A3 poster) where you collect important quotes from your book.
- Sociogram: Choose suitable buttons to represent the main characters of the book. Then make a sociogram showing the relations between the characters. Compare your version with other students.
- Character profiles: Look at the different levels of a main character's personality and complete the profile circles (see attached worksheet)

## Other:

- Write a poem or song-lyrics that might be used in a film or radio-play of your book.
- A Novel Museum: display 10 to 15 items that play a role in the book. Tour-guides present the artifacts.
- Theme in a bottle: (message in a bottle)
- Make a board game: Design a board (use settings, plot line and events... task cards or fields... you might even make *Fimo* character-counters...)
- Non-stop talking: Ss stand in two concentric circles. The Ss in the outer circle talk non-stop for 1 minute (older Ss can do 2-3 minutes) about the novel they have read. Ss in the inner circle listen. Teacher measures time. After 1 minute, Ss change roles. Then Ss in the outer circle move one person to the left. Do this with 5-6 partners. (Works well for independent reading where Ss talk about different books. If they have all read the same book give out sub-tasks for each round: e.g: Favorite character, least favorite character, setting(s), ending, ...)
- Acrostic poem: Write the title of the novel downwards on a page. Then use each letter as an initial for a line about the book.
- Alternative idea: If you have an idea of your own contact your teacher about it.

**Older students:** Older students who read modern or contemporary literature in their reading groups might also be asked to present:

- Short information about the author: main focus should be on typical themes or characteristic topics, style, other books... Biographical information only if relevant (e.g.: personal experiences that are reflected in the books...)
- Historical or cultural background of the novel
- Making connections to the modern world: Depending on the topics and themes of the book Ss might do tasks such as the following (designed for *Brave New World* or *Animal Farm*):
  - Present the basic principals of propaganda and advertising (do an internet search)
  - Give a propaganda speech about any topic of your choice. Then explain the methods you have used.
  - Present the pros and cons of genetic engineering

# 52 Fabulous Discussion-Prompt Cards for Reading Groups

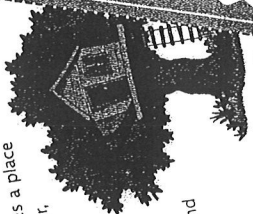
Snap-Apart Question Cards That Build Comprehension & Spark Great Discussions About Character, Plot, Setting, Theme & More

by Laura Robb

#10 Setting

## You Are There

Sometimes an author describes a place so perfectly, you can see, hear, smell, and feel what it looks like. Find a setting in the book that drew you in with its details. Read it to your partner or group. Then, discuss the words and phrases you like.



#23 Making Inferences

## Dialogue Detective

Read aloud to your partner or group a dialogue that taught you a lot about the characters conversing. Tell how you used their words to figure out what they were feeling and what their personalities were like.



#45 Plot

## Page Turner

Did the author leave you dangling from a cliff at the end of each chapter? Discuss two or three of your favorite cliff-hangers and explain why each made you think, "I've just got to read the next chapter!"



Great for Literature Circles!

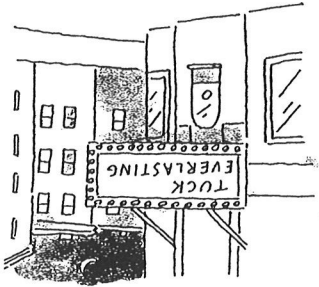
OLASTIC



Mad? You slam a door. Hurt? You cry or run away. Sad? You slump your shoulders. What you say and do communicates your mood and even your personality. The same is true for book characters. Find and discuss two character-revealing passages, and explain what each taught you about that character's feelings, motivations, and personality traits.

## Mood Clues

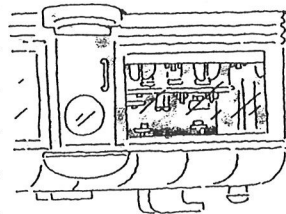
#2/Character



You've been hired to write a one-sentence ad to promote the movie version of this book. With your group, come up with a single sentence that conveys what the main character faces, and what he or she discovers about himself or herself or about others.

## Movie Tag Line

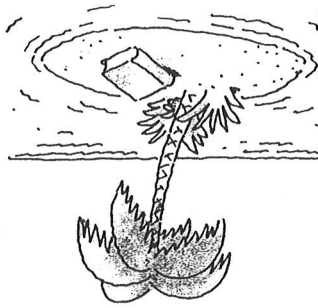
#4/Character



The main character wants to meet you at the local diner to talk about everything he or she has been going through. Think about conflicts this character faces. Then tell the main character what you think about how he or she handles them, and what you consider to be his or her greatest strength—and his or her greatest fear or flaw.

## Heart-to-Heart

#1/Character



Discuss this! If you had to be stranded on a deserted island with any character in this book, who would it be? Why? Who would be your last pick? Why?

## Choose a Character

#3/Character

## Writing Ideas

Read as a writer. Skim your book, and look for words and phrases that you might want to adapt to your writing. Jot these down, and share five or six, and explain why each one appealed to you.



#27/Personal Connections

## Time Travel

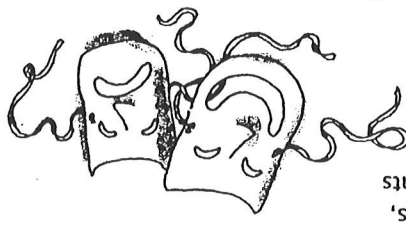
Find examples of flashback—when the story jumps to an earlier point in time. Discuss what you learned from this switch in time. Then discuss which words signaled to you that you were in a different point in the character's life.



#17/Story Structure

## Find the Drama

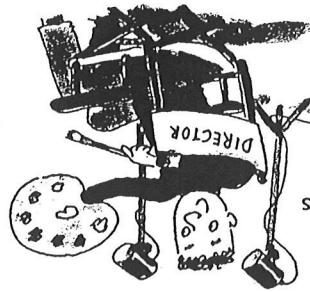
What emotions did the story make you feel? Did you feel nervous? fearful? excited? worried? angry? Take turns sharing a passage that roused your emotions. Read it aloud, and then point to the words, phrases, and events that stirred a specific feeling.



#19/Story Structure

## Creating Mood

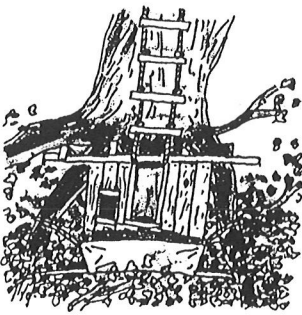
You are directing a play based on this book. Your lighting director asks you to choose a color to help create the mood of the opening scene. First discuss and define the mood, and then pick a color. What associations do you have with this color that made it your choice?



#25/Personal Connections

## You Are There!

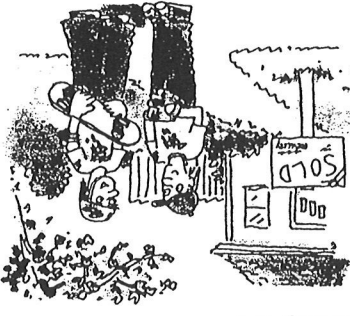
Sometimes an author describes a place with so much detail that you can see, hear, smell, and feel what that place is like. Find a scene that involves several of your senses. Read it to your partner or group, and discuss the words and phrases that stirred each sense.



#16/Setting

## New Kid in Town

The main character is moving to your town. Will he or she fit in? Why or why not? How are his or her values and tastes different from—or the same as—those of your hometown?



#28/Personal Connections

## Hint, Hint

Foreshadowing is a technique authors use to build suspense. It's a detail that hints of something to come. Point out several places where the author uses this technique. Is the clue so obvious it makes you realize what is going to happen, or does it just make you curious?



#20/Story Structure

## Low Point

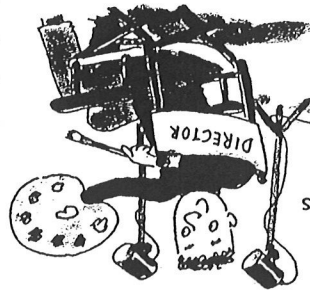
Answer this question from a main character's point of view. Talk-Show Host: "What fears or worries keep you up at night? What was the lowest point in your life?"



#47/Role Play

## Creating Mood

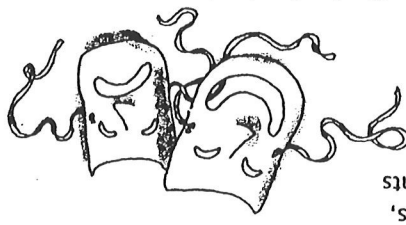
You are directing a play based on this book. Your lighting director asks you to choose a color to help create the mood of the opening scene. First discuss and define the mood, and then pick a color. What associations do you have with this color that made it your choice?



#25/Personal Connections

## Find the Drama

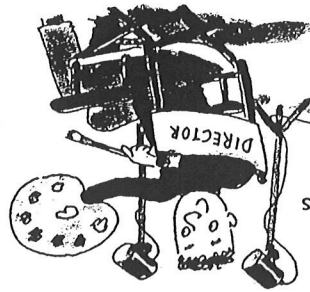
What emotions did the story make you feel? Did you feel nervous? fearful? excited? worried? angry? Take turns sharing a passage that roused your emotions. Read it aloud, and then point to the words, phrases, and events that stirred a specific feeling.



#19/Story Structure

## Creating Mood

You are directing a play based on this book. Your lighting director asks you to choose a color to help create the mood of the opening scene. First discuss and define the mood, and then pick a color. What associations do you have with this color that made it your choice?



#25/Personal Connections

## Time Travel

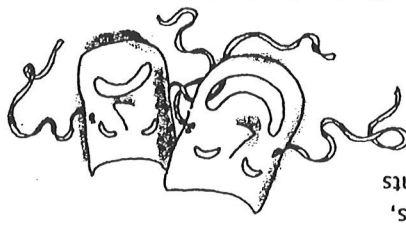
Find examples of flashback—when the story jumps to an earlier point in time. Discuss what you learned from this switch in time. Then discuss which words signaled to you that you were in a different point in the character's life.



#17/Story Structure

## Find the Drama

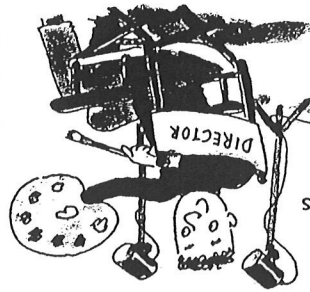
What emotions did the story make you feel? Did you feel nervous? fearful? excited? worried? angry? Take turns sharing a passage that roused your emotions. Read it aloud, and then point to the words, phrases, and events that stirred a specific feeling.



#19/Story Structure

## Creating Mood

You are directing a play based on this book. Your lighting director asks you to choose a color to help create the mood of the opening scene. First discuss and define the mood, and then pick a color. What associations do you have with this color that made it your choice?



#25/Personal Connections

## Hint, Hint

Foreshadowing is a technique authors use to build suspense. It's a detail that hints of something to come. Point out several places where the author uses this technique. Is the clue so obvious it makes you realize what is going to happen, or does it just make you curious?



#20/Story Structure

## Low Point

Answer this question from a main character's point of view. Talk-Show Host: "What fears or worries keep you up at night? What was the lowest point in your life?"



#47/Role Play

## Writing Ideas

Read as a writer. Skim your book, and look for words and phrases that you might want to adapt to your writing. Jot these down, and share five or six, and explain why each one appealed to you.



#27/Personal Connections

## Time Travel

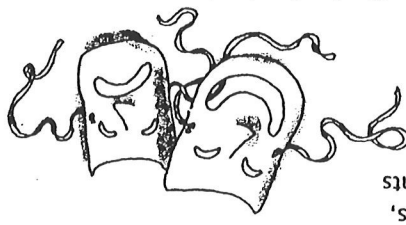
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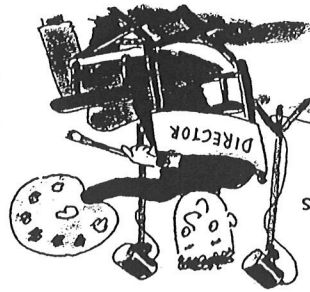
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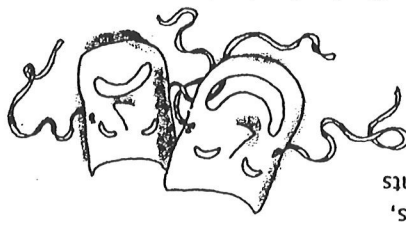
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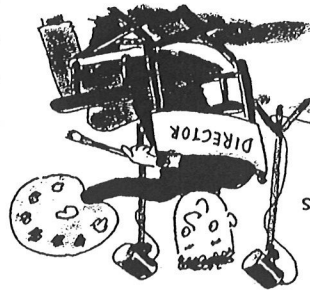
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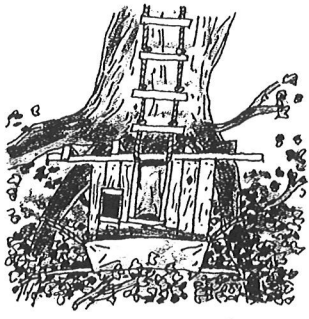
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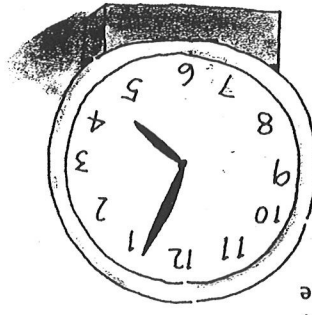
#25/Personal Connections



Sometimes an author describes a place with so much detail that you can see, hear, smell, and feel what that place is like. Find a scene that involves several of your senses. Read it to your partner or group, and discuss the words and phrases that stirred each sense.

## You Are There!

#16/Setting



Reflect on how much time passes in your book. Skimming the text, find and discuss passages that show how the author makes time move.

## Clues About Time

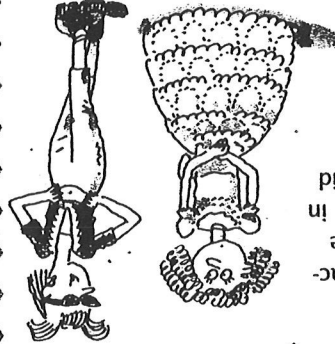
#15/Setting



Pick your favorite character. Which settings deeply affect the character's decisions and feelings? Which create two or three settings and clearly explain the impact each has on the character.

## Important Scenes

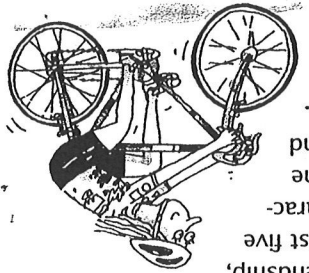
#14/Setting



In this book are the characters living in the past, the future, or do they remain in the present time? What did you learn about the time period? Do you think the world is better or worse off now?

## Past, Present, Future

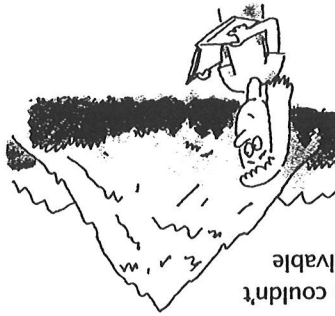
#13/Setting



List things you cherish in life, such as free time, in-line skating, a friendship, or a favorite sport. Now list five to six things the main character values. Discuss how the plot helped you understand what the character values. Then compare your values to the character's.

## Favorite Things

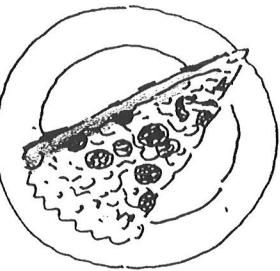
#8/Character



The main character of your book has problems that he or she couldn't solve. Choose two unsolvable problems, explain how the main character deals with each and why each one is impossible to resolve.

## Unsolvable!

#7/Character



Imagine you are having pizza with one of the minor characters in your book. Think about how this character would view a conflict that the main character faced and how they would have solved it. Discuss from the minor character's point of view.

## Minor Character

#6/Character



As a group, discuss several adjectives that describe the main character and pick the best one. Then scan the book for a line or a passage that proves you right. Take a vote on which section provides the strongest evidence.

## Show Me the Support

#5/Character

# How to wet your students' appetite...

Present appropriate books regularly. In your presentations

- focus on a key scene where your main character finds himself in a difficult situation.
- focus on the main problem or conflict of the book
- link the problem to the real world around us
- do not give away the whole plot.

Ideas for your presentations:

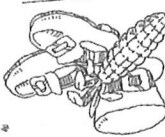
- Describe the main character(s) and their situation/problem/desires...
- Invite students to search for solutions to the problems presented in the book.
- "Put yourself in my shoes" (How would you (the students) react if...)
- Introduce a news article or other text about current events/news that are related to the theme of the novel.
- Read the opening page(s) and stop at a cliff-hanger.
- Choose a really riveting passage (where the main character is in trouble) for a running dictation or dictogloss, then have Ss guess what the book might be about.
- Give Ss the title of the book and/or bookcover, have them ask you YES/NO questions.
- Write a postcard or letter from the main character's point of view (e.g. : describe the situation. ask for help). Ss then write back, asking further questions, giving advice...
- Read a riveting page from the middle of the book. Have Ss guess who/what/why/where...
- Be creative...

While waiting for the books to arrive ask students to write a short paragraph (100 words)

including the following phrases:

- I've chosen ..... because
- I hope that...
- I wonder if...

## Performance Planning Sheet



To get ready for your one-person performance, read your book and think about the main character. Plan your performance by filling out this sheet. Finally, practice your performance in front of a mirror.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**The One-Person Show**

Book title \_\_\_\_\_

Character's name & age \_\_\_\_\_

Author \_\_\_\_\_

1. What will I need to wear in order to show my audience when and where my character lived?

2. How will I need to speak in order to show my character's age? What kind of accent or special words will I need to use?

3. What kinds of props will I need? (Props include tables and chairs as well as things actors use like books and reading glasses.)

4. As I pretend to be this character, what will I tell the audience about who my character is, where he or she came from, what he or she thinks and feels, and what has happened in his or her life?

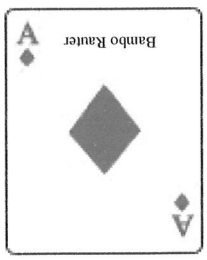
*the body of Christopher Creed*  
*Monore*  
 I've chosen "the body of Christopher Creed" because  
 I think it's a very interesting story that I hope  
 will make me think later.  
 I hope that in the book Christopher Creed is  
 not dead and will be found again.  
 I wonder if it was only because of his fellow  
 students that he left?  
 I wonder if he was so depressed that he  
 really killed himself.  
 I wonder if he had ever had a best friend?  
 I wonder why he was (killed) by everybody.  
 I wonder why he didn't change schools?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make a sketch of her tree as you read. How does it change? Use it in the presentation.</li> <li>• Include other tree symbolism e.g. "Punning" chapter...p. 186.</li> <li>• Movie: Watch the movie, use movie watching tips in bonus material pages (back of book)</li> <li>• Letter to Melinda</li> <li>• Chapter headings: very telling. Choose a few favorite ones, explain their meaning/symbolism</li> <li>• Plot mountain</li> </ul>
<p><b>Possible tasks for book project:</b></p>

1. Do flap text as DICTOGLOSS (good tenses!) guess...
  2. Read them p. 3-5
  3. Discuss: What is sexual harassment? Date-rape? I read it out loud. Ss listen and may read along but MUST keep their arms folded (no writing)
  4. Hand out article "Fighting With Danger"
  5. Hand out info-page: Girls/Boys in the Know
- Groups: write 7 Tips for Girls/Boys (1 catchy sentence or slogan about each \$)

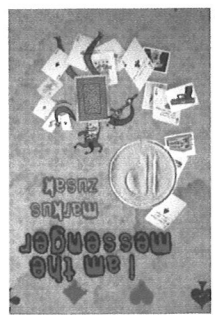
**Speak**  
**By Laurie Halse Anderson**

What might she be referring to in "If there is anyone in the entire galaxy I am dying to tell what really happened, it's Rachel?"  
What might have happened that made her such an outsider?



1. What would you do if you received the following card?  
Ed becomes a hero when he points a gun at the most incompetent bank robber the world has ever seen. Soon after, he receives his first message --- an Ace of Diamonds playing card with three addresses and times written on it. Ed realizes that this is more than an invitation; it's an assignment, and he feels compelled to respond. Ed knows he's been chosen, to care and to act. But how? And by whom?
- Ed Kennedy, 19, is a cab driver who gets no respect (and actually feels like he doesn't deserve any). He lives in a shack with a stinky, coffee-drinking seventeen-year-old dog named the Doorman. He's in love with Ed because she "likes him too much."

**Markus Zusak**  
**I AM THE MESSENGER**



18	Page Turner
2	Mood Lines
3	Movie Tag Line (change a bit: which scenes are they going to show in the trailer?)
5	Show me support
16	Setting
21	Who interests you

- Discussion Prompt Cards: 18, 2, 3, 5, 16, 21 in the book.
- Map: Use a world map and mark /label all the places mentioned.
- Character Portrait (circle...) for the main characters. (looks, smells, goals, behavior...)
- Collect facts and keywords describing the good characters and the evil characters.
- Venn Diagram: Good and Evil
- For presentation: look them up in google and present the most interesting ones
- Collect names of characters and mythical beings
- Famine in Ireland, ...)
- Collect historical events (Great Fire of London 1666, Great Ideas for white-reading and post-reading tasks:

- Read book by.....
4. Groups meet and share findings about the same topic, then crossgroup.
  - Homework: Look up the word/name on your card in google /wikipedia... and prepare an A6 info-card for each one. (keywords)

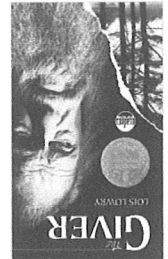


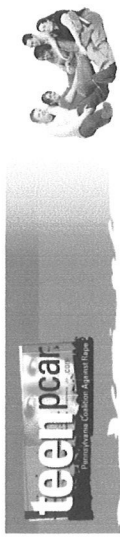
**Teacher's Notes:**  
**The Alchemist (Michael Scott)**

1. Prepare cards with the words: (you'll need one card per student)
2. Read chapter 1 to the class
3. Hand out the cards.

- Every person and his or her experience are precisely the same.
  - Climate and weather are controlled to everyone's profit.
  - At age 11 jobs are assigned to young people by their teachers and educators.
  - Every family has 2 parents, a son and a daughter. The relationships are not biological, partners and children are assigned by authorities using careful observation and character analysis.
- Some details: Discuss the following conditions. What are the advantages? What are the disadvantages?**
3. Imagine you lived in a society without conflict, poverty, unemployment, divorce, injustice, or inequality where competition has been eliminated in favor of a community in which everyone works only for the common good.
  2. Solve the problems: Choose a few valid problems from your list (e.g. poverty, war, divorce, unemployment...) and discuss how they could be solved in an ideal society?
  1. Brainstorming: What are the big problems in today's world?

**The GIVER by Lois Lowry**





## Girls In The Know

### Internet Safety

Think you're safe because you're in the comfort of your own bedroom chatting online? Think again. Keep your identity private. Don't give out your photograph, name, address, phone number, the name of your school, what school activities you're involved in or your parents' work schedule. All of those bits of information can become "clues" for sexual predators to find you. Most importantly, don't meet an online stranger in person. The typical teen who turns up missing from an online meeting is 15 years old and female.

**Saying "NO"**  
Sometimes, sexual assault is the result of miscommunication. For example, the guy doesn't pick up on the girl's nonverbal signs or listen to her protests. Be assertive. Tell him what you don't want to do. Don't be afraid to say "NO" and stick by it.

**Sexual Harassment**  
Flirting between teens is common and healthy. But, some teens have trouble knowing the difference between respectful behavior and unwanted attention. Sexual harassment is any unwanted physical or verbal advance that is sexual in nature. It leaves the recipient feeling demeaned and threatened. Approximately 80% of teens experience sexual harassment. Confront your harasser then report him/her to the school principal or guidance counselor.

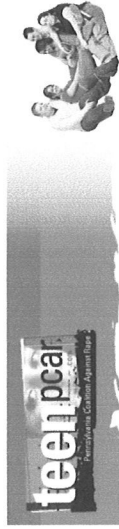
**Dating and sexual assault**  
One out of every five high school girls reports being sexually and/or physically abused by a dating partner. If your boyfriend ignores you or doesn't listen to you, it's time to get out. He might not listen when you say "NO" to sex. Move on if he acts overly possessive or jealous, because a bad temper can lead to violence. Date people who respect you.

It's estimated that 70% of all rapes and sexual assaults are committed by someone known to the victim. If someone is forcing you to have sex, use the word RAPE. This can shock your attacker back to his senses. Or, lie. Tell him you have STDs, your friends are coming back, your parents are expecting you, whatever. Trust your gut. Surviving the attack is the most important thing, whether or not you choose to fight back.

**Alcohol and sexual assault**  
You probably know all about the dangers of drinking and driving. But, did you know that alcohol is the most commonly used date rape drug? When you're under the influence, it's hard to communicate what you want—and what you don't. Alcohol can impair your ability to make smart decisions, lower your inhibitions, render you unconscious and make it easy for someone to force you into a dangerous situation. If you're going to drink, use the buddy system and never leave your drink unattended.

**Statutory rape**  
Dating is a healthy part of being a teenager, but things can get complicated when age differences come into play. In Pennsylvania, sexual activity between someone under 16 years old and someone four or more years older is statutory rape. A healthy relationship requires a balance of power. The ability to drive and earn money gives the older person a lot more power in a relationship.

**If your friend is raped**  
Believe her. Listen to her. Let her know it wasn't her fault. Let her decide who to tell and what to do. She should receive medical help. Even if she can't see any injuries, she could still be injured internally. In order for the nurse to collect evidence, the victim should not eat/drink, shower, urinate, douche or change clothes before going to the emergency room. It's a good idea to call the local rape crisis center. It's free and confidential.



## Guys In The Know

### When the guy is the victim

Yes, guys are raped and sexually abused. No, it doesn't mean they're gay, weak or less of a man. It's NEVER the victim's fault. Sexual violence has nothing to do with sexual orientation. Just because a guy is raped by another guy, it doesn't mean he's gay—no matter how the victim's body reacted during the attack. And, just because a guy person is raped, it doesn't mean that he is to blame for the attack. No one asks to be raped. One out of every six guys is sexually assaulted by the age of 18.

If you know someone who has been sexually assaulted, call you local rape crisis center (888) 772-PCAR (in Pa).

### Sexual Harassment

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Alcohol is the most commonly used date rape drug. Sometimes, there is malicious intent to ply a girl with alcohol or to slip a drug into her drink. Other times, both people's inhibitions are lowered and their ability to clearly communicate breaks down. Regardless, it's rape unless both people consent. Alcohol is never an excuse. See a guy getting a girl drunk to sleep with her? Step in and stop it.

### Online safety

There's nothing private about a "personal" Web page. Thinking of posting pictures from that party on your blog? Would you tape them up on the walls of the school cafeteria? Whatever you post can be seen by anyone with Internet access anywhere in the world, forever. The information is public domain. Even if you delete a blog, saved versions can still exist on other people's computers.

One in seven boys has met strangers from the Internet. That's not smart. Don't let online strangers trick you into thinking of them as real-life friends and don't meet them in person. Law enforcement officials estimate that as many as 50,000 sexual predators are online at any given moment. At night, the number jumps to 250,000.

### Saying and hearing "NO"

It's a one-word lesson that every guy needs to learn about sex. When the answer is no, the answer is no. If it's against her will, it's against the law. It's rape. Respecting someone enough to let her control her life is more powerful than controlling her yourself. Being a guy isn't about getting some. It's about respect. Give it, get it.

## FLIRTING WITH DANGER

Teens confused by issues of date rape, violence and casual sex

By Karen Eschbacher

The news trucks descended, first in Braintree, then in Canton.

In a one-week period in early February, six high school students were charged with raping four 15-year-old classmates in separate, unrelated cases.

Residents in the communities reeled at the news, shocked that the suspects, five of whom are popular athletes, faced such serious charges.

But shock quickly turned to divisiveness. Lines were drawn between those who believed the girls, and those who blamed them.

Rumors spread, along with whispers about the girls' reputations. Petitions circulated through Braintree and Canton high schools urging administrators to allow at least some of the boys back in class.

In the quiet suburbs south of Boston, it would be easy to write off these cases as isolated incidents. But in high schools across the South Shore, confusion and casual attitudes about sex are fueling risky behaviors most teenagers keep well hidden from adults.

In interviews and surveys, teenagers paint a picture of boys who force sex despite being told no, girls who are reluctant to call the crime rape, and a social climate that encourages victims to remain silent.

As a result, experts and teenagers agree, most cases of teen-on-teen rape go unreported.

### Statistics tell a chilling story

- In a Patriot Ledger survey of 527 South Shore high school students conducted for this series, one in five said they knew someone at their school who was forced to have sex by a friend or date and did not report it to police.
- Seven percent of boys in the survey said it's OK to force a girl out on a date to have sex. That compares to only 4 percent of boys who said it was OK in a 1993 Patriot Ledger teen dating survey that asked the same question.
- Twenty percent of boys in the new survey said it is OK or sometimes OK to force a girl to have sex if they are "going together" and have had sex before. Fifteen percent of boys said the same is true if a girl consented but then changed her mind.
- Sixteen percent of Massachusetts high school girls have experienced sexual contact against their will, according to the 1999 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey.
- More than half of all rape and sexual assault victims are females 25 or younger, according to the U.S. Department of Justice.



DEBEE TLUMACKI/The Patriot Ledger

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