

Begin, End, Begin

A #Love Oz YA Anthology

*By Amie Kaufman, Will Kostakis, Alice Pung,
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Teachers Notes Written by Laura Kings

Book Summary:

This anthology has them all.

With brilliantly entertaining short stories from beloved young adult authors Amie Kaufman, Melissa Keil, Will Kostakis, Ellie Marney, Jaclyn Moriarty, Michael Pryor, Alice Pung, Gabrielle Tozer, Lili Wilkinson and Danielle Binks, this is all-new collection will show the world exactly how much there is to love about Aussie YA.

These notes have been designed for teachers to explore the novel in line with the Australian [Curriculum: English](#)

Themes

Coming-of-age, friendship, identity, intercultural identity, facing adversity, magic and imagination

Recommended Ages 14+

Dear Reader,

Books are family. Books are community.

Characters come into our lives, and we're invited to walk beside them. An author welcomes us into the world they've created, a view into their mind's eye.

Any book you hold was nurtured by many hands: early readers, agents, publishers, editors, illustrators, designers, type-setters, printers, publicists, librarians, teachers ... the list goes on and on.

Books create communities — bringing together characters, ideas, writers, words and readers. This book was created by community.

In 2015, the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) surveyed public libraries to find out the list of Top Ten most borrowed books. It was disappointing to find only two Australian titles featured in the young adult category, which was overwhelmed by American books, many bolstered by blockbuster film adaptations.

Our community's response was the creation of #LoveOzYA — a hashtag coined to harness the conversation, and talk about our love of Australian young adult literature, to champion our stories.

LoveOzYA was born from readers and writers and all who love Australia's national youth literature. It was not born out of patriotism or a rejection of international voices — far from it. LoveOzYA has been about the inclusion of voices. And it has been a movement, as the name suggests, about love.

This was the spur to create #LoveOzYA — not only an anthology, but an entire movement devoted to the promotion of Australian creators and their stories.

This book is a love letter to that movement, and all who got behind it.

I hope you enjoy it, as much as we loved creating it.

— Danielle Binks

One Small Step ... by Amie Kaufman

Comprehension Questions

Complete the following using quotes from the text to support your responses.

1. Take note of the story's title. What type of figurative language has been employed? Why has the author chosen this title? What famous quote are they referencing and why? Why has the author chosen to include an ellipsis?
2. As you read the story, keep a vocabulary list of any words that are unfamiliar to you. Make a note of the context in which the word is used (write out the sentence from the story), record the page number and find the meanings in a reputable dictionary and record them next to the entries on your list.
3. The story is written in the first person. Why has the author chosen to do this? How does this choice help to convey the story's message?
4. What is unique about Zaida? Where does she live? Describe the circumstances of her birth? What is her role in Martian society? How is she perceived on Earth? How does she feel about this?
5. Courage is a major theme in the story. How does Zaida demonstrate courage through the text? How do other characters demonstrate courage?
6. What is Harvard? Why has the author chosen to reference this institution in the introduction to the story? What is the significance of a letter from Harvard? What does this mean for the main character, Zaida, and what do you make of her reaction to the letter?
7. What role does social media play in the story and what is Zaida's attitude to her social media commitments? How does she meet her social media commitments? How does social media play a part in the society in which Zaida lives? How does this compare to our society?
8. Take note of the passages in which Zaida describes life and the colony on Mars. How does Zaida's description compare to your ideas of what life on Mars would be like? How does Zaida's life differ to yours?
9. Why isn't the story written in chronological order? What effect does this create for the reader?
10. Describe Zaida's relationship with her parents? What do Zaida's social media commitments reveal about her relationship with her parents? How does Zaida's relationship with her parents contrast with Keiko's?
11. How does Zaida feel about her "celebrity" status? Are her feelings justified? How would you feel if you were in her position?
12. What does Zaida desire most? Justify your answer, considering the concept of personal autonomy in your response.
13. This is a story about identity. How does Zaida's public persona compare to her view of herself? Do you identify with how Zaida feels? Why/why not. Explain.
14. Describe Keiko. Why is a suit breach her personal nightmare? Describe Zaida's relationship with Keiko. What complicates this relationship? Are Zaida's uncertainties justified?
15. How do Zaida and Keiko's lives differ to those of teenagers on earth today? Consider education, jobs, responsibilities and safety in your response.

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16. From where do Zaida and Keiko get their money? What is the significance of these young women having access to personal wealth? What does this mean for their personal autonomy?
17. Why did the author choose to include a threat to Keiko's life in the story? How would the story be different if this event was not included?
18. What does Zaida realize she really wants at the end of the story?

Activities

1. Research the author, Amie Kaufman. Present your findings as a biography card, wanted poster or Wikipedia entry. Consider writing an interview with the author, discussing the story *One Small Step ...* (<http://amiekaufman.com>).
2. What would happen if Zaida and Keiko chose to stay on Mars at the end of the story? Re-write the ending.
3. Find a gap or silence in the story and fill it. For example, re-write the story from another character's point of view or describe an event in more detail.
4. Research the possibilities of humans colonizing Mars. Do you think this will ever happen and how soon do you think it will be a possibility? Consider presenting your response as report, an opinionative article, debate or a PowerPoint presentation to the class.
5. Imagine that you write an advice page on a blog, Facebook or in the local newspaper where teens can ask for your advice on how to deal with issues facing them. What advice would you offer Zaida if she contacted you about one of the issues facing her in the story. Choose from one of the following:
 - a. Imagine it is sometime before the story has taken place and Zaida is planning to reveal her true feelings to Keiko. What would your advice to her be and why?
 - b. Zaida is planning to inform her parents about her new relationship with Keiko and their plans to go to Earth. What is the best way to do this?
 - c. Imagine that Zaida no longer wants to fulfil her social media commitments. How would be the best way for her to inform people that she intends to do this?
 - d. Zaida feels she has no control over her life. How can she gain more control and to whom should she speak about this?

Further Reading

1. *Blue Is the Warmest Color* by Julie Maroh (Graphic Novel)
2. *Higher Education* by Charles Sheffield and Jerry Pournelle
3. *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott
4. *Divergent* by Veronica Roth
5. *Dragon Keeper* by Carole Wilkinson
6. *Looking for Alibrandi* Melina Marchetta
7. *Being Emily* by Rachel Gold
8. *Alex As Well* by Alyssa Brugman
9. *The Martian* (2015 film)
10. *The Space Between Us* (2017 film)

I Can See the Ending ... by Will Kostakis

Comprehension Questions

Complete the following using quotes from the text to support your responses.

1. Why do you think the author chose this particular title?
2. As you read the story, keep a vocabulary list of any words that are unfamiliar to you. Make a note of the context in which the word is used (write out the sentence from the story), record the page number and find the meanings in a reputable dictionary and record them next to the entries on your list.
3. Why does the author keep the reader guessing about what is ending in the introduction? How did you feel after reading the introduction? Was it effective?
4. Who is Nina? Describe her. How does Adam feel about her?
5. How does Adam feel about his job?
6. What is ending in the story?
7. What is unspoken between Nina and Adam?
8. What does it mean to be “aged out of a fast-food job”? What are the implications of this practice?
9. What happens when Adam kisses Nina? What is his reaction? How do you feel about his response?
10. What is remarkable about Adam? Explain.
11. Who is Sophie? Describe her and her role in the story.
12. What would you do if you had ability like Adam’s?
13. What happened when Adam tried to control his powers? What upset him and how did he react to this?
14. What does it feel like when Adam sees the future?
15. Do you think Adam should date Nina? Why/why not? Explain.
16. What is Adam’s attitude to the future? Explain using references to the text.
17. Why do you think Adam writes his predictions on sticky notes?
18. Describe Adam’s mother. Describe his relationship with her. Do they have a healthy parent/child relationship in the story?
19. What does Adam think he needs? Why? Explain.
20. What happens when Adam talks to the “Astounding Anne-Marie”? What do you think of Adam’s reaction?
21. How does Adam feel about himself? Explain. Do you think his feelings are justified? Why?
22. How does Adam feel about his ability? Explain.
23. Why did Adam’s mother get involved with his dad when she knew it wouldn’t last?
24. What is Adam’s mother’s advice about how to deal with knowing the future? Do you agree with her ideas? Why/why not? Explain.
25. Does Adam have to take his mother’s advice? Why/why not? Would you take her advice? Explain.
26. How does Adam learn to use and control his ability? Explain.
27. How does Nina react to finding out about Adam’s abilities? How would you react if you were in her position?

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28. What do you think about Adam's choice about how to approach his relationship with Nina? What would you do the same or differently?

Activities

1. Research the author, Will Kostakis. Present your findings as a biography card, wanted poster or Wikipedia entry. Consider writing an interview with the author, discussing the story *I Can See the Ending* (<http://willkostakis.com>).
2. Suggest an alternative title for the story. Justify your choice.
3. What if Adam decides not to pursue the relationship with Nina? How could the story change? Re-write the story.
4. Have you ever, or does someone you know, work in the fast food industry? Have you ever encountered the practice of "aging out" employees who achieve senior wages? What is your opinion of this practice? Conduct some research into the rights of workers. Write a feature article, compile a report for a current affairs program or conduct a class debate on the issue.
5. Research the romance genre. How is this story similar or different to other stories in the genre?
6. Research the literary term Magic Realism. Do it apply to this story? Justify your choice.
7. What would you do if you could see into the future or read someone's mind? Would you want these powers? Would you use your powers for good or for evil? Is it ethical to use them at all? Discuss.

Further Reading

1. YA Book Lists: Psychic Teen Fiction (<http://www.texascity-library.org/ya/biblio/psychics.php>)
2. *The Gilda Joyce*: Psychic Investigator series by Jennifer Allison
3. *The Mystyx* series by Artist C. Arthur
4. *The Seven Rays* by Jessica Bendinger
5. *The Extraordinary Secrets* of April, May, and June by Robin Benway
6. *The Shadow Project* series by Herbie Brennan
7. *Alyzon Whitestarr* By Isobelle Carmody
8. *The Haven series* by Kristi Cook
9. *Give Up the Ghost* by Megan Crewe
10. *The Body Finder* series by Kimberly Derting
11. *The Clarity* series by Kim Harrington
12. *The Ghost and the Goth* series by Stacey Kade
13. *Crossing Over* (also on audiobook) by Anna Kendall
14. *The Minds* series by Carol Matas
15. *The Dead Is ...* series by Marlene Perez
16. *The Lily Dale* series Wendy Corsi Staub
17. *Jessica* (1-800-WHERE-R-U series), by Meg Cabot (as Jenny Carroll)
18. *Cameron* (The Mind Readers), by Lori Brighton

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In a Heartbeat... by Alice Pung

Comprehension Questions

Complete the following using quotes from the text to support your responses.

1. The title, *In a Heartbeat*, contains a pun. What is a pun? To what is Pung referring here? Why has she chosen to employ a pun?
2. As you read the story, keep a vocabulary list of any words that are unfamiliar to you. Make a note of the context in which the word is used (write out the sentence from the story), record the page number and find the meanings in a reputable dictionary and record them next to the entries on your list.
3. To whom is the first line addressed and why do they need reassurance?
4. The story is written in the mode of a personal letter. Who is the author of the letter? Why are they writing it?
5. Describe Kim. How does Kim feel different to her classmates? How does Kim feel about herself? How do Kim's looks impact her life? Of what does she wish people would take more notice?
6. Displacement refers to a sense of being socially or culturally "out of place". Do you think Kim suffers from a sense of displacement? Why/why not? Justify your response.
7. Describe Kim's mother. How her mother is portrayed as speaking is relevant. What does it reveal about her and the way Kim views her mother?
8. Describe Kim's relationship with her mother. How is their relationship similar or different to yours with your parents?
9. Kim's mother is overly concerned with appearance and apparel. What effect does this have on Kim?
10. First generation migrants are those who, as adults, themselves made the move from one country to another. Second generation migrants are the children of migrants, who were either very young at the time of migration or were born in the country of arrival. The perspectives across the generations can differ enormously. Is this the case with Kim and her mother? In your opinion, does this impact on their relationship in any way? Justify your response.
11. Describe Nancy. Describe her relationship with Kim. Is she a good friend? Is Kim a good friend to her? Why is she worthy of mention in the story?
12. Who is Luis? Describe him. What is his relationship to Nancy and Kim? Why is Kim attracted to Luis?
13. Do you agree with Kim's decision to keep the baby? Why/why not?
14. Do you think Luis' response is appropriate? Why/why not?
15. Are you surprised by Kim's mother's behaviour at the end of the story? Why? Explain.
16. Why does Kim fail to appreciate her mother until the end of the story? Explain.
17. What does this story tell you about gender roles in Kim's world?
18. Kim is conscious of her appearance and the (sometimes unwelcome) attention that it sometimes garners her. Is her beauty an asset or a problem? Justify your response.
19. How do you feel about Kim's choices in the story? Would you make similar or different choices? Explain your reasoning.
20. What role does race play in this story?

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21. The letter is written with a humorous, light-hearted tone. However, serious and distressing things are happening, but Kim keeps the letter light. Why?
22. In your opinion, is the letter really for Kim's future child? In what other way could it be useful?
23. Kim asserts that she is smart and craves the attention of those who she believes notice it (e.g. Louis). Why do you think her intellectual prowess is undervalued until the end of the story? How would the story be different if this were not the case?

Activities

1. Research the author, Alice Pung. Present your findings as a biography card, wanted poster or Wikipedia entry. Consider writing an interview with the author, discussing the story In a Heartbeat (<https://www.alicepung.com>).
2. What is Migrant Literature? Does this story qualify as Migrant Literature? Justify your response.
3. Many migrants come to Australia in pursuit of a better life for themselves and their children. Do you think this is true of any of the characters in this book? Do you think that this is achievable for the children in this story? Are their parents' aspirations for them achievable? Explain and justify your response.
4. Letter writing:
 - a. Write a letter to your future child. How would you like their life to start and what would you like them to know about you, your family and their place in the world?
 - b. Write a letter from Kim's mother to Kim detailing her hopes and dreams for her before her birth. Re-write the letter now that Kim is pregnant and highlight how those hopes and dreams have changed and why.
 - c. Write a letter from Kim's child to her as she expects her own child and reflects on her life experiences and relationship with her mother.
5. Write a conversation between Alice and her mother where she first reveals she is pregnant and perform for the class. What other conversations could you write about from the book?
6. What is symbolism? Explain how clothing plays a symbolic role in this story.
7. Explain how setting plays a significant role in Kim's relationship with Luis. Their relationship starts in the library, moves to the park and then flourishes in her home. In which setting is Kim the most content? Why is Kim uneasy when the relationship moves to her home?
8. Consider the character of Luis. His parent's actions, his actions, Kim's assessment and that of her mother's reveal subtle aspects of Chinese cultural values, which are at times different from and similar to, the Australian norm. Discuss any that interest, intrigue or challenge you.
9. There are similarities between the trajectories of Kim's life and her mother's. How are these women similar and how are they different? List your responses in a table or a Venn diagram. What does this reveal about the relationship between Kim and her mother?
10. Why is a stereotype? How does a stereotype function in society? When can a stereotype be harmful? What stereotypes apply to you? What stereotypes are present in this text? Why did the author include these stereotypes and what are her

intentions?

11. This story is deceptively simple, but actually encompasses several themes, including identity and belonging, generational difference, gender roles and responsibility and expectation. Choose one of those listed and explain how it operates in the narrative.
12. The story is told entirely from Kim's perspective. What are the advantages/disadvantages of this?
13. Kim comments on her mother's poor use of English. How does this influence the reader's perception of Kim's mother? Is this view ultimately justified? Why/why not? How can an author's use of dialogue help to tell a story?
14. Write a straightforward, serious account of a significant event in your life. Now write a humorous or ironic account of the same episode. Share both with a partner and compare their reactions. Which is the most successful? Explain

Further Reading/Viewing

1. *Juno* (2007)
2. *A Swift Pure Cry*, by Siobhan Dowd.
3. *Small Damages* by Beth Kephart
4. *Wild Orphan* poem by Allen Ginsberg
5. "If" by Rudyard Kipling
6. Gwen Harwood writes poems about motherhood: "Gwen Harwood; selected poems and themes" by English Works contributors (<http://www.englishworks.com.au/gwen-harwood-paragraphs/>)
7. "Growing up Asian in Australia", edited by Alice Pung
8. "What I've learnt from studying in Australia as an Asian woman", by Ly Phan, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17.05.2016 (<http://www.smh.com.au/lifestyle/news-and-views/opinion/what-ive-learnt-from-studying-in-australia-as-an-asian-woman-20160516-gow634.html>).
9. "Are Asian Australians trapped under a bamboo ceiling?" by Tim Soutphommasane, *The Guardian*, 11.07.2014 (<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/jul/11/are-asian-australians-trapped-under-a-bamboo-ceiling>).
10. Contemporary Asian Australian Poets, eds. Adam Aitken Kim Cheng-Boey Michelle Cahill
11. "Asian-Australian Diasporic Poets: A Commentary", by Adam Aitken, *Cordite Poetry Review*, 1.08.12 (<https://cordite.org.au/essays/asian-australian-diasporic-poets-commentary/>).

First Casualty ...by Michael Pryor

Comprehension Questions

Complete the following using quotes from the text to support your responses.

1. Take note of the title of the short story. To what famous quote is the title referring and why do you think the author chose to invoke this quote?
2. As you read the story, keep a vocabulary list of any words that are unfamiliar to you. Make a note of the context in which the word is used (write out the sentence from the story), record the page number and find the meanings in a reputable dictionary and record them next to the entries on your list.
3. The story is set in a future human civilization that has expanded across the solar system. As the story begins, comparisons are drawn to schoolies celebrations, taking a gap year and backpacking. Compare these graduation/coming of age celebrations to the ones that you will engage in when you finish school.
4. Define “bozo”. What is the history of this term? Why has it been used here?
5. Why Damien’s ship is called the “Port Vila”? (Think about common names for ships)
6. Would you reply to Damien’s advertisement for a travelling companion? Why/why not? Explain.
7. Describe Tekura in detail. What sort of a first impression does she make?
8. Describe Damien in detail. What is Tekura’s assessment of Damien and are her thoughts justified? Why/why not? Explain.
9. Why do you think Tekura replied to Damien’s advertisement?
10. What is the “Stream”? What is its equivalent in our society?
11. What is “Implant Intolerance (AyeAye)” and what are the implications for Damien?
12. How did Damien end up getting arrested? What does this incident reveal about his character?
13. For what reason is the vagrant at the centre of the incident arrested? What does this reveal about the society that Damien lives in? How does this compare to the society you live in? Can you see any parallels with other historical periods in our society?
14. Who is Uncle Jayden? Describe him in detail. What do you think influenced Uncle Jayden’s varied interests? Can you see any comparisons with other fictional characters?
15. Describe the war and Damien’s attitude to it. How does Tekura feel about this?
16. What did Damien forget to organize and what are the implications of this?
17. What game does Tekura teach Damien? What sort of teacher is she? What is Jayden’s usual attitude to losing and what is different about when he plays with Tekura? What does this reveal about their relationship?
18. What emergency does Damien respond to? Why does he choose to do this?
19. Describe the Palmeene in detail. Why do you think the author chose this name? Do you think Damien was right to help them? Why/why not? Justify your response.
20. What common ground did Damien and Tekura find with the Palmeene?
21. What do the Palmeene think is not a worthwhile product of human civilization? Why do they think this?
22. What did Damien find in common with the Palmeene?
23. What is the unexpected side effect of the rescue?

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24. What sort of storm resulted from Damien's refugee rescue? How does this compare to contemporary events in our society?
25. What is Damien's opinion of commentators? Think of any media commentators you may be familiar with. Do you agree/disagree with Damien's opinions? Justify your response.
26. What is Xenophobia? Why does Tekura think Xenophobia is fantastic for governments? What does she think is the best way to overcome Xenophobia?
27. What happened when Damien tried to dock at the Deimos Station on Mars with the refugees? How did Damien attempt to solve the problem?
28. What is the Earth government's reaction to the refugees? Does this conform to universal law? Why/why not?
29. How does Tekura think the government will counter their attempts to land on Mars? How do Tekura and Damien try to solve this problem?
30. What has Tekura been hiding from Damien? Who is Tekura's mother?
31. How did Tekura manage the spy eye operators? What gave them the best ratings?
32. What happened to another Palmeene vessel before Damien could land with the refugees? What did the government claim? Of what event in Australian history does this remind you?
33. What happened while the attention of the universe was on this other Palmeene vessel? Was the timing of this event significant?
34. What do the military intend to do with the refugees? What is Damien's response?
35. What happened to the Palmeene and what are the implications for them? How does Damien feel about this?
36. What happened after the Palmeene left?
37. What did Tekura decide to do? What is Tekura's approach to politics?
38. How did Damien and Tekura's relationship change by the end of the story?
39. What would you do if you were in Damien's position?
40. Do you think Tekura's politics will succeed?

Activities

1. Research the author, Michael Pryor. Present your findings as a biography card, wanted poster or Wikipedia entry. Consider writing an interview with the author, discussing the story *The First Casualty* (<http://www.michaelpryor.com.au>).
2. Damien suffers from a genetic condition known as "Implant Intolerance" (AyeAye), which prevents him from accessing the stream. Instead he must employ an aid that he refers to as a "doodad". Complete a Plus, Minus, Interesting table to analyse what the drawbacks and the benefits of this situation are for Damien in the story. How does this condition affect the culture in Damien's family?
3. This, of course, is an overtly political story. Readers might benefit from a refresher about the Tampa Affair (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tampa_affair) and the Children Overboard Scandal (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Children_Overboard_affair). Complete a compare and contrast table, which compares the real life political events with events in the story. Why has the author alluded to these events in the story? What message is he trying to send?

4. Devise a political strategy and/or advertising campaign to guide Tekura and Damien's political actions when they return to Earth.
5. Research some recent political movements that have attempted to bring attention to issues such as refugees and human rights in recent times. Present your finding to the class using Prezi, PowerPoint, or by creating an informative webpage or visual display.
6. The Refugee Council of Australia offers a broad range of links to educational resources, lesson plans, games, activities and other resources for discussing issues surrounding refugees in the classroom. These can be found at <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/getting-help/information-guidance/resources-for-teachers/>.
7. Research the social science fiction genre. Does this story conform to the conventions of this sub-genre? Justify your response. Why do you think the author chose to write in this sub-genre?
8. What is *Go*? What do the Palmeenees think about the game? Why has the author chosen to include this game in the story?
9. What would you like to do when you finish school? Choose one of the following formats to discuss the issue of "how much freedom should young people enjoy upon their graduation from high school". Should young people be allowed complete freedom to celebrate and explore the world? What are the practical, financial and safety constraints that they face? How can these be overcome? Do young people have the right to celebrate their move into adulthood or is this idea an artificial social construct designed for marketing purposes? Present your findings as one of the following: class debate, opinionative writing, opinionative speech, current affairs report, feature article or other genre of your choice.

Further Reading

1. *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* (film)
2. Orson Scott Card, *Ender's Game*
3. *Putting Up Roots* by Charles Sheffield
4. *School Ties* (1992 film)
5. *Code Name Verity* by Elizabeth Wein
6. George Orwell, *Animal Farm*
7. Adult Social Science fiction writers: H.G. Wells, Isaac Asimov, Aldous Huxley
8. Young adult dystopian fiction: *The Hunger Games* (2008) by Suzanne Collins, *The House of the Scorpion* (2002) by Nancy Farmer, *Divergent* (2011) by Veronica Roth, *The Maze Runner* (2009) by James Dashner, and *Delirium* (2011) by Lauren Oliver.
9. Poems about refugees can be found at:
 - a. <http://www.warscapes.com/poetry/refugees-some-poems>
 - b. <http://www.poetrylibrary.edu.au/poets/shapcott-thomas-w/seven-refugee-poems-0752016>
10. "How the Computer Beat the Go Master" by Christof Koch, in *The Scientific American*, on March 19, 2016 (<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-the-computer-beat-the-go-master/>)

Sundays ...by Melissa Keil

Comprehension Questions

Complete the following using quotes from the text to support your responses.

1. Record your first impression of the title and your reaction to it. Did it invite you to read on? After reading the story, explain what the significance of the title is and see if your view of it has changed from your first impression.
2. As you read the story, keep a vocabulary list of any words that are unfamiliar to you. Make a note of the context in which the word is used (write out the sentence from the story), record the page number and find the meanings in a reputable dictionary and record them next to the entries on your list.
3. Why do you think the author has chosen to mark out the time for each section of the story?
4. Describe Gabrielle in detail using evidence from the text to support your description.
5. What are the “rules” Gabrielle feels you should adhere to at parties? What does this tell us about Gabrielle?
6. Why does Gabrielle feel out of place at the party? Where does she think should really be?
7. Describe Cam. How is he different to Gabrielle?
8. Who is Claire? Describe her.
9. What does Cam do that concerns Gabrielle?
10. How does Gabrielle’s mother describe her friends? Gabrielle’s mother does not play a direct role in the story. Why do you think the author chose to include her impressions of Gabrielle’s friends?
11. How does Claire respond to what is happening on the dance floor? Is it the response her friends are expecting? What do you think of her response? How would you feel if you were in Claire’s position? Do you think the friends’ reaction is justified?
12. How does Gabrielle react to the news that Cam and Claire have broken up? Do you think Gabrielle’s reaction to Cam and Claire’s break up is justified?
13. What is the subtext of Gabrielle’s relationship with Lou? Find evidence from the text to support your views.
14. What is Lou’s attitude to social events? How does this align with Gabrielle’s attitude?
15. Why is Gabrielle unnerved by Lou’s gesture of bringing her a drink?
16. Why does Gabrielle feel the need to stand up for Lou when Lara calls him “G.I. Joe”?
17. How does Claire feel about her friend’s reaction to her break up with Cam and Cam’s new girlfriend?
18. Why is Gabrielle angry with Claire?
19. What is Gabrielle worried most about as a result of the break-up? Is she being fair to Claire?
20. How does Gabrielle see herself?
21. Why is she worried about losing her friends?
22. What has happened to Tommy? Why is he upset? Why does Cameron feel the need to reassure him?
23. How has the friends’ experience of their parents divorcing affected their friendship and their attitude to Cam and Claire breaking up?

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24. What does Gabrielle dream of doing for a future career? How does she rate her chances?
25. Why does Gabrielle dislike Sundays? What makes Sundays bearable for Gabrielle?
26. What happens between Lou and Cam in the bathroom? How does Gabrielle react?
27. Does Gabrielle cry?
28. What are the friends planning to do after school? How will that change now? What are Gabrielle's plans?
29. What causes Gabrielle to leave the party?
30. What does Gabrielle tell Lou is more upsetting to her than Cam and Claire's break-up?
31. What is Lou's view of the situation?
32. What do Cam and Claire's choices of how they choose to end the party and with whom they are keeping company reveal about the divergent directions their lives are taking?
33. How does Gabrielle feel about Cam and Claire's break-up at the end of the story?
34. To what realization does Gabrielle arrive at the end of the story?
35. How does she feel about it being Sunday as the story concludes? Is there a shift in her attitude?

Activities

1. Research the author, Melissa Keil. Present your findings as a biography card, wanted poster or Wikipedia entry. Consider writing an interview with the author, discussing the story *Sundays* (<https://melissakeil.com>).
2. Investigate the coming of age genre and answer the following questions:
 - a. What is the definition of a coming of age story?
 - b. What is a Bildungsroman novel?
 - c. What is the meaning of coming of age?
3. Investigate the romance genre. Can you see the hallmarks of this genre in *Sundays*?
4. Is it acceptable for stories to cross genre lines? Why/why not? What are the benefits?
5. One of the major themes in this novel is change and fear of change. Make a list of all the changes Gabrielle is facing in the story. Compare these to changes that you may face in your life.
6. In your opinion, do friends have to stay friends forever? Write an advice column for a teen magazine or blog outlining your views.
7. On page 141, Gabrielle vividly describes her neighbourhood.

"I bolt to the edge of the garden, gulping in the warm air. From here, I can see the whole expanse of the narrow road – the house across the street with its pin-neat garden, and the one next door with the overgrown grass and collection of beat-up cars. A little ways down there's a house almost identical to this one, with peeling cladding and a concrete porch. At this moment it's filled with couches and a group of big guys, all beers and booming laughter. Everything is too close together here, everything looking one step away from the decayed neighbourhood in some soon-to-be-apocalyptic wasteland."

I slump against the wire mesh fencing and sink to the ground. The Razaks' house seems to throb, the walls pulsing with music and the dying remnants of a party that'll no doubt be repeated in some other house next weekend.

I close my eyes, a lump in my throat that I can't seem to swallow. Our neighbourhood is never properly quiet; even now, the early morning is overlaid with the voices of the guys across the street and the sound of distant car horns. I hate this place, but I can't help loving it, too. And in my whole entire life, I've never been able to decide which one is going to win out."

Describe your neighbourhood and how you feel about it in detail. How has living there influenced you? Is it similar or different to Gabrielle's neighbourhood?

8. On page 147, there is a lovely description of graffiti:
"Graffiti covers the fences here; in this crumbly early light it almost looks organic, like it's grown from the red brick and concrete itself."

Head outside of the classroom and take a look at the environment around you. How could you describe your surroundings in a way that captures **their** mood in a more meaningful way? Share your descriptions with the class.

9. WRITING ACTIVITIES:
- a. Personal experience prompts: Have you ever felt scared of a major change that is about to occur in your life? Describe the situation and how it made you feel.
 - b. Personal opinion topics: At what age should a person be allowed to legally drink? Vote? Drive? Support your stance with concrete reasons.
 - c. Creative writing prompts:
 - i. Write in role as a young man or woman on the eve of his or her thirteenth, sixteenth or eighteenth birthday. How does he or she feel about leaving childhood behind?
 - ii. Have students write their own first-person narratives based on their own coming of age experiences.
10. View one or more coming of age films or television shows. Students can write responses, reviews or create pitches of their own ideas for shows and films.
11. There's a subtext in this story of the effect of parental divorce on teenage children. The rising divorce rate is just one issue facing young people. Scan local newspapers (or other media) over a one-week period, searching for stories related to teen issues. Practice writing your own newspaper articles on teen issues such as student volunteer efforts, drug use, youth violence, school uniforms, youth detention, youth welfare, youth unemployment or teens and technology use.
12. Change is a major theme in this story. The poem *LINES COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN ABBEY, ON REVISITING THE BANKS OF THE WYE DURING A TOUR, JULY 13, 1798* by William Wordsworth also deals with a theme of change. According to Schmoop:
"At first glance, "Tintern Abbey" might seem to have no possible relation to your life. It's about a guy reminiscing about a walk he took with his sister five years before. Well, not entirely. That's the excuse for writing, but it's not what the poem is about.

"Tintern Abbey" is about the ways that we change over time, and the ways that we try to figure out just when and how and why we've changed. In short, it's about trying to square the person you used to be with the person you've become. So, if you've ever stopped and asked

yourself when you became the person you are, or wondered how or why your memories don't measure up with the facts, this is a poem for you." (Shmoop Editorial Team, 2008, <http://www.shmoop.com/tintern-abbey/>).

For more information, go to: <http://www.shmoop.com/tintern-abbey/summary.html>.

Read the poem carefully and think about what advice Wordsworth may have for Gabrielle about how she will see herself and the world in the future.

Further Reading

1. *The Squid and the Whale* (film, 2005)
2. *The Perks Of Being A Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky (or film)
3. *The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger
4. *The Fault in Our Stars* by John Green
5. *Looking for Alaska* by John Green
6. *Alex As Well* by Alyssa Brugman
7. *Divergent* by Veronica Roth (or film)
8. *The Breakfast Club* (1985 film)
9. *Grease* (1978 film)
10. LINES COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN ABBEY, ON REVISITING THE BANKS OF THE WYE DURING A TOUR, JULY 13, 1798 by William Wordsworth
11. *Hyperion*, John Keats
12. *All the World's a Stage* monologue by William Shakespeare

Missing Persons... by Ellie Marney

Comprehension Questions

Complete the following using quotes from the text to support your responses.

1. Record your first impression of the title and your reaction to it. Did it invite you to read on? After reading the story, explain what the significance of the title is and see if your view of it has changed from your first impression.
2. As you read the story, keep a vocabulary list of any words that are unfamiliar to you. Make a note of the context in which the word is used (write out the sentence from the story), record the page number and find the meanings in a reputable dictionary and record them next to the entries on your list. Some suggested entries are:
 - a. Dilapidated
 - b. Hemophobia
 - c. Misanthropist
 - d. Nauseous
 - e. Agoraphobic
 - f. Conspiratorially
 - g. Atrocious
 - h. Pseudonymously
 - i. What other words can you find from the story to add to the list?
3. The story begins with a very descriptive introductory paragraph. What images did it invoke in your mind? How did that make you feel? Why do you think the author chose to begin this way?
4. What has Rachel chosen to wear to school? What is her attitude to her attire?
5. Describe Rachel. Add new information to your description as you continue to read the story and more is revealed about her.
6. Describe Rachel's family.
7. What is significant about the day?
8. What is Rachel's previous educational experience?
9. How does she feel about going to school?
10. Who is Mai Ng?
11. Why did Rachel move to the city? How does Rachel feel about the move?
12. What is Mai's advice to Rachel?
13. What sort of a first impression does Mycroft make?
14. What is ironic about Rachel's first meeting with Mycroft?
15. What classic literary work features a character called Mycroft? Why do you think the author chose this name for the character? Rachel's last name is Watts. Is there an allusion to a character from the same book? Why has the author chosen to make this connection? What does it tell us about the relationship between these characters?
16. Describe Mycroft in detail.
17. Mycroft employs a wide and varied vocabulary. What does this reveal about his character?
18. What does Mycroft recite instead of the alphabet? Why would he choose to do this? What does it reveal about him?
19. Who is Gus? Describe his relationship with Mai.

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20. Why does Rachel like going home?
21. Who lives near Rachel?
22. What does Rachel's mother do for a living? What does this reveal about their changed circumstances?
23. What is Mycroft's first name?
24. What does Rachel do when it gets too much?
25. How does Mycroft upset Rachel?
26. Where does Rachel go and why does she go there?
27. How does she feel about the city?
28. What is Mycroft's response? Why is it poignant?
29. Have you ever felt like Rachel does?

Activities

1. Research the author, Ellie Marney. Present your findings as a biography card, wanted poster or Wikipedia entry. Consider writing an interview with the author, discussing the story *Missing Persons* (<http://www.elliemarney.com>).
2. Research the literary movement known as Romanticism. Concurrent with this movement was a strong belief and interest in the importance of nature. However, this is particularly in the effect of nature upon the artist when he is surrounded by it, preferably alone. How does this idea function in the story *Missing Persons*?
3. Read the poem LINES COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN ABBEY, ON REVISITING THE BANKS OF THE WYE DURING A TOUR, JULY 13, 1798 by William Wordsworth which "introduces the idea that Nature can influence, sustain, and heal the mind of the poet" (Shmoop Editorial Team, 2008). How would Rachel feel about this idea? What is her view of the city and how does she calm herself when it all gets too much? What does she miss most about living in the country? For some explanation of the poem, go to: <http://www.shmoop.com/tintern-abbey/>.
4. "**My Country**" is an iconic patriotic poem about Australia, written by Dorothea Mackellar (1885–1968) at the age of 19 while she was homesick in the United Kingdom. "My Country" uses imagery to describe the land after the breaking of a long drought.
 - a. Read the poem.
 - b. Research the author, Dorothea Mackellar.
 - c. What significance does this poem have to Australian history and national identity?
 - d. Compare this poem to Rachel Watt's experience and sentiments in *Missing Persons*. Present your findings in a table or Venn diagram.
5. Setting plays a very important role in this story. Explain how setting functions to convey meaning, develop character and tell the story in *Missing Persons* by Ellie Marney.
6. Research the literary term "Intertextuality". This story shares intertextuality with the stories of Arthur Conan Doyle about Sherlock Holmes. How has the author used this intertextuality to build character, relationship and story in this text?

7. A central tenet of Mycroft's character is his vocabulary. What does this tell us about him? How does it draw parallels with his literary namesake? How does Rachel describe his vernacular? How does the way Mycroft speaks set him apart from other characters in the story? How can authors use language to create characters and tell stories?
8. Themes of friendship permeate this story. Consider where this theme is present and answer the following questions:
 - a. What qualities do you look for in a friend?
 - b. Are friends more important to you now than they were in primary school? Why?
 - c. There's an old saying that goes "in order to have good friends you have to be a good friend." What does that mean. Do you think it's true?
 - d. What's the difference between a friend and an acquaintance?
 - e. It can be said that a true friend is somebody who knows everything about you and still likes you. What do you think that means?
 - f. How do you tell the difference between true friends and false friends?
 - g. What is a "best friend?" Is it possible to have more than one "best friend" at the same time?
 - h. In what ways does friendship change as you get older?
 - i. Sometimes you need to make space for their friends to go through changes. How do you do that? Is it always possible, or are some friendships destined to end?
 - j. Is there a difference between popularity and friendship? Can you be popular and not be a good friend? What is more important, being popular, or being a good friend?
 - k. Do you think there's something wrong with you if you aren't part of the popular set?
 - l. Describe the groups or cliques that people you know associate with. Are the relationships within these groups' real friendships? What's the difference between friendship and group membership?
 - m. Some kids say that cliques cut them off from people. Is that true in your experience?
 - n. What do you do if you want a person you have just met to become a part of your group, but the others don't want to have anything to do with this new person?
 - o. Have you ever been excluded from a group? What happened? How did you feel? What should we learn from that?
 - p. Are there kids here at school who get constantly excluded? How do you think that makes them feel? Is there anything you could do about it?
 - q. Are there any racial or ethnic barriers to friendship at your school? How do you feel about that?
 - r. What are the benefits of having friends who are different from us?

Source: <http://www.goodcharacter.com/BCBC/Friendship.htm>

Further Reading

1. My Country, Dorothea Mackellar.
2. Vol 10: Big Changes, Big Choices: FRIENDSHIP (Livewire Media, <http://www.livewiremedia.com/BigChangesBigChoices>)
3. The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
4. The Yearbook Committee, Sarah Ayoub
5. The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie, Ellen Forney (Illustrator)
6. Because You'll Never Meet Me by Leah Thomas
7. Anastasia Again! By Lois Lowry
8. The Kid in the Red Jacket by Barbara Park
9. Twilight by Stephanie Meyer
10. Anne of Green Gables L.M. Montgomery
11. *Young Sherlock Holmes series* by Andy Lane
12. *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio
13. *The Diddakoi* by Rumer Godden
14. *Back Home* by Michelle Magorian
15. *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou
16. Films about new teachers:
17. "Blackboard Jungle" (1955)
18. "The Principal" (1987)
19. "Lean on Me" (1989)
20. "Dangerous Minds"
21. "Mean Girls" (2004) (Based on Rosalind Wiseman's 2002 nonfiction book *Queen Bees and Wannabes*)
22. "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" (2010) (book by the same name by Jeff Kinney)
23. "Rebel Without a Cause" (1955)
24. "Clueless" (1995)
25. "Pleasantville" (1998)
26. "Going to School", poem by C.J. Dennis, can be found in *Classic Australian Poems*, ed. Christopher Cheng
27. "The Women of the West", Poem by George Essex Evans, can be found in *Classic Australian Poems*, ed. Christopher Cheng
28. Lists of poems about school can be found at:
 - a. <http://www.poetryteachers.com/schoolpoems/schoolpoems.html>
 - b. <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/text/poems-about-school>

Oona Underground... by Lili Wilkinson

Comprehension Questions

Complete the following using quotes from the text to support your responses.

1. Try to predict what the story is about using only the title.
2. Record your first impression of the title and your reaction to it. Did it invite you to read on? After reading the story, explain what the significance of the title is and see if your view of it has changed from your first impression.
3. As you read the story, keep a vocabulary list of any words that are unfamiliar to you. Make a note of the context in which the word is used (write out the sentence from the story), record the page number and find the meanings in a reputable dictionary and record them next to the entries on your list.
4. The story begins with a very descriptive introductory paragraph. What images did it invoke in your mind? How did that make you feel? Why do you think the author chose to begin this way?
5. Keep a journal of interesting descriptive passages that appear in the text. In a table, record the following:
 - a. What makes the passage stand out as being particularly descriptive?
 - b. What, if any, figurative language is used?
 - c. Write out the definition of the type of figurative language used.
 - d. Write your own description using style of description and/or the type of figurative language identified.
6. Describe Oona. Add new information to your description as you continue to read the story and more is revealed about her.
7. Describe Meg. Add new information to your description as you continue to read the story and more is revealed about her.
8. What does Oona want Meg to do? How does Meg feel about this?
9. How does Meg feel about Oona? What does Meg feel her role in the relationship is?
10. Why does Meg find it hard to say no to Oona?
11. What is Oona's epiphany?
12. How is Meg different to Oona?
13. What does Oona do with the \$10 note? Why does she do this?
14. Why does Oona want to speak with the witch?
15. What is Meg's view of destiny?
16. What do you think about Oona's superstitions?
17. What sort of friend is Oona?
18. Is Meg's devotion to Oona justified?
19. What do the girls find in the drains?
20. Who do they meet in the drains? What is the significance of this meeting?
21. What is the "Witch's Ball"?
22. How do the girls respond to the Witch's Ball?
23. What does Oona offer the queen as treasure? How does Meg Feel about this?
24. What treasure did Meg bring?
25. What realization does the Witch Queen help Meg come to?

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26. What is the significance of the storm? How does it mirror Oona and Meg's relationship? How does the storm function as a plot device?
27. What does Meg find in her pocket?
28. Is the Witch Queen real? What other explanations might account for what happens in the drain?
29. Why did Oona go down into the drain?
30. What is destiny? What role does the idea of destiny play in this narrative?

Activities

1. Research the author, Lili Wilkinson. Present your findings as a biography card, wanted poster or Wikipedia entry. Consider writing an interview with the author, discussing the story *Oona Underground* (<http://www.liliwilkinson.com.au/blog/>).
2. Find a selection of pictures and write a description of what makes them romantic.
3. Read the story again and write down all the words or phrases that are particularly romantic. Pick the top two and write down why you think they are romantic.
4. Write your own checklist of the things you MUST have in a story to make it fit into the romance genre. Now, find a definition of the romance genre. Does this story fit the genre? Justify your response with evidence from the text. Where does the story diverge from the typical conventions? (tip: do not confuse with *Romanticism*).
5. The Romance Genre has traditionally been considered Popular Fiction and, therefore, not deserving of respect and further study. However, this is a situation that is rapidly changing. Discuss this issue by taking consideration of the following:
 - a. Representation of women in fiction
 - b. Patriarchal control of the Literary Canon
 - c. Space for women's stories
 - d. Methods of production and consumption
 - e. Fair representation of women
 - f. Does the genre effectively empower or disempower women?
6. Traditionally, there have been some problems with the way romance novels represent men, women and relationships. This can reinforce ideas that are disempowering to women.
 - a. Historically, what were the issues in the romance genre?
 - b. How is this situation changing or staying the same?
 - c. How does the story *Oona Underground* by Lili Wilkinson fit into this picture?
7. What is paranormal romance? How does *Oona Underground* by Lili Wilkinson conform to this subgenre?
8. How does magic operate as a plot device in this sub-genre?
9. Like many romance stories, *Oona Underground* by Lili Wilkinson features a happy ending. However, what if things had turned out differently? Re-write the stories ending in a different way. Consider choosing from one of the following scenarios:
 - a. What if the Witch Queen had been something different entirely e.g. a space to write/depict your hope for your destiny denoted by graffiti depicting a "Witch Queen"?

- b. What if Oona had felt betrayed by Meg's actions surrounding the \$10 note?
- c. What if Oona did not reciprocate Meg's feelings?

10. Read the following passage from the story and answer the question.

"Oona's hand opens, and I catch my breath. It's the purple origami unicorn I made for her in grade five, when her parents were breaking up and she was so sad all the time. I spent a whole weekend watching YouTube tutorials trying to get the folds just right.

I can't believe she has kept it, all this time.

I can't believe she's giving it away.

The Witch Queen takes the purple unicorn and tosses it on her alter without looking at it. It's gone within seconds, a brief flare of yellow flame, and then just ash."

Look at the sentence and paragraph structure in this excerpt. How does the author change the pace of the story? How does the author create emphasis? What is the overall tone of the passage? What figurative language is present? What is the overall effect?

10. How does the plot device of Journey/Quest operate in this story?

11 Like many effective short stories, this story features a limited setting. The action begins as the girls enter the drain and the story concludes as they exit. The parts of the drain mirror the "acts" of the story. Write your own short story, which takes place in a limited setting and then write a rationale to justify your choice of setting. Consider the way it helps you to concentrate on developing other parts of the story.

Further Reading

1. "Romancing Reality: The Power of Romance Fiction to Reinforce and Re-Vision the Real " by Jenny Crusie (<http://jennycrusie.com/non-fiction/essays/romancing-reality-the-power-of-romance-fiction-to-reinforce-and-re-vision-the-real/>)
2. "7 Essential Tips for Writing a Romance " by Jennifer Lawler (https://writersblock.loft.org/2014/01/31/2991/7_essential_tips_for_writing_a_romance)
3. "The "Canon" of the Romance Genre? " by Kaye Dascus (<https://kayedacus.com/2012/10/31/the-canon-of-the-romance-genre/>)
4. "They're teaching a romance novel course at Yale, but it's not what you think", by Donna Doherty, Register Arts Editor, *New Haven Register*, 24.01.2010, (<http://www.nhregister.com/article/NH/20100124/NEWS/301249970>)
5. *What are the distinctive features of short stories?* by The School for Excellence, 2012, (<http://www.tsfx.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/nsw-sample-notes-english.pdf>)

6. Romance novel. (2017, February 14). In *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Retrieved 02:46, February 18, 2017, from https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Romance_novel&oldid=765488778
7. Paranormal romance. (2017, February 12). In *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Retrieved 02:48, February 18, 2017, from https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Paranormal_romance&oldid=765096830
8. *Twilight Series* by Stephenie Meyer
9. *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded*, by Samuel Richardson
10. *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen
11. *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte
12. *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare
13. *Romeo + Juliet*, Directed by Baz Luhrmann (1999)
14. *Red Carpet series*, Directed by Baz Luhrmann
15. *She Walks in Beauty* by Lord Byron
16. *i carry your heart with me (i carry it in my heart)* by E. E. Cummings
17. *I loved you first: but afterwards your love* by Christina Rossetti
18. *A Glimpse* by Walt Whitman
19. *Sonnet 116* by William Shakespeare
20. *The Good-Morrow* by John Donne

The Feeling from Over Here... by Gabrielle Tozer

Comprehension Questions

Complete the following using quotes from the text to support your responses.

1. Try to predict what the story is about using only the title.
2. Record your first impression of the title and your reaction to it. Did it invite you to read on? After reading the story, explain what the significance of the title is and see if your view of it has changed from your first impression.
3. As you read the story, keep a vocabulary list of any words that are unfamiliar to you. Make a note of the context in which the word is used (write out the sentence from the story), record the page number and find the meanings in a reputable dictionary and record them next to the entries on your list.
4. The story begins with a very descriptive introductory paragraph. What images did it invoke in your mind? How did that make you feel? Why do you think the author chose to begin this way?
5. What does the start of the novel reveal about Lucy and her life?
6. At the start of the story, what is Lucy rushing to do? Why is she running late? What effect does this state of affairs have on her mood?
7. What stroke of luck does Lucy encounter on the bus?
8. What do Lucy's text messages reveal about Lucy?
9. Who are the "Olivia Bensons"?
10. Develop a character profile for Lucy.
11. What happens to the spare seat next to Lucy? What is Lucy's reaction?
12. Why does Lucy feel uncomfortable? How does Lucy manage her discomfort?
13. What would Lucy like Cameron to do? Can you guess why she feels like this?
14. The story is broken up into short periods of time. Why has the author chosen to do this?
15. What is the history between Lucy and Cameron?
16. Who is Mitch? What sort of a person is he? What is he responsible for and what are the effects of his actions?
17. What is Lucy's reaction to being included on the list?
18. How does Mitch's bullying impact Lucy and Cameron's relationship?
19. How do Lucy's friends respond to the bullying incident?
20. What was Mitch's fate? What was the effect on Lucy?
21. How does Lucy try to solve the Cameron problem?
22. The bus driver offers small witticisms throughout the story. Why has the author chosen to include this minor character?
23. How does Lucy react when Cameron tries to sit with her at the restaurant? Was her reaction justified?
24. How does Lucy feel after she storms off?
25. Why does the story change perspective halfway through?
26. What happens to the bus?
27. Who calls Cameron while he is waiting for a new bus? What does the call reveal about his life?

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28. How does Cameron try to justify his behaviour toward Lucy? Do you think this is an adequate excuse?
29. Why is Lucy special to Cameron?
30. How did Mitch retaliate when Cameron stood up to him?
31. What does Cameron finally manage to do while they are waiting for the replacement bus? What is Lucy's reaction?
32. How has their relationship changed when they return to the bus? What does this tell the reader about the importance of communication and the power of apology?
33. What do Cameron and Lucy find they have in common?
34. Do you think Lucy will visit Cameron in Melbourne in the future? What does the future hold for Lucy and Cameron's friendship? Justify your response with evidence from the text.
35. Comment on the structure of the story. Why has the author chosen to tell the story in this way? Consider the use of tense, time, flashback and perspective in your response.
36. What new significance does the title, *The Feeling from over Here*, have at the end of the story?

Activities

1. Research the author, Gabrielle Tozer. Present your findings as a biography card, wanted poster or Wikipedia entry. Consider writing an interview with the author, discussing the story *The Feeling from over Here* (<http://gabrielletozer.com>).
2. Like many effective short stories, this story features a limited setting. The action begins as Lucy enters the bus and concludes as they reach their destination. The climax of the story occurs as the bus breaks down.
3. Plot the story events on the story arc to reveal which parts of the bus journey correlate to the different short story elements. Now, use the story arc to plan an original short story, which features a limited setting and includes all the elements of a successful short story.
4. How does perspective function in literature? Define this literary device. How does perspective operate in Gabrielle Tozer's story, *The Feeling from over Here*?
5. What is Perception? How can we better appreciate the perspectives of others? Complete the following activities on Perspective Taking created by Conflict Resolution Education in Teacher Education (CRETE):
 - a. Seeing Different Things in the Same Image:
http://www.crededucation.org/resources/perception_checking/What_Do_You_See_Activity_OCDRCM.pdf
 - b. We Each See the World a Little Differently:
http://www.crededucation.org/resources/perception_checking/See_World_Differently_Activity_OCDRCM.pdf
 - c. Understanding perception differences:
http://www.crededucation.org/resources/perception_checking/Understanding_Perception_Differences_OCDRCM.pdf

6. The story relates incidents of bullying and sexual harassment that deeply affect the main characters. Define bullying and sexual harassment. Have you ever experienced either of these? How did you feel? Choose one of these issues, research it and design an awareness campaign to highlight the issue and ways to prevent it at your school
7. Write an opinionative speech on one the following and present to the class:
 - d. The importance of communication
 - e. The power of apology
 - f. The role of empathy in healthy relationships
 - g. The value of seeing things from another perspective

Further Reading

1. Definition of Perspective (<https://literarydevices.net/perspective/>)
2. "Bully", directed by Lee Hirsch (2013) (<http://www.amightygirl.com/bully-film>)
3. *Dear Bully: 70 Authors Tell Their Stories* by Megan Kelley Hall, Carrie Jones
4. *Permanent Record* by Leslie Stella
5. *The Scar Boys* by Len Vlahos
6. *Tease* by Amanda Maciel
7. *Side Effects May Vary* by Julie Murphy
8. *The Lord of the Flies* by William Golding
9. *Nineteen Minutes* by Jodi Picoult
10. *I'm the King of the Castle* by Susan Hill
11. *Cat's Eye* by Margaret Atwood
12. *The Ugly Duckling* by Hans Christian Anderson (fairy tale)
13. *Gallop Foxley* by Roald Dahl (short story)
14. Lists of books about bullying can be found at (scroll down for young adult):
 - a. <http://www.amightygirl.com/mighty-girl-picks/top-books-on-bullying-prevention-for-mighty-girls>
 - b. <https://www.common sense media.org/lists/books-about-bullying>
 - c. <https://www.weareteachers.com/14-must-read-anti-bullying-books-for-kids/>
 - d. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/booknews/11235959/books-about-bullying.html>
15. "Mean Girls" (2004)
16. "Heathers" (1988)
17. "The Breakfast Club" (1985)
18. Lesson plans and activities for students about bullying:
<https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/Resources/TeachingResources/Pages/Lesson-plans-and-activities-for-students.aspx>
19. Lesson plans on being reasonable and ethical online:
<https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/NationalDay/ForSchools/LessonPlans/Pages/Stand-Together-2015.aspx>
20. Active bystanders lesson plans:
<https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/NationalDay/ForSchools/LessonPlans/Pages/Stand-Together-2013.aspx>

Last Night at the Mount Solemn Observatory... by Danielle Binks

Comprehension Questions

Complete the following using quotes from the text to support your responses.

1. Try to predict what the story is about using only the title.
2. Record your first impression of the title and your reaction to it. Did it invite you to read on? After reading the story, explain what the significance of the title is and see if your view of it has changed from your first impression.
3. As you read the story, keep a vocabulary list of any words that are unfamiliar to you. Make a note of the context in which the word is used (write out the sentence from the story), record the page number and find the meanings in a reputable dictionary and record them next to the entries on your list.
4. The story begins with a description of the first word the protagonist learned. What was unusual about this word? What images did it invoke in your mind? How did that make you feel? Why do you think the author chose to begin this way?
5. Develop a character profile for Bowie. Add information to it as you read the story until you have developed a full picture of who she is and what her life is like.
6. Develop a character profile for King. Add information to it as you read the story until you have developed a full picture of who he is and what his life is like.
7. What is the significance of Bowie and King's names?
8. When does Bowie's mum think she is happiest?
9. Where is King going and why? What is Bowie's reaction?
10. What are King's plans for the year and what are his parents' reactions?
11. What is the significance of the street names in Orianna? Describe the town of Orianna.
12. What does Bowie find at the Parallax?
13. What is the significance of the hand gestures? What does it tell us about King?
14. Describe Rami and Em.
15. How long has Bowie lived in Orianna? Describe Bowie and her family's life there.
16. Why was the move hardest on King?
17. Why are Rami and King such good friends? What event led to their friendship?
18. How does King react when he see Bowie?
19. Who are Kel and Aiden?
20. What does King do for a living?
21. How do Kel and Aiden respond to King? How do most people react to King? What does this reveal about King's life in Orianna?
22. What is King's sign for Bowie? What is the significance?
23. What does Bowie want to do? What is King's reaction?
24. What does Rami reveal they are planning to do and why does he do this?
25. What decision does Adelaide make?
26. Why does Bowie consider Adelaide a friend?
27. Describe Adelaide Jones. How did she become part of the friendship circle?
28. What is the significance of the t-shirts Adelaide makes? What shirt did she make for King? Who is Gwen Harwood? What poem do you think is on the shirt? Why?
29. What is a Corrie Lake?

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30. What is Orianna's claim to fame?
31. Who is John Goodricke? Why do King and Bowie's parents think he is a good omen?
32. What happened to the telescope?
33. Where are the friends heading?
34. Who goes to the observatory now?
35. What do the group do when they arrive?
36. Why is Bowie lucky to be at the observatory that night?
37. Why is it the last time the group will go to the observatory?
38. How does Bowie feel about King leaving?
39. How does King feel about his decision to leave?
40. Why does Bowie think King should leave?
41. What would your advice to King be?
42. Have you ever been in a position similar to Bowie? How did it make you feel?
43. Why does Bowie tell King about the giants in Iceland? What is she really telling him?
44. What new significance does the title, *Last night at the Mount Solemn Observatory*, have at the end of the story?

Activities

1. Research the author, Danielle Binks. Present your findings as a biography card, wanted poster or Wikipedia entry. Consider writing an interview with the author, discussing the story *Last Night at the Mount Solemn Observatory* (<https://www.killyourdarlings.com.au/contributor/danielle-binks/>).
2. There is a certain symbolism associated with the setting in this story. What is the significance of the telescope on this tale?
3. Disability is central to the depiction of the character of King in this story. How does disability influence King's decisions about his future?
4. Make a list of disabled characters that you are familiar with in film, television, video games and literature. Create a table and classify their representation as positive or negative and justify your choice. What do you notice overall about the portrayal of disabled characters?
5. Create a guide for writers on how best to sensitively portray fictional characters with disabilities. Consider presenting in digital format.
6. Present an opinionative speech or write a letter to the editor outlining why disabilities should be better represented in fiction.
7. Make a short film of the story or, create a preview for the upcoming movie version.
8. Rewrite the story from the point of view of one of the other characters.
9. Write a travelogue detailing King's experiences after he leaves Orianna.
10. Write a letter from King explaining his decision to leave Orianna and his feelings about his decision. Then, write a return letter from Bowie to King outlining her feelings on the matter.

Further Reading

1. *Into the Wild* by Jon Krakauer (1996); "Into the Wild" directed by Sean Penn (2007)
2. *Hatchet* by Gary Paulsen; "A Cry in the Wild" (1990)

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3. *Peak* by Roland Smith
4. *All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr
5. *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain
6. *Stardust* by Neil Gaiman
7. *Mosquitoland* by David Arnold
8. *The Dark* by John McGahern
9. *Blind* by Rachel DeWoskin
10. *Jerk, California* by Jonathan Friesen
11. *Owning it: Stories About Teens With Disabilities* edited by Donald Gallo
12. *The London Eye Mystery* by Siobhan Dowd
13. "Breakfast Club" (1985)
14. "Stand by Me" (1986)
15. "American Graffiti" (1973)
16. "Toy Story 3" (2010)
17. "Adventureland" (2009)
18. "Blackberry Picking", a poem by Seamus Heaney and "The Singer" a poem by Medbh McGuckian (teacher's notes can be found at http://www.bbc.co.uk/northernireland/schools/11_16/poetry/pdf/pr01_growingup.pdf)
19. "Before Sleep" poem by Ezra Pound
20. "The Explorer" by Rudyard Kipling
21. "Walking Away" by C. Day Lewis (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/guides/zx8fbk7/revision>)
22. "The Call of the Wild" by Robert Service
23. "Gwen Harwood; selected poems and themes" by English Works contributors (<http://www.englishworks.com.au/gwen-harwood-paragraphs/>)
24. "A Look at Fictional Characters With Disabilities" By Dave Astor, in *The Huffington Post*, 26/11/2012 (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/dave-astor/disabled-characters_b_2164802.html)
25. "Getting it wrong – Writing disability in fiction" posted by Visibility Fiction on May 1, 2014 in *Disability and or Neuro-diversity* (<http://visibilityfiction.com/getting-it-wrong-writing-about-disability-in-fiction/>)
26. "Fiction, like life, tells disabled people their lives have less value" by Corinne Duyvis in *The Guardian*, Monday 14 March 2016 (<https://www.theguardian.com/childrens-books-site/2016/mar/14/disability-autism-sci-fi-corinne-duyvis>)
27. *On the Edge of Gone* by Corinne Duyvis
28. 'Disability in Kidlit' website - <http://disabilityinkidlit.com/>
29. - *Five Flavors of Dumb* by Antony John (2010)
30. - *Feathers* by Jacqueline Woodson (2007)
31. - *El Deafo* by Cece Bell (2014)
32. - *The Tribe* (2014, film)
33. - *Beyond ableism and ignorance: disability and fiction*, posted by Kill Your Darlings 2014 (<https://www.killyourdarlings.com.au/2014/09/beyond-ableism-and-ignorance-disability-and-fiction/>)
34. - *Disability history month: John Goodricke the deaf astronomer*, posted by BBC News 2012 (<http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-20725639>)

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Competition Entry #349... by Jaclyn Moriarty

Comprehension Questions

Complete the following using quotes from the text to support your responses.

1. Try to predict what the story is about using only the title.
2. Record your first impression of the title and your reaction to it. Did it invite you to read on? After reading the story, explain what the significance of the title is and see if your view of it has changed from your first impression.
3. As you read the story, keep a vocabulary list of any words that are unfamiliar to you. Make a note of the context in which the word is used (write out the sentence from the story), record the page number and find the meanings in a reputable dictionary and record them next to the entries on your list.
4. The story begins with a description of a competition. Why has the author chosen to do this? What effect does it have?
5. Develop a character profile for the protagonist. Add information to it as you read the story until you have developed a full picture of who they are and what their life is like.
6. How does the story begin? What is unusual about the introduction? What was your reaction? Why do you think the author chose to do this?
7. From what perspective is the story written? What is the effect of this?
8. What do we learn about the protagonist's personality in the first few lines?
9. What is a cliché? Find a definition and give an example.
10. What is a metaphor? Find a definition and give an example.
11. Where does the protagonist live?
12. What do you think about the introduction to the "essay"? How could it be improved? What does it tell us about the personality of the protagonist? What does the protagonist think has been achieved by the introduction to the essay? Was this successful? How the introduction be written in a better way?
13. What do you think the Time Travel Agency might be?
14. Describe the shop front at the Time Travel Agency. Are you surprised by the appearance of this? Why/why not? What impression does it give you of the operation?
15. Who is Kara?
16. What is the Time Travel Agency?
17. What has been the general public's reaction to the Time Travel Agency?
18. What sort of trips does the agency offer and how do they do this?
19. What is "time lag" and how can it be avoided?
20. Why doesn't the agency offer trips to the future?
21. What are the rules of time travel according to this story?
22. Who is Noah Brackman? Describe him.
23. What point does Noah raise about time travel? How does Kara respond?
24. What does the protagonist think about time travel? What do they compare their belief to? What do we call this type of figurative language? Provide a definition for the term.
25. What is the protagonist's view of Professor Raskdfjsa?

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26. What did the protagonist do when she entered the booth? What do you think of her actions?
27. What is the protagonist's view of Melbourne?
28. Why was the protagonist tempted to hit the "help" button? What did she do instead? Why did the protagonist do this?
29. What did the protagonist discover from her trip? Were they satisfied with their findings?
30. What happens when the protagonist returns home after her trip to the Time Travel Agency?
31. Why does the protagonist claim that she have the winning entry?
32. What is the protagonist's justification to prove that time travel is real?
33. How does the protagonist describe her sub-conscious?
34. Why does the protagonist need to win the completion? How does she justify their assertion that they should win?
35. What is the greatest lesson that the protagonist has learnt?
36. What is the outcome of the protagonist's time travel experience?
37. Why hasn't Noah spoken to the protagonist since the kiss? What does the protagonist decide to do about this and what is the outcome?
38. Do you think the entry should win the completion? Why/why not?
39. What message about life and relationships is evident from the protagonist's experiences with Noah?
40. Did the time travel experience contribute to saving the protagonist's chances of a relationship with Noah?
41. Is the protagonist male or female? Find textual evidence to support your assertion. Why has the author approached the character in this way?

Activities

1. Research the author, Jaclyn Moriarty. Present your findings as a biography card, wanted poster or Wikipedia entry. Consider writing an interview with the author, discussing the story *Competition Entry #349* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jaclyn_Moriarty)
2. Imagine you teach a course on how to improve your writing. Choose one of the following and deliver a lesson to the class showing them how they could improve their writing by incorporating it (or avoiding it!) in their work. Find example from the story to support your work.
 - a. Cliché
 - b. Metaphor
 - c. A well-written introduction
 - d. Suspense
 - e. Simile
3. Does *Competition Entry #349* conform to the conventions of the essay genre? What are the conventions of this genre? Re-write *Competition Entry #349* in the form of a well-written essay.
4. Class debate/discussion ideas:

- a. Did the protagonist's time travel experience save her chances of a relationship with Noah?
 - b. Is time travel in the format present in the story *Competition Entry #349* beneficial or dangerous? Explain.
5. What is your opinion about time travel? If it were possible, would it be worth it? Make a list of the pros and cons of time travel as outlined in this story. Present your finding in a Plus, Minus and Interesting table. Look at the findings in your table? Has your opinion of time travel changed at all? What does this tell us about the power and role of Literature in influencing opinions?
6. How does perspective function in literature? Define this literary device. How does perspective operate in Jaclyn Moriarty's story, *Competition Entry #349*? Compare this to the way perspective operates in Gabrielle Tozer's story, *The Feeling from over Here*? Why have the author's chosen to tell their stories in this way? Have they been effective in telling their stories?
7. The Protagonist's experiences with time travel in the story give added insight into recent events that change her view about her prospects of a relationship with Noah. What message about relationships does this send to readers? Write an opinionative speech on one the following and present to the class:
 - a. The importance of communication
 - b. The power of taking a chance
 - c. The role of empathy in healthy relationships
 - d. The value of seeing things from another perspective
 - e. Support your assertions with evidence from the text.
8. The author uses humour extensively in this story. There are many ways to write humourously. In her article, "What Writing Techniques Do Writers Use to Create Humour in Stories?" Kristine Tucker lists four ways authors incorporate humour into their work. These include:
 - a. Silly Satire
 - b. Outrageous Similes and Metaphors
 - c. Unexpected Twists
 - d. Play on Words

Can you find examples of these in *Competition Entry #349*? Make a list of examples from the story and the type of humour used. Are there types of humour employed in *Competition Entry #349* that are not included in Kristine Tucker's list? Add these examples to your list and name them. Share your findings with the class.
9. Why do you think Jaclyn Moriarty employs humour in *Competition Entry #349*? Is it effective? In his article, "7 Reasons to Include Humour in Your Work ", Ian Coburn gives the following seven reasons to include humour in a story:
 - a. To address uncomfortable or confrontational subjects.
 - b. Releases tension for characters and the audience or reader.
 - c. Keeps the reader or audience engaged.
 - d. Makes the characters real and multi-dimensional.
 - e. Provides punctuation and flow.
 - f. Makes your work memorable.

g. Provides cohesiveness.

(<http://writetodone.com/7-reasons-to-include-humor-in-your-work/>)

Which of these reasons for using humour applies to *Competition Entry #349*? Now, think about an experience you have had. First write about it in a serious way, then try to adopt a more humorous tone. Choose a partner and swap stories. Ask them which version of the story is more successful and to give you reasons as to why.

10. Write your own essay outlining why you should win an exclusive time-travel package from the Time Travel Agency.
11. Try writing your own suspense story. This can be done in class as a round robin activity where students choose a random prompt, start writing the story and then pass their story on to be continued by the next person after two minutes. Detailed instructions from the *Education Place* for a Round Robin Suspense writing activity can be found at: <http://www.eduplace.com/activity/suspense.html>. A list of suspense writing prompts can be found at: <http://www.eduplace.com/activity/pdf/prompts.pdf>.

Further Reading

1. "7 Reasons to Include Humour in Your Work " by Ian Coburn for *Write to Done* (<http://writetodone.com/7-reasons-to-include-humor-in-your-work/>)
2. "The Importance of Humour Writing" by Mel Helitzer with Mark Shatz in *Writer's Digest*, September 24, 2008 (<http://www.writersdigest.com/qp7-migration-writers-digest-conference/comedy-writing-secrets-excerpt>)
3. "5 Reasons to Use Humour in Writing" by Lynda R. Young, 8.08.2011 (<http://lyndaryoung.blogspot.com.au/2011/08/5-reasons-to-use-humour-in-writing.html>)
4. "What Writing Techniques Do Writers Use to Create Humour in Stories?" By Kristine Tucker for *Classroom* on Synonym.com (<http://classroom.synonym.com/writing-use-create-humor-stories-8015455.html>)
5. "Back to the Future" (film, 1985)
6. *Playing Beatie Bow* by Ruth Park
7. *The Time Machine* by H.G. Wells
8. The Young Adult Library Services Association publishes a list of young adult books about time travel can be found at: "Booklist: Time Travel Reads for Teens" on *The Hub*, 6.04.2016 (<http://www.yalsa.ala.org/thehub/2016/04/06/booklist-time-travel-reads-for-teens/>)
9. A list of humorous books for teens can be found at: "Looking for a Good Laugh: Humour in Teen Fiction" by Tom Reynolds, April 2014, in *Novelist* on EBSCO (<https://www.ebscohost.com/novelist/novelist-special/201403-looking-for-a-good-laugh-humor-in-teen-fiction>)
10. "21 Fast Hacks to Fuel Your Story With Suspense", by Brian Klems for *Writer's Digest*, January 12, 2015 (<http://www.writersdigest.com/online-editor/21-fast-hacks-to-fuel-your-story-with-suspense>)

Short Story Writing Activities:

1. Visual Texts – Creative writing exercise to stimulus

Choose a visual text and examine it. Respond by writing answers to the following questions in well-constructed sentences:

1. **Subject matter/context** – What is shown?
2. **Purpose** – What does the composer hope to achieve?
3. **Style/Structural features** – What visual features and techniques are evident?
4. **Language** – What language if any has been used? What is the effect and why?
5. **Themes** – What main ideas or concepts are developed within the visual text?
6. **Compositional features** – What visual aspects are evident? How have they impacted on meaning?
7. **Engagement with the viewer** – What connection is made with the responder? What feelings, attitudes, moods are generated by the use of visual features?
8. **Symbolism, imagery** – What is visually implied or emphasised?

Source: Stanners, B. 2009. *Exploring Genre: Science Fiction*, Phoenix Education, Putney.

2. Activity: Writing on demand

Write a 300-word short story in response to a visual text. Remember to follow the writing process and plan your work first.

When you have finished, swap your story with a partner and share feedback on how you could improve your work.

3. Storybird: You might like to start planning your short story by making a *StoryBird*.

Storybirds are short, art-inspired stories you make to share, read, and print. Read them like books, play them like games, and send them like greeting cards. They're curiously fun.

Storybird is a collaborative storytelling tool. It features gorgeous art and stunning illustrations stimulate the imagination and spark creativity. The results are both sharable and printable.

<http://storybird.com/>

<http://storybird.com/books/about-us-a-peek-inside-storybird/#>

Teacher info:

<http://storybird.com/teachers/>

Instructional video:

<http://vimeo.com/6178690>

4. The Writing Process: The writing process involves three main stages.

1. Composing: getting ideas and writing about them

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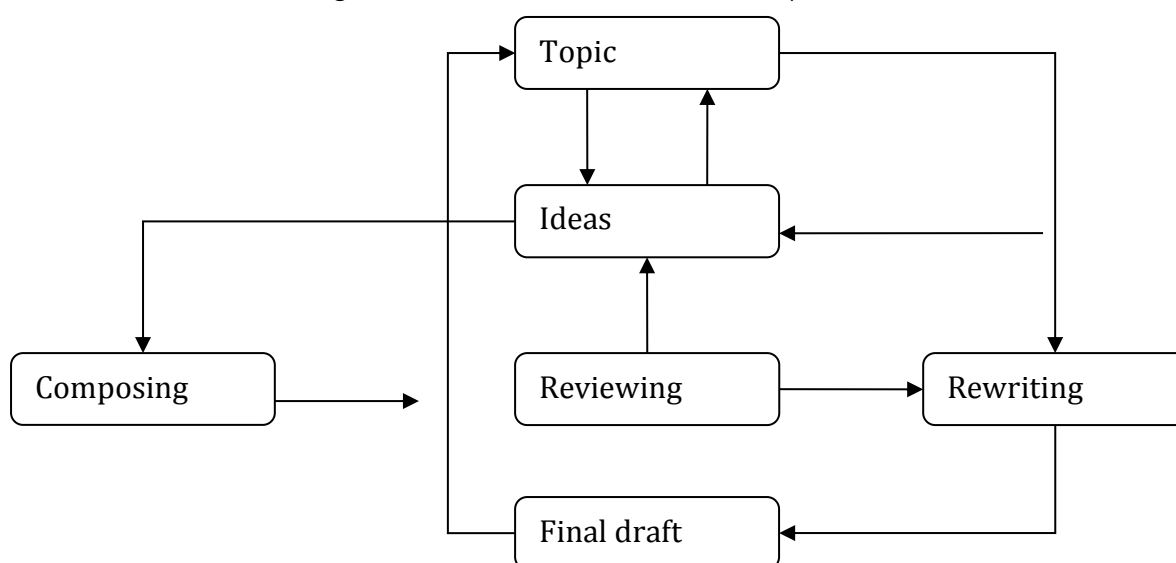
2. Reviewing: Evaluating what you have written

3. Rewriting: Changing what you first wrote

However, in practice, these stages are not so easily separated. You may find you get new ideas when you think you have completed stage three, and this can mean starting again at the composing stage. The following diagram shows how all the stages of writing, drafting and editing are interlinked.

N.B.

- The ideas relate to the topic
- The composition of the first draft relates to the topic and your ideas
- Reviewing relates to the first draft and to the topic.



Adapted from: Manning, M. and Sullivan, R 1997. Changing Contexts 4: A practical English course. Oxford University Press Australia: Melbourne.

5. Use the “Seven Steps to Writing Success” by Jen McVeity to write your own original short story.

Step 1: Plan for success

Step 2: Sizzling Starts

Step 3: Tightening Tensions

Step 4: Dynamic Dialogue

Step 5: Show, Don't Tell

Step 6: Ban the Boring

Step 7: Exciting Endings

For elaborations on the seven steps, please go to:

<https://www.sevenstepswriting.com/what-are-the-seven-steps/>

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6. Brainstorm ideas for your story using the S.C.A.M.P.E.R technique devised by Bob Eberle (PhD).

SCAMPER is a checklist that helps you to think of changes you can make to an existing idea to create a new one. You can use these changes either as direct suggestions or as starting points for lateral thinking, and to allow students the use of their imagination. S.C.A.M.P.E.R can be used in a number of activities. The letters in the acronym stand for:

S	Substitute	place of another to have another person or thing act or serve in the place of another
C	Combine	to bring together, to unite
A	Adapt	to adjust for the purpose of suiting a condition or
M	Modify	to alter, to change the form or quality
	Magnify	to enlarge, to make greater in form or quality
	Minify	to make smaller, lighter, slower, less frequent
P	Put to Other Uses	to be used for purposes other than originally intended
E	Eliminate	to remove, omit or get rid of quality, part or whole
R	Reverse	to place opposite or contrary, to turn it around
	Rearrange	to change order or adjust, different plan, layout or scheme

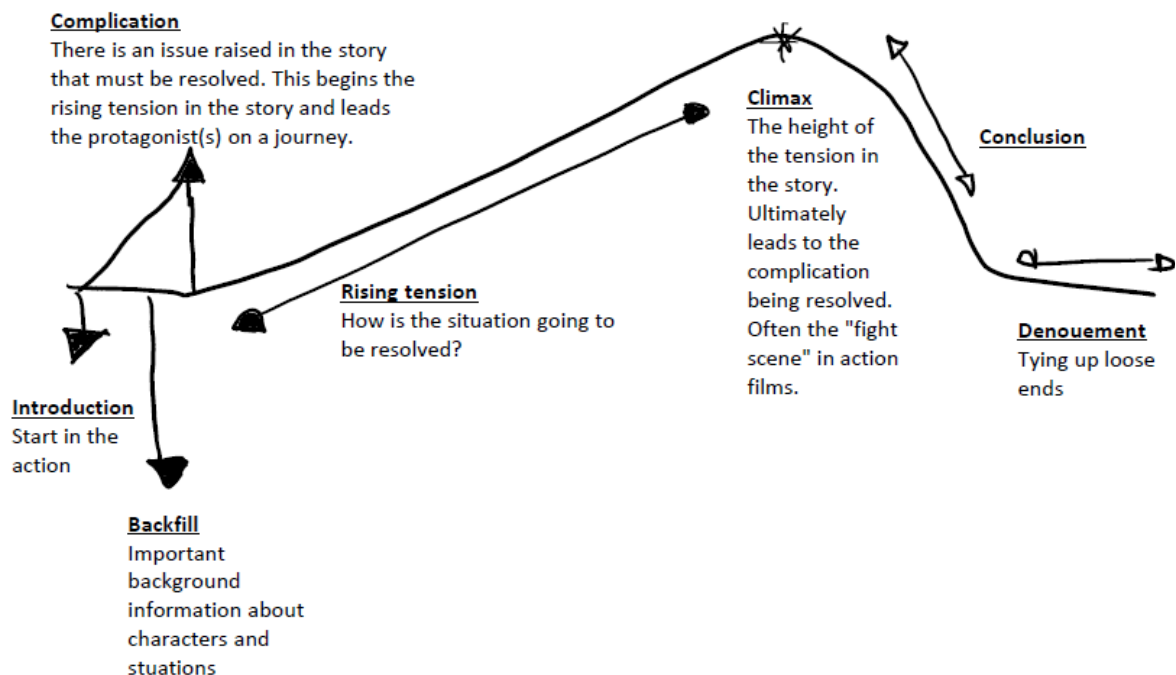
Source: <http://det.wa.edu.au/detcms/school-support-programs/gifted-and-talented/teachers/provision/approaches-and-strategies/instructional-strategies/scamper.en?page=1&>

7. Use Bubbl.us to create a mind map of your ideas. Go to: <https://bubbl.us> (According to Bubbl.us, a mind map is a graphical representation of ideas and concepts. It's a visual thinking tool for structuring information, helping you to better understand, remember and generate new ideas.)
8. Remember: Short stories tend to be less complex than novels. Usually, a short story will focus on only one incident, has a single plot, a single setting, a limited number of characters, and covers a short period of time.
 - a. Does your story idea conform to this convention?
 - b. If not, how can you alter it so that it does? (Consider focusing on one incident in a larger narrative that interests you)

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9. Structure your story by plotting your story idea on a story arc or story graph.
Remember to:
 - a. Start your introduction in the action
 - b. Backfill immediately after your introduction to flesh out your characters, their history and motivations
 - c. Develop your plot by planning a number of complications that present themselves to the protagonist on their journey
 - d. Gradually build up the tension until you reach a huge tension scene
 - e. Make sure there is an action climax that brings matters to a head
 - f. Conclude by wrapping up character emotions and loose ends on the story.
Draw the strands of the plot together.
 - g. Some stories include a dénouement, where matters are explained or resolved. It is the outcome of a situation, when something is decided or made clear.

ELEMENTS OF A STORY (CONVENTIONS)



10. Consider the plots, themes and messages in your story.
 - a. Plot: what the story is about. Develops from a conscious idea.
 - b. Theme: What the story is really about. Develops from the subconscious.
 - c. Message: relates to the theme and emerges from the action of a story.
11. Develop the characters in your story. There are many types of characters. Here are some ideas to get you started:
 - a. Flat
 - b. Round
 - c. Antagonist

- d. Protagonist

Produce some background information on the key characters in your short story. Do this for each major character.

- a. Name
- b. Place of Residence
- c. Occupation
- d. Age
- e. Sex
- f. Interests
- g. History/Background
- h. Personality
- i. Appearance
- j. An incident they are involved in
- k. List some adjectives that describe this character

12. Consider the setting carefully. Many writers rely heavily on descriptive writing to create a visual image of the setting they are trying to immerse the reader in. In short stories, settings are often limited.
 - a. Where will you set your story?
 - b. Write this description out on lined paper.
 - c. How will you create your visual images?
 - d. Could you accurately draw the scene? Have a go.
13. Consider the mood and atmosphere.
 - a. An author's vocabulary choices play a major role in developing mental imagery for his/her reader.
 - b. Great authors use figurative language to enhance visual imagery and create atmosphere.
14. Writing tip: Show, don't tell. According to Wikipedia, "show, don't tell" is a technique often employed in various kinds of texts to enable the reader to experience the story through action, words, thoughts, senses, and feelings rather than through the author's exposition, summarization, and description. The goal is not to drown the reader in heavy-handed adjectives, but rather to allow readers to interpret significant details in the text (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Show,_don't_tell)
 - a. When writing your own short story, invoke the five senses. Create pictures in the reader's mind, like the rich visuals you see in the film. Describe:
 - i. Sight
 - ii. Sound
 - iii. Taste
 - iv. Smell
 - v. Touch (feel)
 - b. Use precise and descriptive verbs, rather than over using adjectives.
15. Review your work carefully by considering the following:
 - a. Purpose:
 - i. Do characters face a problem?
 - ii. Does my story entertain or instruct the reader?
 - b. Structure:

- i. Does my orientation include information about who, when and where?
 - ii. Have I introduced a problem or complication?
 - iii. Does my story have a resolution or events to solve the problem?
 - iv. Is there a message behind my story? Is one needed?
- c. Grammar:
 - i. Does my writing conform to the conventions of direct and reported speech?
 - ii. Did I include action verbs (show, don't tell)?
 - iii. Did I use time connectives or conjunctions to link the events?
 - iv. Have I used complex noun groups to describe people and places?
 - v. Have I used descriptive language including figurative language?
- d. Writing Features:
 - i. Have I planned my writing in enough detail?
 - ii. Have I included a variety of simple, compound and complex sentences in my writing?
 - iii. Is the verb tense consistent?
 - iv. Do the subjects and verb agree in my sentences?
 - v. Have I used plurals and articles correctly?
 - vi. Have I used capital letters, full stops and other punctuation markers correctly?
 - vii. Have I checked my spelling carefully and corrected any mistakes.
 - viii. Have I re-read my work to edit it carefully?
- e. Make a list of things you need to ask for help with and show the list to your teacher.

Author of the Notes

Laura Kings is an experienced teacher and journalist. Laura has an interest in creating teacher resources, she has also written work for film, television and new media.

About the Authors

Amie Kaufman Bio



Amie Kaufman is a New York Times and internationally bestselling author of young adult fiction. Her multi-award winning work has been published in 24 countries, and described as “a game-changer” (Shelf Awareness), “stylistically mesmerising” (Publishers Weekly) and “out-of-this-world awesome” (Kirkus). The Starbound Trilogy, co-authored with Meagan Spooner, began with *These Broken Stars*. Her latest series, co-authored with Jay Kristoff, began in 2015 with the international bestseller *Illuminae*. Raised in Australia and Ireland, Amie has degrees in history, literature, law and conflict resolution. She lives in Melbourne with her husband, their rescue dog, and an extremely large personal library.

An interesting fact is that Amie had the story vetted by a NASA scientist, so the little details, from condensation inside Keiko's helmet to the colony being underground to protect from radiation, to the need to constantly remove dust, are all true.

Will Kostakis Bio

Personally, Will Kostakis is ready to catch a ball two seconds after it's hit him in the face. Professionally, he's thankful he's chosen a career that requires little (if any) coordination. After dabbling in celebrity journalism and reality TV, he now writes for young adults.

His first novel, *Loathing Lola*, was released when he was just nineteen, and his second, *The First Third*, won the 2014 Gold Inky Award. It was also shortlisted for the Children's Book Council of Australia Book of the Year and Prime Minister's Literary awards.

The Sidekicks is Will's latest novel!"



Alice Pung BIO



Alice was born in Footscray, Victoria, a month after her parents Kuan and Kien arrived in Australia. Alice's father, Kuan - a survivor of Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge regime - named her after Lewis Carroll's character because after surviving the Killing Fields, he thought Australia was a Wonderland. Alice is the oldest of four - she has a brother, Alexander, and two sisters, Alison and Alina.

Alice grew up in Footscray and Braybrook, and changed high schools five times - almost once every year! These experiences have shaped her as a writer because they taught her how to pay attention to the quiet young adults that others might overlook or miss.

Alice is a qualified lawyer and still works as a legal researcher in the area of minimum wages and pay equity. She lives with her husband Nick at Janet Clarke Hall, the University of Melbourne, where she is the Artist in Residence.

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Michael Pryor BIO



Born in Swan Hill, Michael spent his childhood in country Victoria and Melbourne before moving to Geelong at the age of 10.

Michael's short stories have appeared in Australia and overseas in publications such as *Overland* and the *New South Wales School Magazine*. Michael's writing moves from literary fiction to genre Science Fiction to slapstick humour, depending on my mood.

He has been shortlisted six times for the Aurealis Award for Speculative Fiction, and has also been nominated for a Ditmar award.

Melissa Keil BIO

Melissa Keil was born in Melbourne, Australia, and has been a giant book nerd for as long as she can remember. She studied Cinema and Anthropology at university, and then spent a few more years dabbling in graduate study, including Professional Writing and Editing. In between she has been a high school teacher, Middle Eastern tour guide, waitress, community theatre dogsbody, and IT help desk person (hands down, her most unsuccessful job to date).

Now, by day, she is a children's book editor, and spends the rest of her time reading, writing, buying comic books, watching YouTube, and wrangling a cheeky spoodle named Hugo.



Her debut YA novel, *Life in Outer Space*, was the winner of the 2013 Ampersand Project. It's a young adult romantic comedy that combines some of her many loves – movies, music, karate, the Astor Theatre, Star Wars, and all things geek. *Life in Outer Space* was the recipient of the 2014 Ena Noël award, and was shortlisted for the 2014 CBCA Book of the Year (Older Readers). Her second YA novel, *The Incredible Adventures of Cinnamon Girl*.

Ellie Marney BIO



Ellie Marney is a teacher and author of the *Every* series (*Every Breath*, *Every Word*, *Every Move*), a highly-awarded crime trilogy for Young Adults now published in Australia and overseas. In 2015, *Every Breath* was named by the Australian Library Information Association as one of the top ten most-borrowed YA books in libraries nationwide.

Ellie has helped spearhead a collaborative group of literary sector professionals under the banner '#LoveOzYA' to advocate for and promote Australian YA literature, and she hosts a book club – '#LoveOzYAbookclub' – online. She is an Ambassador for the Stella Prize Schools Program, and is a regular speaker at schools, events and festivals.

Ellie was born in Brisbane, and has lived in Indonesia, Singapore and India.

Lili Wilkinson BIO

Lili Wilkinson is the author of ten books, including *Scatterheart* and *Pink*. She established insideadog.com.au, the Inky Awards and the Inkys Creative Reading Prize at the Centre for Youth Literature, State Library of Victoria.

Lili has a PhD in Creative Writing from the University of Melbourne, and now spends most of her time reading and writing books for teenagers. Her latest novel is *The Boundless Sublime*.



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Gabrielle Tozer BIO



Gabrielle Tozer is the internationally published author of three YA novels: *The Intern*, which won the State Library of Victoria's 2015 Gold Inky Award, *Faking It* and *Remind Me How This Ends*.

Based in Sydney, Gabrielle loves sharing her passion for storytelling and creativity, and has appeared at festivals, schools and conferences around Australia. She has also been featured on *Weekend Today*, *Triple J* and *ABC Radio*, as well as in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *Dolly*, *Girlfriend*, *TV Week* and *Cosmopolitan*.

Gabrielle's first picture book, *Peas and Quiet* (illustrated by Sue deGennaro), is due for release on June 24, while her short story 'The Feeling From Over Here' (featured in *Begin, End, Begin: A #LoveOzYA Anthology*) is out now. Say hello: gabrielletozer.com

Danielle Binks BIO

Danielle Binks is an editor, book blogger, literary agent, and youth literature advocate.

The short story in a #LoveOzYA anthology is her first book publication, and marks her as an emerging voice in the Australian YA landscape.

Visit daniellebinks.com to find out more.

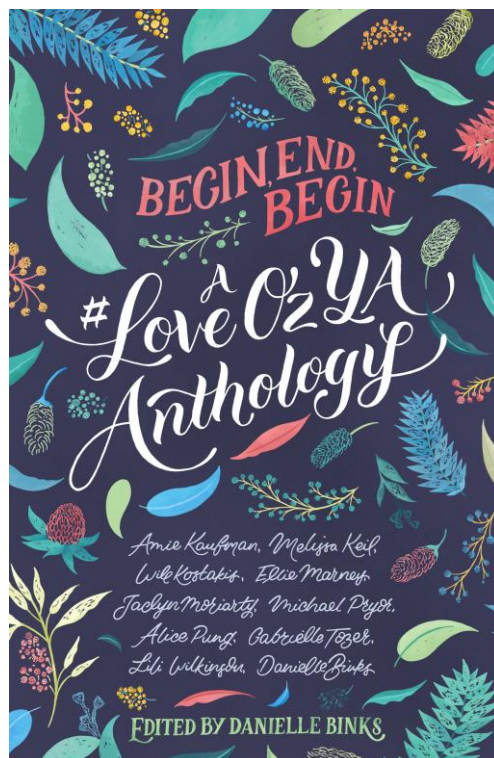


Jaclyn Moriarty BIO



Jaclyn Moriarty grew up in Sydney, lived in the US, the UK and Canada, and now lives in Sydney again. She is the prize-winning, best-selling author of the Ashbury-Brookfield books (including *Feeling Sorry for Celia* and *Finding Cassie Crazy*) and the *Colours of Madeleine* trilogy (*A Corner of White*, *The Cracks in the Kingdom* and *A Tangle of Gold*).

Visit jaclynmoriarty.com to find out more.



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