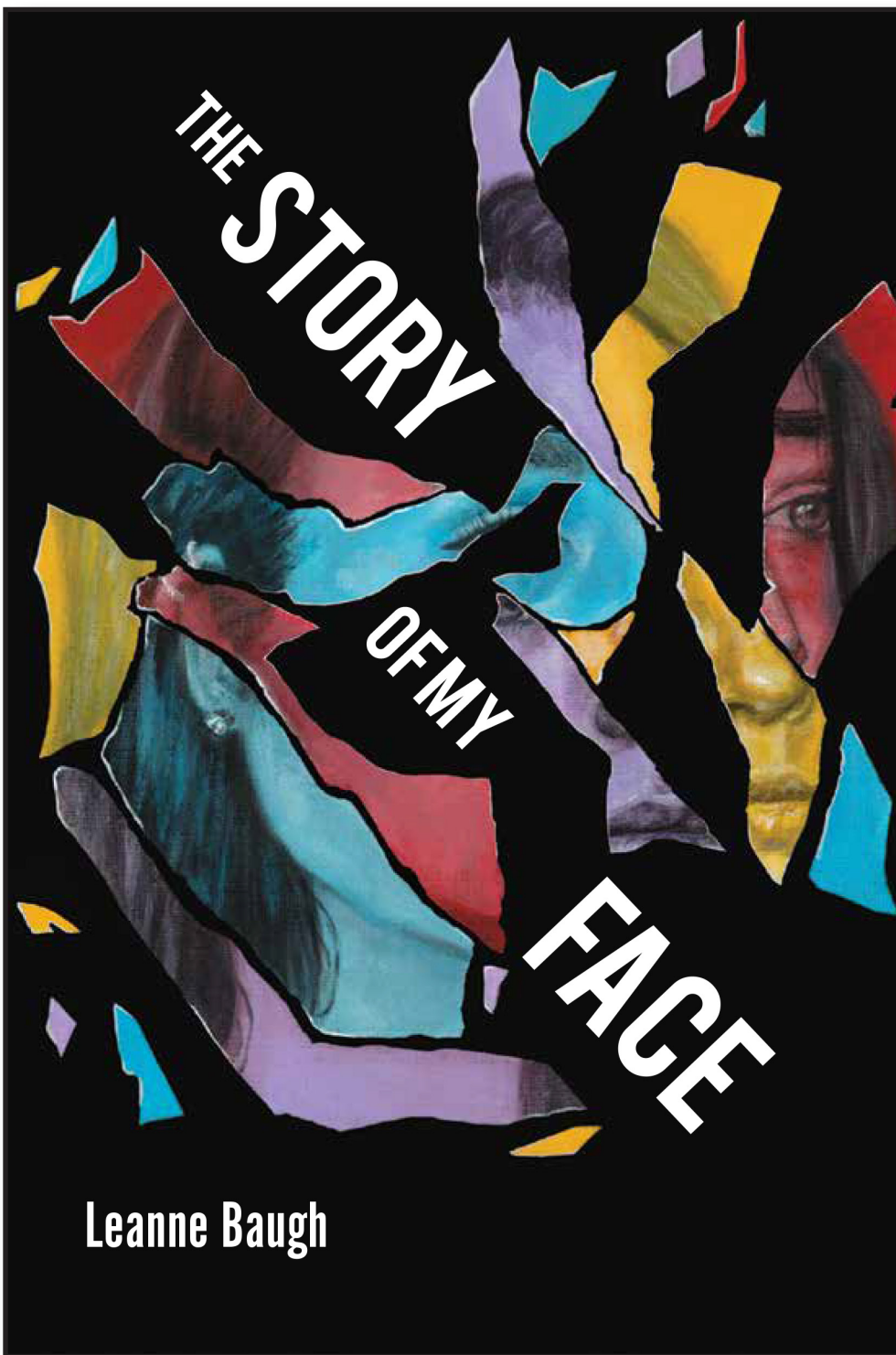


Grades 11 & 12; Ages 13–18



Teacher's Guide: The Story of My Face  
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ISBN: 9781772600704

Second Story Press  
[www.secondstorypress.ca](http://www.secondstorypress.ca)

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This novel study unit is intended for Grade 11 or 12 Language Arts students in the University stream of the Ontario Secondary Curriculum but may be adapted for other courses and uses as teachers see fit. There are also ideas for cross-curricular links included at the end of this guide.

## Synopsis of Text:

After being attacked by a grizzly bear in the Rocky Mountains, seventeen-year-old Abby Hughes is left with facial scars, which are all she can think about and all that she thinks anyone else can see when they look at her. After months of hiding out at home, returning to high school feels as daunting to Abby as enduring seven plastic surgeries. She knows it will be hard to show her new face to the world, but Abby doesn't expect the level of rejection and hurt she receives, especially from people she thought were her friends. When taunts and bullying take a dangerous turn, she has to rediscover the strong, confident person beneath her skin.

## Disclaimer of Mature Content:

This powerful text captures emotions and events in vivid detail. There are descriptions of healthy sexual relationships as well as attempted rape and sexually abusive behaviours. There is content related to drinking, drugs, alcoholism, depression, and coping strategies for grief. There is also explicit language. As a story of self-awareness and acceptance, it offers many opportunities for students to connect to their own inner feelings and insecurities, family and friend relationships, and life experiences with grief, trauma, self-acceptance, and bullying. This story should be shared with mature students.

## Themes:

- Friendship, Healthy Romantic Relationships, Parent-Child Relationships, Dating
- Sex, Drugs, Abuse/Assault, Unhealthy Romantic Relationships, Bullying
- Grief, Coping Strategies, Support Networks, Communication
- Facing Fears/Taking on Challenges
- Identity, Perceptions of Inner and Outer Self, Self-Acceptance

## Synopsis of Unit:

- Students, as a class or in small groups, will read the first three chapters together along with the teacher, discussing and setting up success for understanding and connecting to the rest of the text. These beginning book-club activities will allow students to delve into the setting, characters, and the themes of the book, as well as to work on reading comprehension and strategies of visualizing, connecting, and making inferences.
- Students will then read the remaining 25 chapters of the novel independently, meeting with group members several times, as necessary. Students will choose themes that speak to each of them and take notes of instances in the text where those themes are apparent.
- Students will then conduct further research through a variety of sources and will communicate their understanding to the class through an open-ended assignment.

## Before Reading Activities:

### 1. Cover Art Discussion

- Have students look at the cover art of the novel, designed by Shannon O'Toole.
- Ask: What do you predict this story will be about? What connections or thoughts come to mind?

### 2. Back Cover Summary Discussion

- Have students read the summary of the book on the back cover.
- Re-evaluate your predictions. Ask: What would you change or add? What further connections or thoughts come to mind? What questions do you have that might be answered in this text?

**Teacher Note:** Hopefully deeper connections and conversations will take place as students put together words and visual clues and recognize some of the themes of the novel that might become apparent.

## Beginning Reading Activities:

Read chapters 1, 2, and 3 together: “Duck and Cover” (pp. 1–10), “Schultzy” (pp. 11–18), and “Grizzly Diaries” (pp. 19–29).

- Focus: Visualization strategies, character mapping, and theme identification
3. Chapters 1–3 introduce the setting of the story: It takes place 30 minutes west of Calgary, in the small farm township of Springbank in southwestern Alberta, in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains.
    - Ask: What do you know about the foothills surrounding Calgary, Alberta? What do you know about the Rocky Mountains? Have you ever travelled to or hiked in Western Canada?
    - Do: Have students create a collage of images to help visualize the setting of this story. Go on a virtual tour of the area using Google Maps Street View or Google Earth.
    - Ask: How does the setting of this book compare with your own community?
  4. Chapter 1 describes Abby’s face and body seven surgeries after she was attacked by a grizzly bear on a hike in the mountains.
    - Do: At the end of Chapter 1, ask students to draw Abby (from their own visualizations). Have students compare their sketches with each other’s. Then re-read the description on pages 5–6 where Abby traces herself in the mirror of the costume closet at school. As a group, create a list of the descriptors used in the text. Compare this list with students’ drawings. Which features are missing? Which features differ from the drawings?
- \* ESSENTIAL QUESTION: How do our visualizations of characters, setting, and events help us understand the story?

5. Chapters 1–3 introduce most of the main characters in the novel. (A few more are introduced in later chapters.)
- Do: Have students create a character map that allows them to identify people, describe their character traits, and infer their relationships to one another. Continue adding to this map as new characters are introduced and as new character traits or relationships are revealed through the events in the novel.
  - \* ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS: What are the different types of relationships we need in our lives? What types of relationships are toxic or dangerous? How does character mapping help us, as readers, with longer, more complex texts?
6. Chapters 1–3 describe many of the key events that will continue to develop in the story. The author shares high school life with friendships, bullying, and a variety of teacher-types. The author also shares the details of the grizzly bear attack, the reactions of peers, the relationship between Abby and her family members (including how this is impacted by her father’s depression), and Abby’s affair with Liam.
- Do: Reiterate with students that the subject matter written about in these first few chapters will continue to be described in more detail. Ensure that the classroom will be a safe space for them to discuss their feelings, reactions, and connections to the events and themes. Remind students to approach the text with sensitivity and maturity when discussing the content and their reactions with peers.
  - Do: Have students collaboratively create a list of themes they think might develop in the story. The teacher should add any themes not yet presented by this list (ones that may not appear until later chapters).

**Teacher Talk:** For themes in this novel, refer to the list on page 1 of this guide, or below on page 8 in the “During Reading” section of this guide.

- \* ESSENTIAL QUESTION: How can we use our inferences, visualizations, connections, and other comprehension strategies to make sense of this story? In what ways might we record our thoughts while reading so we can remember and reference them after the novel concludes?

**Teacher Talk:** Here is a list of possible formats for students to record their thoughts:

- **Quotes and Notes:** Logical, linear-thinking students might choose to create a T chart on which they copy a quote or an event from the story in the left column (along with a chapter or page-number reference), and their thoughts or reactions in the right column.
- **Open-Minded Portraits:** Artistic, non-linear-thinking students might choose to create a booklet of silhouette-face cutouts that are bound together. Each face represents a character (Abby might have several pages by the end). On the front of the face are external or physical characteristics (from physical descriptions to actions to speech). On the back of the face are internal characteristics (emotions, reactions, character traits, inner monologues). Each entry should be cited with a page reference.
- **Mind-Map Web:** Non-linear thinkers might also choose to create an open web of ideas. They might choose to start with several webs for different themes, and branch out instances where those themes are represented and explored. Each branch should have a description, quote, or thought, and a page reference.
- **Journal Entries:** Linguistic and/or emotional thinkers might choose to write reflection journals for each chapter, exploring their reactions and thoughts to the themes and events in the novel. These entries, as with the options above, should be well referenced with page numbers.



## During Reading Activities:

- Focus: Engaging with the themes in the novel, finding evidence in the text to support ideas, reflecting on inner thoughts, and using comprehension strategies
- 7. Students are to select two themes to focus on while reading, record their thoughts throughout the reading process, and prepare to share their thoughts with the teacher or their peers as requested.

*(Note: Due to the sensitive and personal nature of the connections and reactions some students might have, students should be assured that their work will never be given to a peer to read without permission, and that the sharing process will be discussion-based, with students sharing whatever thoughts they are comfortable expressing aloud.)*

- Have students select any two of the following themes to focus on while reading. They might choose themes that they can personally connect to or ones that are new to them that they are interested in exploring or learning more about.

### Themes to choose from:

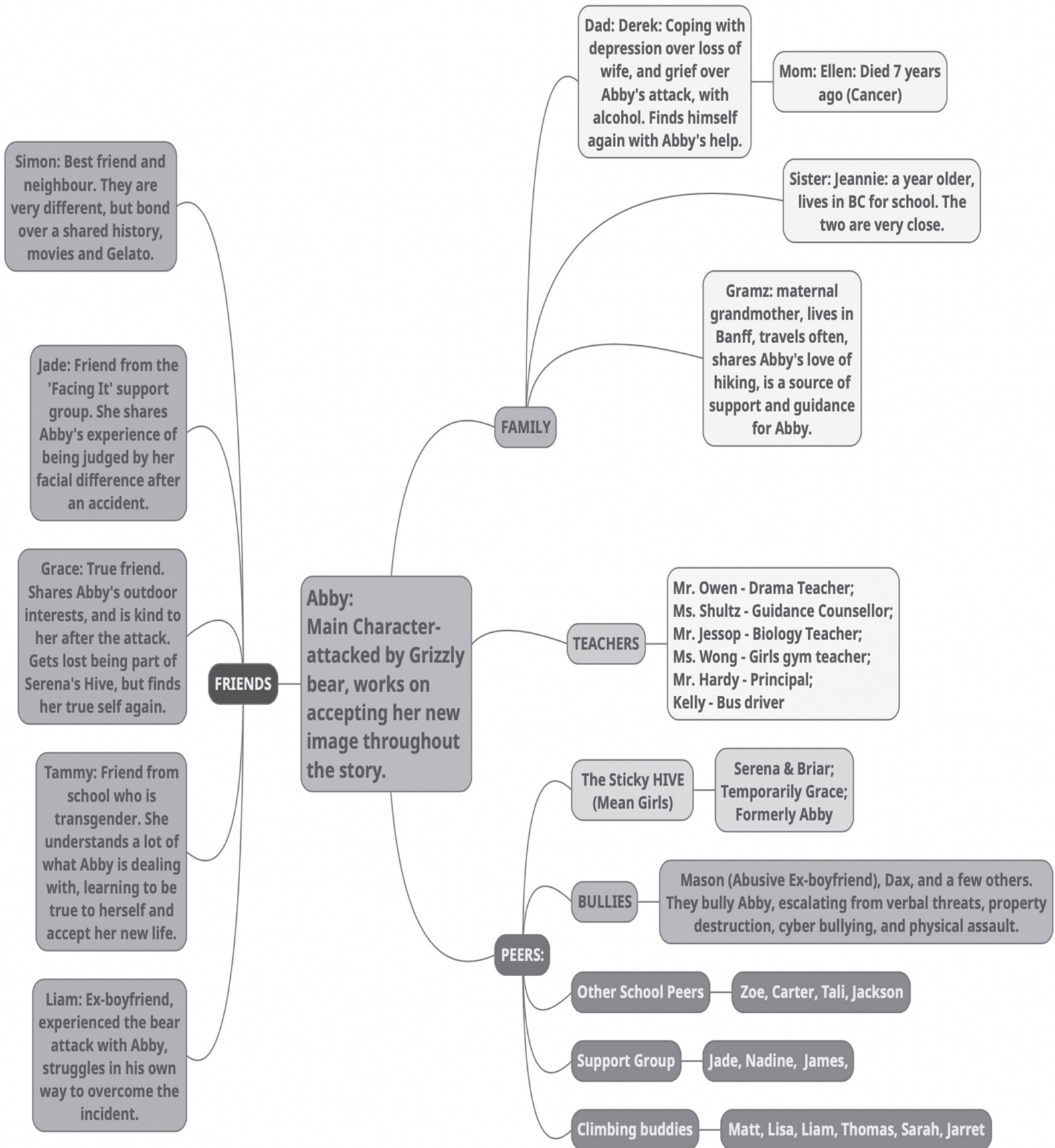
- Friendship, Healthy Romantic Relationships, Parent-Child Relationships, Dating
- Sex, Drugs, Abuse/Assault, Unhealthy Romantic Relationships, Bullying
- Grief, Coping Strategies, Support Networks, Communication
- Facing Fears/Taking on Challenges
- Identity, Perceptions of Inner and Outer Self, Self-Acceptance

- Have students select an organizer of their choice (see options above) to record significant events or quotes related to their chosen themes, as well as their thoughts and reactions (predictions, connections, inferences, visualizations, etc.).

- Have students read the remaining 25 chapters independently and use their organizers to record their comprehension and engagement with the text.

**Teacher Talk:** The amount of engagement you choose to have with students during this portion of the unit will depend on students' reading levels, comprehension levels, and personal factors related to the content of the story. You may decide to have students re-group at the end of the book or throughout the book after each pre-assigned set of chapters. You may choose to have small book-club sessions with peers or host student-teacher conferences.

# Character Mapping



## Chapter Summaries

### Chapter 1, "Duck and Cover":

Abby and Simon wait for the bus to school on Abby's first day back after the grizzly bear attack. She endures the reactions of her peers on the bus and at school, some gawking at her new face and others avoiding eye contact all together. Abby hides out in the costume closet at school (a place that's familiar and safe because of her experience with the drama department) and catalogues her scars in the mirror. The reader is introduced to Serena, Briar, and Grace—Abby's supposed best friends; Liam—her ex-boyfriend; and Mason and Dax—the school bullies. Abby learns that her "best friends" may not really be her friends at all. Mr. Jessop, the science teacher, seems unaware of the change in friendship dynamics.

### Chapter 2, "Schultzy":

Abby makes her way to drama class, one of three courses she has this final semester. Mason, her ex-ex-boyfriend, pulls her up on stage for an improv scene about a breakup. It becomes obvious that this is not acting at all. Mason is still angry that Abby cheated on him with Liam and threatens that she'll "pay for it." Mr. Owen, the drama teacher, seems none the wiser. Mrs. Schultz, the guidance counsellor, offers a friendly hand.

### Chapter 3, "Grizzly Diaries":

Abby talks with her sister, Jeannie, over FaceTime. The two recount Abby's first day back, school, boys, and other sisterly topics. Abby then skims her friends' social media postings, which offer the reader more insight into each of the characters. The reader learns about Abby's odd obsession with grizzly bear research and about her strained relationship with her father. Abby's dream gives the reader a visual of the grizzly bear attack.

### **Chapter 4, “Bear Bait”:**

Abby experiences another episode of bullying: Mason has written Bear Bait across her locker for all to see. She is then verbally accosted by him outside and called a slut; these events expose more details about her relationship with Mason and about the kind of person he is. Abby receives an anonymous text (likely from Mason) with the handle “UR SO FN UGLY” and with a Frankenstein meme—adding cyber-bullying to her list of problems. Abby sees her plastic surgeon and considers attending a support group. Abby tries to convince her father that he should try online dating.

### **Chapter 5, “Fever”:**

Gym class is replaced by “social dance,” where the girls’ and boys’ classes are combined for dance lessons. Abby feels awkward as the only one in her gym uniform, which shows off more of her scars than she is comfortable with. Liam ends up being her dance partner, and the reader experiences the unexplained tension between them. Abby tries to convince Simon to take her to the grad dance in case Liam bails on her; Simon refuses. Abby and her dad reminisce over pictures and videos of her mom (who passed away seven years earlier from cancer). She confronts her dad about his depression and his drinking. Abby receives another message from UR SO FN UGLY.

### **Chapter 6, “Tormented”:**

Abby experiences more bullying from Mason and Dax. Abby starts working on her dramatic monologue assignment, using writing as a therapeutic release.

### **Chapter 7, “Facing It”:**

Abby attends her first support group for people with “facial differences” (a term this group likes to use instead of disfigurement or deformity). Abby does some deeper self-reflection and realizes just how judgmental she is of others (something that has become more obvious to her in previous chapters as well). Abby makes a new friend, Jade.

### **Chapter 8, “AA Cup”:**

During a sex-education lesson, Abby remembers her first time seeing Liam naked. Grace reminds Abby of what kind of boyfriend Mason was—jealous, possessive, overbearing, and

almost sociopathic. She urges Abby to tell someone about the bullying, but Abby thinks it will only make things worse. Abby goes bra shopping with Serena, Grace, and Briar. The girls each judge their own bodies harshly, making it obvious that looking sexy and feeling good on the inside are strongly connected. Abby is confronted by a sales woman, who mistakes her physical deformity for an intellectual deficiency, speaking to her slowly and loudly (something other support-group members have also experienced). Abby finds it difficult to fit her new self in with her old friends.

### **Chapter 9, "Talisman":**

Abby, Jeannie, and their dad spend Easter together in Banff, at Abby's grandma's house. The sisters work on their dad's online dating profile together. Abby experiences anxiety just being near the mountains, and she's afraid to walk outside. Gramz tells Abby that the bear is now her talisman—a spirit animal or life guide that will speak to her in her dreams and offer strength and guidance.

### **Chapter 10, "Tammy":**

The reader is introduced to Tammy, who has transitioned from being Jeremy. Her dramatic monologue is titled "Ten Things You Need to Know About Transitioning." Abby connects to Tammy's words about the process of tearing down the old and rebuilding the new person she's become and deserving "to live an authentic life." Tammy and Abby share a conversation about Mason. He bullied Tammy when she first transitioned, and telling the principal only made things worse. The reader learns more about Mason's troubled past.

### **Chapter 11, "Man Versus Grizzly":**

Abby and Simon visit the Calgary Zoo to confront a grizzly bear safely contained behind a reinforced wire fence. This attempt at facing her fears is not quite a success. Simon starts talking about a girl named Olivia, with whom he has a lot in common. Abby not only has to face her fears of the bear but of losing her best friend to another girl and to another city when Simon goes away to university in the fall.

### **Chapter 12, "Java Junction":**

Abby meets Simon and Olivia at the café owned by Liam's mom. Abby's jealousy creeps up on her. Abby and Liam exchange another awkward encounter. Abby watches old home movies and continues to revise her monologue.

### **Chapter 13, “The Story in My Brain”:**

During her reproductive-system test in biology, Abby vividly recalls the first time she and Liam had sex. Mr. Owen asks Abby to lead an improv session with some grade eight recruits to the drama program. She reluctantly agrees. Abby is devastated when Grace tells her that Liam agreed to go to grad with Serena (even though he had promised to take Abby whether they were still together or not). Grace sheds some light on Liam’s experience of coping with the bear attack. Abby and Grace reminisce over old hiking trips, and Grace confesses that she doesn’t really like the person she has become—trying desperately to fit in with the “in” crowd instead of being grounded and true to herself. Abby attends another support-group meeting. She walks away with a notion of how to get out of the trap of self-sabotage and how to change the story inside her head. The theme of self-acceptance is explored in depth.

### **Chapter 14, “Evolving”:**

Abby’s dad finds a match on his online dating site. Abby checks out a Facebook page called Evolve for inspirational quotes: “You teach people how to treat you by what you allow, what you stop, and what you reinforce.” Abby blocks UR SO FN UGLY on her phone to stop receiving nasty texts. She also stands up to Mason in the stairwell at school, in an effort to put an end to his bad behaviour.

### **Chapter 15, “Fashionistas”:**

Tammy takes Abby to the mall for a makeover. Her confidence is infectious. Abby practises changing the story in her head by rephrasing the negative thoughts she has with positive statements about herself. Her shopping experience with Tammy is far more successful than the one she had with Serena, Grace, and Briar.

### **Chapter 16, “Over the Edge”:**

Abby’s gym class heads out for a hike, her first since the attack. Grace continues to be a true friend and sticks with Abby on the path. When Abby spots a brown bear, she panics, and Grace helps her back to the bus. Abby and Simon have a conversation about Olivia and Simon’s nervousness about having sex for the first time. Abby’s dad’s first date wasn’t all he hoped it would be, and he feels disappointed that people don’t represent their true selves online.

## **Chapter 17, “Déjà Vu All Over Again”:**

Abby and Carter lead an “Improv-a-ganza” session with a group of grade eight drama recruits. Abby does a wonderful job, and Carter introduces the idea that Abby might consider becoming a drama teacher. Abby reluctantly attends the bush party that all her peers are attending—her first party in about a year. The scene is of teens partying around a large bonfire, drinking, smoking, and blaring techno-beats in the middle of a large farm field. Abby has a run-in with Mason, who tries to rape her in a secluded spot. She fights him off, runs away, and finds Liam. Liam and Abby have their first honest conversation in his car while she calms down after Mason’s attack. Liam’s avoidance has been because he feels shame for not being able to save Abby from the attack. The reader finds out just how much he has been suffering this past year. Abby comes home to find her dad packing for a hike with a new woman, Angela, whom he is quite smitten with.

## **Chapter 18, “Trust”:**

Abby goes on another hike, finally facing her fears. Her dad’s hiking date with Angela was also a success—he hadn’t been hiking in a few years. Abby more seriously considers applying to the concurrent education and drama program at the University of British Columbia. Simon asks Abby’s permission to ask Olivia to graduation. Abby feels betrayed but is supportive of her best friend.

## **Chapter 19, “Unframed”:**

Abby and Liam share an almost normal conversation. Serena breaks down from the pressure her mother puts on her to value her looks more than anything else (a theme that has been building in previous chapters). Abby gets called to the office, where she finds police waiting for her. Mason has framed her as a drug dealer, a false yet serious allegation. Luckily, Simon and Jackson witnessed Mason and Dax putting pot in her locker to set her up, and they took it out before her locker was searched.

## **Chapter 20, “Climbing the Walls”:**

Gym class is a co-ed excursion to a local indoor climbing gym. Abby was an excellent climber before her attack, but her body is weaker now, and she is nervous. Matt, the climbing instructor, is so excited to see Abby after so long and asks her to demonstrate for the class. Abby struggles at first, but her body soon remembers what to do, and she thrives. Matt gets



her and Liam to demonstrate lead climbing, and this helps to steer their relationship to a stronger path as well. Matt invites Abby on a climb near Lake Louise.

### **Chapter 21, “Unrehearsed”:**

Mr. Owen surprises Abby, asking her to share her monologue with the drama class. She is not ready to share it, and the experience is awful. Anticipating Mason’s usual cornering of her in the stairwell after class, Abby tries a new tactic to avoid being bullied—asking Mr. Owen questions about the summer drama internship as she walks down the stairs with him. Abby attends another support-group meeting. The focus is on changing your thinking and actions to work toward self-acceptance. The notion of “fake it until you make it” is offered by Jade, paralleling Abby’s journey to return to her former actress-self.

### **Chapter 22, “The Giant Petting Zoo”:**

Abby surprises herself and accepts Matt’s invitation to go climbing on Saturday. On her way into Banff National Park, there is a group of tourists blocking traffic, taking pictures of a bear on the side of the road and feeding it food. Abby feels a surge of rage, steps out of her car, and goes off on a rant to a man who is way too close to the bear. She misses her climb with Matt and heads out on a trail walk with her Grandma instead. After, Gramz gives Abby a dress that belonged to her mother and convinces Abby to attend her graduation dance, date or no date.

### **Chapter 23, “Mountain Love”:**

Abby meets Angela, her dad’s new girlfriend. They all enjoy a nice dinner together. Abby commits to going to grad with her dad and Jeannie. Abby is nervous about her monologue performance being only a week away.

### **Chapter 24, “Inside Out”:**

Zoe shares her monologue about her family’s experience of having her father in prison for bank robbery. Serena’s body-image issues are revisited. Serena and Abby have an altercation over Liam; Serena’s insecurity causes her to accuse Abby of trying to steal Liam back.

## **Chapter 25, "Dancing with the Bear":**

On the night of the community drama performance, Abby prepares to present her monologue. When Abby leaves the backstage area to use the bathroom, Mason and Dax follow her in and lock the door, and their bullying escalates to assault. The graphic attack that ensues includes Mason and Dax placing a bag over Abby's head and duct-taping it shut around her neck. They bind her wrists and ankles as well, and Mason again threatens to rape her. Instead, they carry her to a vacant area in the school, away from the crowds of the drama attendees, and lock her in a custodial closet. Abby is finally rescued by Schultzy and Ms. Cooper, the custodian, who mumbles something about Mason stealing her keys. When Schultzy offers to find Abby's father so he can take her home, Abby insists on performing her monologue. Her monologue is powerful, and she receives a standing ovation.

## **Chapter 26, "Facing the Music":**

Mason and Dax are arrested. Abby learns that Liam is the one to thank for her rescue. He came backstage to wish her luck and overheard Mason and Dax boasting about what they had done. Simon and Abby have a talk about the future and how, after graduation, everything is going to change. Abby has a dream that she is in an airport with all of her peers, but when the airline goes to scan her boarding pass, it's blank, and she is stuck watching everyone else begin their next chapter.

## **Chapter 27, "And the Winner Is...":**

At graduation, Zoe is announced as the winner of the summer drama workshop. Abby is announced as the runner-up and is also asked to perform with the group that summer. Abby makes a big decision to cancel her next round of surgeries over the summer and, instead, applies to the Faculty of Education for September. She is starting to look forward to moving on and living life again, accepting her scars and seeing beauty in the mirror.

## **Chapter 28, "Don't You (Forget About Me)":**

The novel ends at graduation. Serena's coping mechanism leaves her drunk before the dance even begins, and Liam bails on her. Abby finds Liam, and they search out a quiet place to talk. The air finally seems to clear between them, and they share a long-overdue hug. Abby dances with her dad. Their relationship has also overcome the rough patch. Liam asks Abby to dance, and it's just like it used to be—like no else in the world exists.

## After Reading Activities:

- Focus: reflecting on, researching, and representing themes through multimodal, self-guided projects
8. Students will choose at least one of the two themes they chose to focus on while reading. They will reflect on the evidence they collected about Abby’s story, conduct research on the theme to identify facts that might support their findings, and represent their knowledge and personal response to the novel in a product of their choosing. Ideas for this product and the possible links to the Ontario Language Arts curriculum are below. Students and teachers can negotiate other forms of expression on a case-by-case basis.
- Have students select the theme that they had the most connection to, the most evidence for, or that they wish to pursue further.
  - Have students pose questions for further research on the theme.
  - Have students conduct research through a variety of sources (Internet searches for scholarly articles; support/help sites; statistics; videos; reputable presentations such as TED Talks; library visits; interviewing an expert; interviewing peers; or notes on personal experiences).
  - Have students select an appropriate multimodal product to share their findings. The following pages contain a list of options with curriculum links for assessment purposes. Teachers and students can negotiate other forms for final products.

## Possible final products to communicate response to a theme in the text:

- Compose an expository essay on one of the themes in the text. Be sure to define the theme, describe evidence of this theme in the text, cite research on how this theme relates to young adults like you, and make connections to your personal experiences or thoughts.
- Compose a photo essay on one of the themes in the text. Be sure to define the theme in both words and visuals. Describe or illustrate some of the events in the text, cite research on how this theme relates to young adults like you, and include personal connections or thoughts. Present this in print or in blog format.
- Write a short screenplay adaptation of a few of the scenes in the novel that demonstrate your chosen theme. Your script should have narration/stage directions, speech, and action cues. Your screenplay should showcase your understanding of the evolution of the theme, include additional researched facts to support your findings, and provide evidence of your own bias toward or thoughts on the theme.
- Write your own personal monologue about your reactions, connections, and thoughts toward one of the themes in the text. Your monologue should demonstrate your personal stance on the issue and should offer examples from the text and supporting researched facts. Present this orally to the class or through a blog or video posting.
- Write a descriptive essay analyzing the development of selected characters from the novel. This character development should focus on one of the themes in the text. Your essay should include specific examples from the text for each character, research that supports the changes and reactions of the characters in

the text, and what you have learned about yourself through conducting these character analyses.

- Create a website or blog post to showcase your understanding of one of the themes in the novel. Your target audience for this web page should be teenagers, specifically those who may be experiencing their own connections to the theme you chose. Your page should include your own words on the theme with examples from the novel as well as your own research. It should also include a variety of media, such as images, embedded videos, and links to help sites or other research pages.
- Create a work of visual art, in a medium of your choice, that represents your response to one of the themes in the novel. Your work must be accompanied by 1) an artist's statement that defines your theme, 2) the inspiration behind the work from the novel and from your own experiences and thoughts, 3) any research or facts that inspired parts of the work, and 4) a description of any elements in the work that may be more abstract or need clarification for some viewers.

# Ontario Language Curriculum Connections:

## Activity Recap:

1. Before reading—cover walk;
2. Before reading—summary discussion;
3. Beginning reading—visualization of setting;
4. Beginning reading—visualization of Abby;
5. Beginning reading—character mapping;
6. Beginning reading—identification of events and themes, and metacognition about reading strategies;
7. During reading—recording and discussing themes, reactions, and thoughts;
8. After reading—producing multimodal text to share reflections on theme.

Curriculum Expectations	Related Assignment Component
Reading and Literature Studies: R1.1 Read a variety of texts <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Grade 11 prompt: What recurring themes emerge in these texts?</li><li>• Grade 12 prompt: What ideas in other readings challenge your understanding of the novel?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Novel study</li><li>• Discussion about themes (1–8)</li><li>• Recording and reflecting on themes (1–7)</li><li>• Responding to themes through a product of their choice (8)</li></ul>

<p>R1.2 Use reading comprehension strategies to understand texts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grade 11 prompt: Use a graphic organizer to record responses to a controversial issue; record reactions to the choices and behaviours of characters in a novel.</li> <li>Grade 12 prompt: Activate prior knowledge, discuss thoughts during reading, pose questions to discuss with classmates after reading.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Before, during, and after reading discussions and recordings (1–7)</li> </ul>
<p>R1.3 Demonstrate understanding Identify important information and supporting details.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grade 11 prompt: Create a mind map to illustrate character relationships in a novel; create a concept map to represent the key ideas in a text; use details from a text to support interpretations.</li> <li>Grade 12 prompt: Outline two contrasting interpretations from a scene in a novel; what evidence from the text would you use to support your critical response?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Setting collage (3)</li> <li>Abby’s sketch (4)</li> <li>Character mapping (5)</li> <li>Planning stage of final product (8)</li> </ul>
<p>R1.4 Make Inferences Support inferences with well-chosen stated and implied ideas from a text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grade 11 prompt: What inferences can we draw about the characters from the opening chapters?</li> <li>Grade 12 prompt: Explain what the details in a story suggest about the author’s attitude toward a subject.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During and after reading discussions and recordings (6–7)</li> <li>Final product (8)</li> </ul>
<p>R1.5 Extend Understanding (connections) Make increasingly rich connections between the ideas in a text and personal knowledge, experience, and insights; other texts; and the world around them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grade 11 prompt: Compare the thinking and responses of a fictional character in a crisis with your own probable reactions in similar circumstances.</li> <li>Grade 12 prompt: Compare the personal and moral evolution of the main character in a coming-of-age story with your own experiences. Explain parallels between the way an issue is presented in a text and the way a similar issue is playing itself out in current events. What insights have you gained by reading this text? What possibilities can you imagine now that you might not have considered before reading this text?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During Reading discussions and recordings (6–7)</li> <li>Final product (8)</li> </ul>
<p>R4.1 Metacognition Explain the strategies they found helpful before, during, and after reading.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grade 11 prompt: What pre-reading strategies did you use before starting your independent reading of the novel?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beginning Reading discussion (6)</li> <li>Planning for final product (8)</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grade 12 prompt: How did questioning the text during reading help to clarify your understanding?</li> </ul>	
<p>Writing W1.2 Generating and Developing ideas Generate, expand, explore, and focus for potential writing tasks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grade 11 prompt: Use a graphic organizer to group ideas and to help determine the focus or key concepts to be used in an essay. Record sources used to gather information and credit the original author to avoid plagiarism.</li> <li>Grade 12 prompt: Use a writer’s notebook while reading to record ideas for creative writing. Record sources used to gather information in order to credit the original author and avoid plagiarism.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During reading and recording (7)</li> <li>Research phase of final product (8)</li> </ul>
<p>W1.4 Organize Ideas Identify, sort, and order ideas to support writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grade 11 prompt: How will you organize the information you gathered for your essay?</li> <li>Grade 12 prompt: Use a variety of organizational patterns to present ideas in an essay.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning for final product (8)</li> </ul>
<p>W2.1 Form Write for different purposes and audiences using a variety of literary, informational, and graphic forms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grade 11 prompt: Write a report comparing the responses of classmates by gender to a novel or a narrative poem for peers based on a story.</li> <li>Grade 12 prompt: Write an essay analyzing the themes used in a literary work; design a website for a novel written for an audience of teenagers. Have you interviewed any of the people involved in a conflict or the authorities who could help resolve the issue? Have you used graphic and informational forms on your novel study website?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential ideas for final product (8)</li> </ul>
<p>W2.3 Diction Use appropriate descriptive and evocative words, phrases, and expressions to make writing clear, vivid, and interesting for their intended audiences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grade 11 prompt: Use evocative words and phrases accurately and effectively in describing a response to a text; use precise words and clear, straightforward sentences to present information.</li> <li>Grade 12 prompt: What effect are you trying to create in your writing? Which words would create this effect?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final product (8)</li> </ul>
<p>W2.5 Critical Literacy Explain how their own beliefs, values, and experiences are revealed in their writing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final product (8)</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grade 11 prompt: What attitudes and values are revealed in this piece of informational writing, even if they are not stated?</li> <li>• Grade 12 prompt: Examine your writing for bias and inclusive language. What does your writing reveal about your background and expectations? Does your writing assume that the social reality of your life is also that of other members of your community?</li> </ul>	
<p>W3.5 Proofreading Regularly proofread and correct their writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grade 11 prompt: Ask peers to check drafts for errors in spelling, vocabulary, punctuation, and grammar.</li> <li>• Grade 12 prompt: Why are accurate spelling, vocabulary, punctuation, and grammar such important elements of writing?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final product (8)</li> </ul>
<p>W3.6 Publishing Use a variety of presentation features, including print or script, fonts, graphics, and layout to improve clarity and coherence of their written work, and to heighten its appeal and effectiveness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grade 11 prompt: How does your choice of design features and layout reflect your audience?</li> <li>• Grade 12 prompt: How can you integrate photos and text in an appealing way?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final product (8)</li> </ul>

Source: **The Ministry of Education. (2007) *The Ontario Curriculum: Grades 11 and 12***

## Additional Resources:

- Support for Reading Comprehension and Novel Study

A resource for any Literacy teacher who needs a refresher on Before, During, and After Reading strategies for students. This teaching guide includes information on reading texts, organizing information, research and citations, and visual formatting for presenting written work. It includes graphic organizers, examples, and tips of the trade.

  - Dan Hughes and Leanne Baugh. *Steering the Course: Strategies for Reading, Researching, Writing, and Other Essential Skills*. Grades 9–12. BC Ministry of Education. Open Schools BC. (2014). Accessed at: [http://media.openschool.bc.ca/osbcmmedia/steering\\_9–12/etext/steering-the-course.pdf](http://media.openschool.bc.ca/osbcmmedia/steering_9–12/etext/steering-the-course.pdf)
- Support for Students

This novel has sensitive content. Some students may have personally experienced similar situations of bullying, assault, and depression or may have watched someone else go through these traumas using a variety of coping mechanisms. Those students may need an outlet to express their experiences and receive help. If you, as the teacher, are able to facilitate these conversations and create a safe space in your classroom for peers to engage, that is wonderful. If students need more support beyond that, the following links should be provided to all students (those that need help might not always come forward to ask for it).

  - <https://kidshelpphone.ca/get-info/what-sexual-assault/>
  - <https://kidshelpphone.ca/get-info/what-bullying/>
  - <https://teens.webmd.com/teens-and-alcohol#1>