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Negotiating Boundaries:
Making it Through Adolescence Alive

*“You don’t have to suffer to be a poet. Adolescence is enough suffering for anyone.”
-John Ciardi*

Rationale:

If one were to look up the term “adolescence” in most dictionaries, he or she would probably find a variation of the phrase: “the state that someone is in” or the “time period between” “...puberty and adulthood” (American Heritage, 2005). In the realm of the educational world, however, the effects of adolescence upon education go much deeper than its dictionary definition. The secondary teacher has the difficult responsibility of working with, guiding, and relating to students who, in many ways, have no real, consistent, or solid sense of self. These teenage students are not just caught in physical juxtaposition between puberty and adulthood during the time that we have them—they are trapped between the innocence and wonder of childhood and the confusion and complexity associated with the struggle to become an adult. It is that exact difficulty of moving from one life stage to the next that so often leads adolescent students to drop their focus off of academic pursuits in the interest of attempting to manage the societal difficulties and complexities associated with being a teenager.

As prominent social psychologist C. Stevenson suggests,

Every child wants to believe in him or herself as a successful person; every youngster wants to be liked and respected; every youngster wants physical

exercises and freedom to move; and youngsters want life to be just (1992).

If these needs are continually not met during the influential adolescent years (which, unfortunately, is often the case in one sense or another during the teenage years), then adolescent repercussions are often “alienation from school, loss of general self-esteem and a sense of belonging, and destructive methods of coping, including delinquency and drugs” (MNSA, 1996).

- “*Why should Speak be incorporated into the curriculum?*”

The aforementioned characteristics of adolescence are all unfortunate realities associated with this confusing time period of life. It is therefore the secondary English teacher’s role and responsibility to engage students in learning and literature by very deliberately selecting books to study that both capture student interest and uphold high learning standards at the same time. For these reasons, Laurie Halse Anderson’s award winning novel *Speak* has been chosen to be the focus of the “Making it Through Adolescence Alive” unit (which is one unit from the overarching “Negotiating Boundaries” conceptual design that will be implemented throughout the entirety of the 9th grade year). *Speak* brings up tough issues dealing with the search for identity as an adult that many 9th grade freshmen are just embarking upon and can relate to. For example, after having her first beer at her first high school party, the book’s protagonist, Melinda, suddenly finds herself in a very physically unwanted and mentally crippling position: as the victim of a sexual assault. The remainder of the book deals with the mental and social repercussions that the events of that night play out in her life, including severe social isolation and teenage depression, which have been found to be prominent issues in current adolescent life today. Although this book will be the primary focus of this unit, it

will also be supplemented by various poems and short stories to further enhance student learning.

- “*This book does not accurately depict teenage life, and I don’t want my student(s)/son/daughter to be sent ‘wrong messages’ about teenage life because of it.*”

Although *Speak* deals with some strong and disturbing issues including rape and depression, it is important to understand that this book is reflective of real life and is not simply an overly dramatic portrayal of the adolescent years. According to Teen CASA (Coalition Against Sexual Abuse), over 50% of high school boys and over 42% of high school girls agree that it is alright or even “acceptable” for a “male to hold a female down and physically force her to engage in sexual intercourse” (Warshaw, 1994). In addition, a survey conducted in New York (which is also the setting of the novel) found that 12% of high school adolescent girls and 5% of high school adolescent boys have been or currently are sexually abused (The Commonwealth Fund, 1999). That is one out of every ten girls, and one out of every twenty boys who are sexually abused during their adolescent years; in one period of one day of teaching, that is roughly about two students per class. Multiply that number by the amount of periods taught in a day and it makes the subject of *Speak* hit much closer to home.

However, sexual abuse is not the only “real” adolescent issue that Anderson’s novel touches upon. Unfortunately, depression is also a teenage epidemic that is much more prevalent than one would wish or might think. The Aspen Education Group estimates that “as many as one in every 33 children and one in eight adolescents may have depression” (AEG, 2001). It is another shocking fact that suicide in adolescents

aged 15-24 is the third leading cause of death with teenagers, but that the rate of attempted suicides in this same age group is actually much, much higher (AEG, 2001). As teenage depression is a very tangible fact in society today, it is important for the young adult or adolescent novels chosen to be incorporated into classroom studies to be reflective of current teenage issues to both engage and inform their readers.

- “*This book should be read for entertainment purposes only, and has no place in the classroom.*”

Beyond the psychological scope of adolescent issues and development, *Speak* also has literary merit in the context of the classroom. Anderson’s novel is laden with literary elements and techniques, such as reversals, symbols, allusions, themes, structure, setting, etc. that are important for students to recognize and understand: so important, however, that the Georgia Department of Education has created a performance standard devoted to the identification, comprehension, and interpretation of “evidence (e.g., diction, imagery, point of view, figurative language, symbolism, plot events and main ideas) in a variety of texts” (GPS ELA9RL1).

In addition, *Speak* has won several prestigious Young Adult literature awards, including the Printz Honor Medal, National Book Award Finalist, Booklist’s Top 10 First Novels of 1999, Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators’ Golden Kite, *LA Times*’ Book Prize, The Edgar Allen Poe Award, an--last but not least--the Parents’ Guide to Children’s Media Award for Outstanding Achievement.

It is for all of these societal, psychological, and educational reasons that *Speak* has a very real and very important place in the secondary classroom today. Armed with this novel, the teacher can illustrate the importance of the choices one makes and also the

repercussions associated with those choices; he or she can enlighten some on current adolescent cultural and social issues that are going on around them, comfort others who have already begun to feel the pressures of adolescence, and serve as a catalyst of change within these students to move to a more content, stable place of identity on the road to adulthood. Perhaps most importantly of all, by selecting a novel that reflects very tangible teenage issues that is real and important to the student, the teacher can engage him or her in the learning of literature that not many other teaching strategies can do.

Works Cited

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Goals and Accompanying Assessment Rubrics:

Major Projects

The *Speak* unit will consist of two major projects: a multimedia cumulating project, and a writer's portfolio.

Goals	Standard(s) Met	Assessment
The student will be able		

to...		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect upon the different conflicts and figures of authority that weigh upon and have influences upon the speaker (and adolescents in general) • Question the possible consequences upon the speaker of these influences • Explore and reflect upon these influences via multiplied and varied genres through explorative writing • Express him- or herself in a variety of writing genres 	<p>The student employs a variety of writing genres to demonstrate a comprehensive grasp of significant ideas in sophisticated literary works. The student composes essays, narratives, poems, or technical documents. The student demonstrates understanding of significant themes in specific literary works (ELA9RL5).</p> <p>The student practices process writing and, when applicable, uses the writing process to develop, revise, and evaluate writing (ELA9W4).</p>	<p>Writer’s Portfolio</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect and express upon their own feelings and emotions about being a teenager in a non-traditional, artistic means • Express and relate the reasoning/ symbolism behind the artistic project in a written format 	<p>The student deepens understanding of literary works by relating them to contemporary context. The student relates a literary work to non-literary documents (ELA9RL3).</p>	<p>Multimedia Cumulating Project</p>

Description and Evaluation of Major Assessments:

○ Writer’s Portfolio Description*

Throughout the unit you have had lots of experiences with writing and other art forms. In response to Speak, you have produced a variety of pieces of writing, art, and other forms of expression. Presumably, you have learned something about yourself, the literature, how to write, how to read, and other things.

Prepare a portfolio in which you present things you’ve produced that have resulted in your most valuable learning. We will call these things exhibits. The

exhibits you present do not need to be your best work, and you will not need to worry about being graded on the quality of final drafts--we've already been through that with your smaller writing assignments. Rather, you will be graded on how carefully you reflect on what you learned from producing them. Often, we learn the most from our rough drafts, our frustrated efforts, and other experiences that do not yield our best products.

Your portfolio should include:

-A title page with name and date

-A minimum of three items that serve as your exhibits. Your portfolio may include additional exhibits from outside of class if you wish.

-A written statement that identifies and discusses significant learning based on each exhibit, consisting of a minimum of 200 words.

-A longer synthesis paper, in which you discuss how these exhibits as a whole reveal what you've studied, consisting of a minimum of 750 words (roughly three typed pages).

Rubric:

	F	D	C	B	A
Timeliness	Portfolio is turned in after the specified due date.	Portfolio is turned in on time.	Portfolio is turned in on time.	Portfolio is turned in on time.	Portfolio is turned in on time.
Following Directions	Portfolio does not meet/ include minimum components (cover page, exhibits, commentaries , synthesis paper).	Portfolio does not meet/ include minimum components (cover page, exhibits, commentaries , synthesis paper).	Portfolio meets/ includes minimum components (cover page, exhibits, commentaries , synthesis paper)	Portfolio meets/ includes minimum components (cover page, exhibits, commentaries , synthesis paper)	Portfolio meets/ includes minimum components (cover page, exhibits, commentaries , synthesis paper)
Written Statement	Does not clearly explain how each exhibit served as the sour of significant learning about the self, the materials, and/or the learning process.	Does not clearly explain how each exhibit served as the sour of significant learning about the self, the materials, and/or the learning process.	Does not clearly explain how each exhibit served as the sour of significant learning about the self, the materials, and/or the learning process.	Clearly explains how each exhibit served as the sour of significant learning about the self, the materials, and/or the learning process.	Clearly explains how each exhibit served as the sour of significant learning about the self, the materials, and/or the learning process.

Synthesis Paper	Does not clearly explain in the synthesis paper how the individual exhibits contribute to an overall set of related learning experiences explained in terms of a related set of points.	Does not clearly explain in the synthesis paper how the individual exhibits contribute to an overall set of related learning experiences explained in terms of a related set of points.	Does not clearly explain in the synthesis paper how the individual exhibits contribute to an overall set of related learning experiences explained in terms of a related set of points.	Does not clearly explain in the synthesis paper how the individual exhibits contribute to an overall set of related learning experiences explained in terms of a related set of points.	Does not clearly explain in the synthesis paper how the individual exhibits contribute to an overall set of related learning experiences explained in terms of a related set of points.
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o Multimedia Cumulating Project Description

Throughout the entirety of the novel, the speaker has a very difficult time wrestling with what she wants her art project to become. At the end of the book, she finally settles on creating a tree. We talked about the significance of this choice in class, and what the tree itself and different parts of the tree symbolize in terms of the journey the speaker has made in her life during the time span of the book.

- *Think about a journey you have made and/or are in the process of making in your life, and create your own tree like the one the speaker made in the novel. Depending on where you are in your journey, your tree can be a sapling, just starting out, or a big, strong oak, or a tree in the dead of winter, or a tree just beginning to flower with the coming of spring.*
- *You will also be required to “back up” what your tree means and what it symbolizes with a written paper of some sort. It can be an essay, a poem, a song, whatever form you can express yourself best with, as long as it clearly expresses how this piece of artwork relates back to your life. In this piece of writing, be sure to define what particular “journey in life” you are referring to, and why/how this tree symbolizes or defines that journey. (If you are confused, think about the speaker’s journey as coming to terms with what happened to her by finally opening up and speaking about her rape and facing the boy who did it.)*

Rubric:

	F	D	C	B	A
Art Project	Project does not follow directions; is not clearly a	Project does not follow directions; is not clearly a	Project follows directions; is a tree of	Project follows directions; is a tree of	Project follows directions; is a tree of

	tree of some sort.	tree of some sort.	some sort.	some sort.	some sort.
	Neatness; Is evident that little time has been put into the creation of the tree.	Neatness; Is evident that little to some time has been put into the creation of the tree.	Neatness; Is evident that some time has been put into the creation of the tree.	Neatness; Is evident that time has been put into the creation of the tree.	Neatness; Is evident that time has been put into the creation of the tree.
	On-task; student made little use of time given in class to work on project	On-task; student did not make use of all or most time given in class to work on project	On-task; student did not make use of all time given in class to work on project	On-task; student made use of time given in class to work on project	On-task; student made use of time given in class to work on project
Written Paper	No reference to life journey is mentioned in paper.	Life journey is not clearly identified in paper.	Life journey is identified in paper.	Life journey is clearly identified in paper.	Life journey is very clearly identified in paper.
	Paper does not mention either how the tree symbolizes or how it relates back to the life journey.	Paper does not do a good job of either identifying how the tree symbolizes or how it relates back to the life journey.	Paper identifies only one or the other of how the tree both symbolizes and relates back to the life journey.	Paper identifies how the tree both symbolizes and relates back to the life journey.	Paper clearly identifies how the tree both symbolizes and relates back to the life journey.
	The paper is rushed and there is no mention of how the tree relates back to the life journey.	The paper is not very thought out and the reader can not make a clear distinction between how the tree relates back to the life	The paper is thought out and the reader can somewhat distinguish a connection between how the tree relates back to the life journey.	It is evident that the paper is clearly thought out and the reader can make the connection between how the tree relates back	It is evident that the paper is clearly thought out and the reader can easily make the connection between how the tree

		journey.		to the life journey.	relates back to the life journey.
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Minor Projects:

Minor projects will also be required throughout the unit as well. Most of these smaller assessments will be associated with the writer's portfolio assignments that will be assigned throughout duration of the unit. The total completion of these assignments will count as half of the final writer's portfolio grade, with the other half being devoted to the portfolio as a final entity at the end. Examples of prompts for these smaller writing assignments along the way include, but may not be necessarily limited to:

- ❖ In *Speak*, the main character has many conflicts with various authority figures (such as "No-Neck," her principal, her parents, etc.) Write an account about a conflict with authority that you have experienced. The authority figure might have been an adult (a parent, teacher, coach, etc.), or a peer in an authoritative position (a team captain, student government leader, upperclassman, etc.). Throughout your narrative, you should convey the following:
 - your relationship with the person with whom you came in conflict with
 - how both you and the other person viewed the conflict
 - if you resolved it, how; if you didn't, explain what happened
 - what you learned through the experience
 You do not need to explain these things in this order, and you don't need to announce or label any of them (that is, you don't need to have a paragraph beginning, "My relationship with so-and-so was..." Rather, you should, at some point in your narrative, relate them in some way.

- ❖ Based on this painting by Edward Munch entitled *The Scream* (shown on overhead), write a first person narrative as the speaker in the book. Think about how the speaker might be feeling at this point in our reading, and how this might relate to this particular painting. You can write this in any form you like (such as poem, diary entry, stream of consciousness, narrative, chapter that could be inserted into the book, etc.) as long as it is in first person and relates the feelings of the speaker in the book to the painting.

- ❖ Throughout the book, the speaker comes into contact with various people around her (her teacher, her parents, her former friends, her rapist, etc.) Based on what we've read thus far, write an account of one of these incidents she was with these other characters through that other character's eyes, from his/her/their perspective(s). For example, you could write about what "No Neck" thinks about the speaker in his class as a student (perhaps he thinks she's lazy? Maybe just some "punk kid?" A kid with a huge attitude problem? Maybe he's afraid of her?) Be sure to identify the specific incident involved, and use characteristics that Halse depicts in her novel of the character to identify him/her/them in your narrative. This assignment should be a minimum of one typed page.

Materials:

- Encyclopedia set
 - Internet/computer station
 - Tree reference books (big, brightly colored pictures; wide arrange of different species, etc.)
 - Copy of the *Lifetime* movie version of *Speak*
 - Copy of Edward Munch's painting *The Scream* on overhead transparency
 - Art materials, such as glue, paste, markers, crayons, charcoal, poster board, drawing paper, construction paper, rubber stamps, Lego blocks, etc., etc.
 - Natural materials such as tree leaves, sticks, bark, etc.
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Lesson plan breakdown (specific lessons and activities):

Day 1 of Unit (Monday)*

8-10 minutes: Allow students to choose their seats; take attendance for first time, being sure to learn and note preferred nicknames, etc.

10 minutes: Pass out and go over syllabus, being sure to go over and explain the purpose/meaning behind the year-long "Negotiating Boundaries: Making it Through Adolescence Alive" over-arching theme that will be present throughout all units this year.

15-20 minutes: Provide hard copy of the following inventory and have students respond in writing:

Please answer these questions as honestly and completely as possible. Your answers will not only help me to get to know you as a person, but will also help me to know how to teach this class as well. The more honest you are and the less you try and "impress" me, the better able I'll be to suit your needs as your English teacher.

- What do you think so far about being in high school? Is being a "freshman" what you thought it'd be so far? Are you excited/scared/anxious/relieved?
- How do you feel about this stage of adolescence thus far in general? Are you enjoying the "place" that you're at? Do you wish that you could go back in time or speed up the clock to another stage or age in your life? For example, do you wish that you were in elementary school again, where you didn't have to worry about homework assignments or what to wear on the first day? Do you wish you were 18 already and could drive and were going off to college soon? Are you

**These lesson plans are based upon "regular," non-block scheduled 50 minute class period days.*

perfectly content with where you are physically and emotionally right now?
Please elaborate on why you feel this way.

- Are you of the mindset that reading books and writing about your feelings, etc. helps you to “deal” with your life or not? Or to what extent do you believe this is true? Please elaborate with your reasoning behind your view(s), being sure to back up whatever your view is with what type of reading you enjoy doing in your free time (reading type—magazines, novels, newspaper, etc., specific titles of favorite works, and reading frequency—read the newspaper every morning, read one book for pleasure each week over the summer, only read what’s assigned in class, etc.).

10-15 minutes: Introduce and present *The Skin I’m In* and *Speak*, explaining what each is about, what issues each book deals with, and how each book relates to our over-arching theme; read a tantalizing excerpt from each. Then allow students to vote on which novel they would like to investigate in the first unit via paper slips; collect and privately tally scores.

2 minutes: Announce winner [for our purposes it will be *Speak*] while preparing for dismissal; remind students that there are multiple copies of *The Skin I’m In* to be found for checkout on the classroom bookshelf, and that there will also be other in-class opportunities for self-selected novels to be investigated throughout the year as well.

Day 2 of Unit (Tuesday)

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping—including passing out the ordered books that the class voted on to read for this unit

10 minutes: Provide hard copy of the following prompt and have students rate each statement according to directions:

Each of the following statements expresses an opinion. Rate each statement from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

1. If a person is raped, it’s his or her own fault.
2. My goal during high school is to be in the most popular clique.
3. Being diagnosed as “depressed” is just making excuses to feel sorry for yourself.
4. I “dropped” one of my best friends from elementary/middle school because he or she is not in my group of friends anymore.
5. I know someone my age who has tried to commit suicide.
6. I would do anything to be “cool.”
7. If I saw someone without any friends sitting alone at lunch, I might not invite him or her to sit with me because I’d be afraid of what my friends would think.
8. Committing suicide is the most selfish thing a person can do.
9. I think that our mascot plays a really important role in our identity as students here at our school.
10. I think that attempting to committing suicide is really only a cry for attention.

11. I often feel that the person I seem like on the outside and the person I am on the inside are two very different people.
12. Adolescence is just a temporary state that I am waiting to get through.

Be aware that we will be getting in groups to discuss our feelings on these statements, but that you will be allowed to choose which subject(s) from the survey you wish to bring up in the group discussion; you are not required to talk about or share your thoughts on any personal subject that is uncomfortable for you to discuss in groups.

10 minutes: Have students get in groups of four or fewer. Because this is the first time for small-group work, model how to form and work in a group before beginning. Then provide hard copy of the following instructions and go over them together.

What did you think about the statements? Discuss amongst yourselves your reactions to them. Are there any you felt particularly strongly about (perhaps rated a 5)? Are there any you disagreed with completely (rated a 1)? Compare with your group members, making sure to explain why you feel the way you do. Please remember not all topics need to be brought up in discussion if some of them are particularly emotional or personal to you.

5-10 minutes (depending on willingness to discuss personal topics in large group): Open small group discussions to whole class discussions, allowing students to discuss what they feel strongly about and explain why. The time allotted for this activity will vary, depending on the students' willingness to open up to personal topics in a large group.

20-25 minutes: Provide hard copy of the following prompt and have students write individually:

Use any, all, etc. of the feelings you evoked today by either rating the statements on your own or by discussing your feelings in groups and put it on paper. You may use any form of writing you like: ideas might be poem, journal entry, stream of consciousness, etc. Just get your thoughts and feelings down on the paper, and try to capture them as best you can. This will be your first piece of your portfolio for this unit (there will be more on that tomorrow).

2 minutes: Return seats to original positions; prepare to depart.

Day 3 of Unit (Wednesday)

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping

5-10 minutes: Ask for volunteers to share their written responses to yesterday's journal writing prompt.

20-25 minutes: Provide hard copy of the following portfolio assignment sheet and rubric, explaining assignment and answering any questions, being sure to point out that yesterday's assignment will be the first addition to each student's portfolio.

Throughout the unit you have had lots of experiences with writing and other art forms. In response to Speak, you have produced a variety of pieces of writing, art, and other forms of expression. Presumably, you have learned something about yourself, the literature, how to write, how to read, and other things.

Prepare a portfolio in which you present things you've produced that have resulted in your most valuable learning. We will call these things exhibits. The exhibits you present do not need to be your best work, and you will not need to worry about being graded on the quality of final drafts--we've already been through that with your smaller writing assignments. Rather, you will be graded on how carefully you reflect on what you learned from producing them. Often, we learn the most from our rough drafts, our frustrated efforts, and other experiences that do not yield our best products.

Your portfolio should include:

- A title page with name and date*
- A minimum of three items that serve as your exhibits. Your portfolio may include additional exhibits from outside of class if you wish.*
- A written statement that identifies and discusses significant learning based on each exhibit, consisting of a minimum of 200 words.*
- A longer synthesis paper, in which you discuss how these exhibits as a whole reveal what you've studied, consisting of a minimum of 750 words (roughly three typed pages).*

Rubric:

	<i>F</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>A</i>
<i>Timeliness</i>	<i>Portfolio is turned in after the specified due date.</i>	<i>Portfolio is turned in on time.</i>	<i>Portfolio is turned in on time.</i>	<i>Portfolio is turned in on time.</i>	<i>Portfolio is turned in on time.</i>
<i>Following Directions</i>	<i>Portfolio does not meet/ include minimum components (cover page, exhibits, commentaries , synthesis paper).</i>	<i>Portfolio does not meet/ include minimum components (cover page, exhibits, commentaries , synthesis paper).</i>	<i>Portfolio meets/ includes minimum components (cover page, exhibits, commentaries , synthesis paper)</i>	<i>Portfolio meets/ includes minimum components (cover page, exhibits, commentaries , synthesis paper)</i>	<i>Portfolio meets/ includes minimum components (cover page, exhibits, commentaries , synthesis paper)</i>
<i>Written Statement</i>	<i>Does not clearly explain how each exhibit</i>	<i>Does not clearly explain how each exhibit</i>	<i>Does not clearly explain how each exhibit</i>	<i>Clearly explains how each exhibit served as the</i>	<i>Clearly explains how each exhibit served as the</i>

	<i>served as the sour of significant learning about the self, the materials, and/or the learning process.</i>	<i>served as the sour of significant learning about the self, the materials, and/or the learning process.</i>	<i>served as the sour of significant learning about the self, the materials, and/or the learning process.</i>	<i>sour of significant learning about the self, the materials, and/or the learning process.</i>	<i>sour of significant learning about the self, the materials, and/or the learning process.</i>
<i>Synthesis Paper</i>	<i>Does not clearly explain in the synthesis paper how the individual exhibits contribute to an overall set of related learning experiences explained in terms of a related set of points.</i>	<i>Does not clearly explain in the synthesis paper how the individual exhibits contribute to an overall set of related learning experiences explained in terms of a related set of points.</i>	<i>Does not clearly explain in the synthesis paper how the individual exhibits contribute to an overall set of related learning experiences explained in terms of a related set of points.</i>	<i>Does not clearly explain in the synthesis paper how the individual exhibits contribute to an overall set of related learning experiences explained in terms of a related set of points.</i>	<i>Does not clearly explain in the synthesis paper how the individual exhibits contribute to an overall set of related learning experiences explained in terms of a related set of points.</i>

15-20 minutes: Begin *Speak* by reading aloud to students as they work individually on decorating their personal portfolio folder with provided art materials, magazines cut outs, etc.

2 minutes: Put crafts, supplies, folders, etc. back in designated areas; assign reading through “The Opposite of Inspiration is...Expiration?” (up to page 30) for following day, stating that there will a quiz of sorts on said reading. Prepare to depart.

Day 4 of Unit (Thursday)

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping

10-15 minutes: Provide hard copy of the “summary quiz” directions. Allow students as much time as they need (within reason) to complete summary quiz, as this will be their first such quiz.

5-10 minutes: Direct students’ attentions to prompt on overhead while students are wrapping up their quizzes.

On page 6 from your reading last night is the speaker’s list of the “First ten lies they tell you in high school.” So far in your experience here, do you agree or

disagree?

5-10 minutes: Open small group discussions to whole class discussions, allowing students to discuss what they feel strongly about and explain why.

15-20 minutes: Direct students' attention to new prompt on the overhead:

After having brainstormed on what we think about the "First ten lies they tell you in high school," now write your own top ten lies they tell you in high school. After you write your top ten, pick a few of your favorites and explain underneath why you chose them, and if they have any similarities to the experiences Melinda is going through in the book or not. Finish for homework. This is your first opportunity for a possible portfolio writing piece, if you so decide to use it.

2 minutes: Assign reading for tomorrow through "Nightmare" (page 46). Return seats to original positions; prepare to depart.

Day 5 of Unit (Friday)

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping

10 minutes: Provide hard copy of the "summary quiz" directions again. Allow students to complete quiz.

10 minutes: Have students get into groups of four or fewer to discuss prompt.

Okay, so from what we've read last night, something terrible has obviously happened to Melinda. Based on what you've read so far, what do you think it could be? What evidence do you have for this hypothesis? Brainstorm on this for a few minutes while we wait for everyone to get a chance to read this, being sure to make specific references from the text (page number, quote, etc.) to back up your assertions or hypothesis. In a few minutes, we'll be breaking up into small groups, and later, one large group (like we did on Tuesday and yesterday), to discuss what we think could have happened.

10-15 minutes: Have students get in groups of four or fewer. Allow students to share their guesses and inferences as to what has happened to our protagonist that is making her feel the way she is. Move from group to group, facilitating discussion, making sure to bring up "Why do you think that? Where in the book are you basing that hypothesis on?" etc.

5-10 minutes: Open small group discussions to whole class discussions, allowing students to discuss what they feel strongly about and explain why. Again, be sure to prompt any "fuzzy conjectures" with "Why do you think that? What in the book makes you think this?" etc.

2 minutes: Assign reading for tomorrow through "Winter Break" (page 72). Return seats to original positions; prepare to depart.

Day 6 of Unit (Monday)

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping

10 minutes: Summary quiz prompt. Allow students to finish.

30-35 minutes: Explain to students that today will be a completely writing day. Give out hard copy of writing prompt/put up on overhead:

This writing assignment involves you as Melinda: get inside her head. Express how you are feeling at this point via writing—it can be any form or mode of writing, such as a journal entry, a letter to “The Beast,” a letter to your parents, a letter to your friends, a poem, a song, a speech to the student body, etc., etc...you get the idea. You will have the rest of the period to complete this assignment.

This will serve to be another opportunity to add to your portfolio collection.

*Model to the class how you might go about completing the assignment, being sure to base your idea on specific parts of the text as a basis and as a “jumping off” point.

5 minutes: Allow students an opportunity to share their writing aloud to rest of class if they would like (not, however, a requirement).

2 minutes: Assign reading for tomorrow through “Dark Art” (page 92); prepare to depart.

Day 7 of Unit (Tuesday)

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping

10-15 minutes: Short class discussion on what new developments have occurred; connect them with how they add to or take away from our “theories” as to what happened. Be sure to point out the possible significance of Melinda’s art project assignment: what might be significant about the fact that she’s been assigned a tree? What might be significant about the fact that she is having trouble fulfilling the assignment?

20-25 minutes: Introduce Multimedia Cumulating Project, providing hard copy of the assignment sheet and rubric, (also being sure to address any questions):

Multimedia Cumulating Project Description

Throughout the entirety of the novel, the speaker has a very difficult time wrestling with how she wants to tackle her art project tree assignment. We talked about the significance of this assignment in class, and what the tree itself and different parts of the tree might symbolize in terms of the journey the speaker has made in her life during the time span of the book.

- *Think about a journey you have made and/or are in the process of making in your life, and create your own tree like the one the speaker made in the novel. Depending on where you are in your journey, your tree can be a sapling, just starting out, or a big, strong oak, or a tree in the dead of winter, or a tree just beginning to flower with the coming of spring.*

- You will also be required to “back up” what your tree means and what it symbolizes with a written paper of some sort. It can be an essay, a poem, a song, whatever form you can express yourself best with, as long as it clearly expresses how this piece of artwork relates back to your life. In this piece of writing, be sure to define what particular “journey in life” you are referring to, and why/how this tree symbolizes or defines that journey. (If you are confused, think about the speaker’s journey as coming to terms with what happened to her by finally opening up and speaking about her rape and facing the boy who did it.)

Rubric:

	<i>F</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>A</i>
<i>Art Project</i>	<i>Project does not follow directions; is not clearly a tree of some sort.</i>	<i>Project does not follow directions; is not clearly a tree of some sort.</i>	<i>Project follows directions; is a tree of some sort.</i>	<i>Project follows directions; is a tree of some sort.</i>	<i>Project follows directions; is a tree of some sort.</i>
	<i>Neatness; Is evident that little time has been put into the creation of the tree.</i>	<i>Neatness; Is evident that little to some time has been put into the creation of the tree.</i>	<i>Neatness; Is evident that some time has been put into the creation of the tree.</i>	<i>Neatness; Is evident that time has been put into the creation of the tree.</i>	<i>Neatness; Is evident that time has been put into the creation of the tree.</i>
	<i>On-task; student made little use of time given in class to work on project</i>	<i>On-task; student did not make use of all or most time given in class to work on project</i>	<i>On-task; student did not make use of all time given in class to work on project</i>	<i>On-task; student made use of time given in class to work on project</i>	<i>On-task; student made use of time given in class to work on project</i>
<i>Written Paper</i>	<i>No reference to life journey is mentioned in paper.</i>	<i>Life journey is not clearly identified in paper.</i>	<i>Life journey is identified in paper.</i>	<i>Life journey is clearly identified in paper.</i>	<i>Life journey is very clearly identified in paper.</i>
	<i>Paper does not mention either how the tree symbolizes or how it</i>	<i>Paper does not do a good job of either identifying how the tree</i>	<i>Paper identifies only one or the other of how the tree both</i>	<i>Paper identifies how the tree both symbolizes and relates</i>	<i>Paper clearly identifies how the tree both symbolizes</i>

	<i>relates back to the life journey.</i>	<i>symbolizes or how it relates back to the life journey.</i>	<i>symbolizes and relates back to the life journey.</i>	<i>back to the life journey.</i>	<i>and relates back to the life journey.</i>
	<i>The paper is rushed and there is no mention of how the tree relates back to the life journey.</i>	<i>The paper is not very thought out and the reader can not make a clear distinction between how the tree relates back to the life journey.</i>	<i>The paper is thought out and the reader can somewhat distinguish a connection between how the tree relates back to the life journey.</i>	<i>It is evident that the paper is clearly thought out and the reader can make the connection between how the tree relates back to the life journey.</i>	<i>It is evident that the paper is clearly thought out and the reader can easily make the connection between how the tree relates back to the life journey.</i>

10-17 minutes (or remaining time): Read *Speak* aloud to students as they prepare for departure; assign reading through “Stunted” (page 104).

Day 8 of Unit (Wednesday)

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping

10-15 minutes: Distribute hard copies of the following prompt in preparation for class discussion:

After last night’s reading, there is even more talk of this “tree” business. What is the deal with the tree art project? What is the big deal about it, and why is Melinda having such an ordeal doing it? It’s just a tree, isn’t it? What do you think? Find specific references/allusions to trees/ her art project and discuss in groups of 4 or less.

Allow students to move into groups and begin discussion.

10-15 minutes: Distribute following prompt:

Brainstorm ideas on if you were a tree, what type would you be? What would you look like? Would you be a specific type of tree for a certain reason? Would you be in a certain season of the year? Give a lot of thought to this, because your final project for this unit will involve you actually “fleshing out” the tree you design for yourself—both physically and on paper (See yesterday’s unit project sheet).

We will have “Tree Time” at various occasions throughout this unit for you to work on brainstorming ideas for your project, writing the paper, and creating the

tree itself. There are various materials in the classroom that are currently available to you to use to fulfill this assignment, such as encyclopedias, tree reference books, the internet/computer station, sticks, art materials, etc.

20 minutes: After answering questions, signal the start of “Tree Time.”

2 minutes: Assign reading for tomorrow through “Miss” (page 118). Put up materials and return desks to original positions; prepare to depart.

Day 9 of Unit (Thursday):

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping

10 minutes: Summary quiz on last night’s reading; allow student to finish.

20-25 minutes: Put up color overhead transparency of Edward Munch’s *The Scream*. Introduce the painting by artist and title. Distribute hard copy of the following writing prompt to students:

Based on the readings this far, respond to this painting in the first person from Melinda’s point of view at this point in the book. As we’ve done at every other point in the semester, you may use any type or form of genre to fulfill this assignment, such as journal entry, poem, letter, etc. Try to use details from the text to support how Melinda’s emotions and this painting might be similar (or different) from each other.

15-20 minutes: Open up floor to those who would like to share. Follow up with class discussion on what is happening in the book so far, being sure to make a connection with the significance of the painting to the title of the book.

2 minutes: Assign reading up to “A Night to Remember” (page 137); prepare for departure.

Day 10 of Unit (Friday):

3 minutes: Attendance; housekeeping

15-20 minutes: Discuss developments of text based on last night’s readings, based around the following questions: How did your theories of what you thought had happened match up with what actually did happen to Melinda? Could you see it coming, or was it a complete shock? What do you think Melinda should do now? Do you feel sorry for her? Do you feel angry at her friends? If you were Melinda, what would you do now?

20-25 minutes: Take this time as an opportunity to answer any questions on the portfolio assignment. Go over what pieces of writing you should currently have to be able to choose from for your final portfolio to be turned in. Be sure to describe more in depth what exactly a “synthesis paper” should entail, also being sure to pass around an example of student work.

2 minutes: Assign readings up through “My Life as a Spy” (page 150); prepare for departure.

Day 11 of Unit (Monday):

3 minutes: Attendance; housekeeping

10 minutes: Summary quiz; allow students to finish.

10-15 minutes: Class-wide discussion on what has happened in this weekend’s readings. Be sure to emphasize the new Andy/Rachelle relationship: ask students what they would do if they were Melinda.

20 minutes: Follow up class discussion with the following writing assignment:

Write a letter to Rachelle (Rachel) from Melinda, trying to warn her of Andy. What would you say to her? What evidence would you use to try and convince her to stay away from him? What types of evidence do you think would be the most convincing/have the most appeal to Rachel? Would you tell her the truth as to what has really happened to Melinda?

7 minutes: Read aloud from *Speak* as students finish up their letters. Assign reading through “The Beast Prowls” (page 162). Prepare for departure.

Day 12 of Unit (Tuesday):

3 minutes: Attendance; housekeeping.

15 minutes: Facilitate class discussion on what the cover might mean after readings up to this point. Hope to bring up symbolism/themes/motifs/references throughout or within the book in the discussion.

30 minutes: “Tree Time.” You may begin the actual construction of the tree if you feel you are ready; I have brought in some materials for you to possibly use: I encourage you to look for interesting/unique ways to fulfill these project requirements with the materials I have brought in; you are also more than welcome to bring in materials from home to work with as well. *During this time, teacher should make him or herself available to students for questions or conferences about their papers or projects.

2 minutes: Clean up/put away materials; return desks to original positions; assign reading through “Fault!” (page 170). Remind students that portfolios are due on Friday; prepare for departure.

Day 13 of Unit (Wednesday):

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping.

15 minutes: Class discussion: What is going on here?! Discuss what changes the speaker is going through: how is she different than she was in the beginning of the book? (Be

sure to mention the four marking-period divisions of the book if students do not bring up themselves.) What do you think/hope is going to happen to her by the end of the book?

30 minutes: “Tree Time.” *During this time, teacher should make him or herself available to students for questions or conferences about their papers or projects.

2 minutes: Clean up/put away materials; return desks to original positions; assign reading through the end of the book! (page 198).

Day 14 of Unit (Thursday):

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping.

20-25 minutes: Discuss the last few chapters of the book. Allow students to focus upon whatever aspects they wish, and lead discussion themselves. (Book is very moving at this point--students will most likely have a lot to say. If not, then teacher should be prepared to jump in and guide discussion towards reoccurring motifs, symbolism, significance of title/cover, etc. in regards to last few pages of book.)

15-20 minutes: Allow students class time to get their portfolios together/ask questions about synthesis paper, etc.

2 minutes: Remind students that portfolios are due tomorrow (being sure to inform them that they will be sharing their synthesis papers in their groups before they turn them in tomorrow as well); prepare for departure.

Day 15 of Unit (Friday):

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping.

15-20 minutes: Have students get into groups of 4 or more to share/read aloud their synthesis papers with one another. After each group has finished, students will turn in their portfolio projects for reading/grading and begin working on their projects.

20-25 minutes: “Tree Time.” Inform students that by today, they should be done with the paper component of the project, as the remainder of Tree Times next week will be spent working on the art component while watching the Lifetime movie version of *Speak*. *During this time, teacher should make him or herself available to students for questions or conferences about their papers or projects.

2 minutes: Clean up/put away materials; return desks to original positions, prepare for departure. Remind students that projects will be presented next Thursday and Friday of next week.

Day 16 of Unit (Monday):

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping.

45 minutes: *Lifetime* movie version of *Speak*/ Tree Time. *During this time, teacher should make him or herself available to students for questions or conferences about their projects.

2 minutes: Clean up/put away materials; return desks to original positions, prepare for departure. Remind students that projects will be presented on Thursday and Friday.

Day 17 of Unit (Tuesday):

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping.

45 minutes: *Lifetime* movie version of *Speak*/ Tree Time. *During this time, teacher should make him or herself available to students for questions or conferences about their projects.

2 minutes: Clean up/put away materials; return desks to original positions, prepare for departure. Remind students that projects will be presented on Thursday and Friday.

Day 18 of Unit (Wednesday):

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping.

45 minutes: Finish up *Lifetime* movie version of *Speak*/ Tree Time. *During this time, teacher should make him or herself available to students for questions or conferences about their projects.

2 minutes: Clean up/put away materials; return desks to original positions, prepare for departure. Remind students that projects will be presented *tomorrow* and Friday.

Day 19 of Unit (Thursday):

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping.

45 minutes: Student presentations of tree projects.

2 minutes: Assign reading of *The Scarlet Letter*, due Monday; prepare for departure.

Day 20 of Unit (Friday):

3 minutes: Attendance, housekeeping.

45 minutes: Student presentations of tree projects.

2 minutes: Remind students of *The Scarlet Letter* reading assignment, due Monday: point out to students that they should be thinking about similarities between the two texts in terms of adultery, “scapegoating,” freedom of speech, etc.; prepare for departure.