Young adult literature and suicide featuring a teaching and discussion unit using the text 13 Reasons Why

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Young adult literature and suicide featuring a teaching and discussion unit

using the text *13 Reasons Why*

by

Bradley Scott Grout

A creative component submitted to the graduate faculty

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF ARTS

Major: English (Literature)

Program of Study Committee:

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Chapter 1: Introduction

As a middle school teacher of seventeen years, I see students who struggle with anxiety and depression each academic year, and the number of students diagnosed with mental illnesses continues to increase. Each year I have taught, the need for mental health services has risen to its current crisis status. And now that it has reached a crisis, school officials are finally taking it seriously and lawmakers are willing to provide money for further support. However, adding further difficulty is that students often do not admit to feelings of depression or anxiety, let alone other symptoms of traumatic experience. It is often only after a suicidal act is completed that friends and family recognize the warning signs associated with suicide, and they realize they should have intervened.

What I personally did not anticipate 17 years ago when I first started teaching was how much my role as “teacher” would blur with that of “counselor.” This is a very fine line every educator must understand and recognize. Teachers are not counselors nor do they (should they) have the time to be counselors although teachers should remain aware of the signs of mental illnesses and how to identify suicidal warning signs. A teacher can never take the place of a certified counselor, but students will often find a teacher they can confide in, and in those cases, it is important for teachers to know the appropriate actions to take if students should confide in them that they or a friend needs help. It is important for all teachers to be aware of the available support resources and the appropriately certified professionals for students fighting such battles.

Young adult literature has helped shed light on the topic of teen suicide. After Jay Asher published his book 13 Reasons Why in 2007, the book’s publication received mostly positive praise with a little negative reception (“Families”). A decade later, Selena Gomez produced a series for Netflix now in its third season, which is based upon the novel. The first season
immediately spawned a negative reception from critics and parents (Wittmer). Various advocacy
groups have decried both the book and the series’ role in encourage teen suicide by means of
glorifying it. For example, in the Fox News report “Families blame 13 Reasons Why for 2 teens’
suicides,” two teenage girls in separate isolated incidents committed suicide shortly after
watching the Netflix series. Both girls fought depression and struggled in school; however, the
parents blame the show as the impetus for their daughters’ suicides or, perhaps, as the catalyst
pushing them just far enough over the edge to go through with the act. On July 15, 2019, Netflix
took action at the behest of mental health advocates and shortened the three-minute suicide scene
during the last episode in season one. Netflix posted this message via social media:

“We've heard from many young people that 13 Reasons Why encouraged them to start
conversations about difficult issues like depression and suicide and get help — often for
the first time,” the statement read. "As we prepare to launch Season 3 later this summer,
we've been mindful about the ongoing debate around the show. So on the advice of
medical experts, including Dr. Christine Moutier, Chief Medical Officer at the American
Foundation for Suicide Prevention, we've decided with creator Brian Yorkey and the
producers of 13 Reasons Why to edit the scene in which Hannah takes her own life from
Season 1” (TodayShow).

This raises a critical, perhaps zeitgeist, question: Do books like 13 Reasons Why teach students
to identify the warning signs of acts like suicide? Or do such books encourage teenagers to carry
out such acts providing ideas of which they might imitate? Furthermore, in light of the latter,
should educators use these books in their classrooms, whether directly or indirectly, or should
educators prevent students from reading such materials for fear students may attempt to commit
the acts they read? Should educators promote these types of literature in the hopes of raising
awareness to prevent such tragedies?

School officials must be vigilant to identify the warning signs in students as not all signs are obvious. In 2012, in Johnston, Iowa, two students, a freshman and sophomore, committed suicide only a day apart from one another. The father of one of the teens, Brian Carico, former principal at Johnston Middle School and current principal at Ames High School, wants all Iowa teachers to receive special training with their teaching license renewal. Carico told the Des Moines Register, “The goal was not and is not to make teachers into counselors,” he said. “It's more about raising awareness. If you can recognize the signs, you can ask questions and you can get people to resources” (Morelli). A teen’s peers are more apt to recognize these warning signs if they know what they’re looking for and if they know what to do if they see them. If teachers can educate teens on what to look for and what to do, perhaps they can prevent some of these suicidal acts.

As a result of this advocacy, in Iowa it is now an annual requirement to receive an eight-hour suicide prevention and postvention training according to the Iowa Department of Education’s website, which states:

In 2018, the Iowa legislature passed Senate File 2113 requiring protocols and school employee training relating to suicide prevention and postvention, identification of adverse childhood experiences and strategies to mitigate toxic stress response. The requirements of Senate File 2113, Iowa Code § 279.70 and IAC 281—14.4 apply to all public school districts in Iowa. The school district’s board must require annual training by July 1, 2019. The trainings do not have to occur until after July 1, 2019 and must be provided annually. School districts have the authority to select the evidence-based, evidence-supported training that best meets the needs of their district (Educateiowa.gov).
Recently, three students—a female student who attended the Ames Community School District in Ames, Iowa, a male student who attended the Boone Community School District in Boone, Iowa, and a male student who attended the Clear Lake Community School District in Clear Lake, Iowa—chose to end their lives.  

This issue has suddenly magnified, causing alarm within the public school system. While most teachers were dealing with No Child Left Behind, they turned around only to find this issue confronting them. Most teachers have been aware of the mental health needs of their students, but the urgency and frequency of student needs have now overwhelmed most teachers who are already stressed and overworked by other federal and state guidelines regarding assessment, test prep, curriculum, not to mention the day-to-day routine of running an effective classroom.

Fortunately, the State of Iowa recognizes the need for more mental health services for children. Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds signed into law the groundwork for a children’s mental health system. “The law requires that a set of core services be made available across the state, ranging from assessment and medication management to crisis response and inpatient treatment. It also establishes a board to oversee the system, advise the regions and help coordinate community services” (Gerlock). The concern issued in Chapter 1 of this study surfaces again here: where is that line between teacher and counselor? For all that teachers have been asked to do, will entering the educational field now require mental health training or some form of a degree in counseling? Also, with all this discussion about students experiencing mental health distress, hardly anything has been said about the mental health of teachers. For example,

A 2017 educator work-life study surveyed teachers across the US and found that 1.86 million FTE teachers describe their mental health as “not good.” In this same survey, 61% of teachers reported that they were “always” or “often” dealing with high-stress over
a 30-day period. To corroborate these findings, and to show how these stress levels have increased over the past 4 years, a 2014 Gallup poll revealed that 46% of teachers reported high-stress levels that year. A staggering 15% increase over a 3-year period. These findings are tied with nurses for the highest stress levels of any occupational group, and even higher than doctors (Hougan et. al.).

The bottom line is simple: it is unreasonable for teachers to solely bear the weight of responsibility here, which could possibly be bridged by the inclusion of certain literature into the curriculum.

Literature is a vehicle where students can discuss such issues through the characters’ actions. A significant amount of young adult books address real-life issues such as cutting, rape, violence, bullying, and suicide, and the number of such books published continues to grow each year along with the availability of young adult literature (Peterson). With the frequency of such traumatic happenings and the amount of literature available, there’s no shortage of books for students to read and no shortage of information available; the issue is getting such books into the hands of teens and teachers in school classrooms. A recent report from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) cites a 36 percent increase in suicide rates of all ages from 1999-2016 in the state of Iowa (Hilyard). According to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, suicide is the 9th leading cause of death in Iowa and the second leading cause of death for those aged 15-35. According to the website, “More than five times as many people die by suicide in Iowa annually than by homicide” (“Suicide”). Chapter 2 provides a literature review of adolescent stages, problem novels, currents facts and statistics on suicide, an overview of young adult literature featuring suicide, and critiques of the novel 13 Reasons Why.

Because of my role as a middle school teacher, I am concerned about the prevalence of
teen suicide, and I want to know how young adult literature about suicide is portrayed, and whether this portrayal is realistic. Therefore, this creative component focuses on the following two research questions:

1. How is suicide portrayed in 21st-century young adult literature?
2. How do YA books about teen suicide compare to actual statistics in race/ethnicity, tone, gender, and setting/location?

In order to answer these questions, I read twenty-five young adult books relating to the topic of suicide and collected information from each text regarding race of the author, race of the protagonist, tone of the book’s conclusion, gender of the author, gender of the main character, suicidal person, location of the author, and location setting of the book, the latter of which was not always available. Charts and an analysis of each of these areas is provided in Chapter 3. The analysis is further discussed in Chapter 5 regarding its relevance to YA literature.

Chapter four of this creative component features a twenty-day teaching unit using the novel *13 Reasons Why* by Jay Asher including a calendar, daily lesson plans, and activities for teachers to use. The activities are heavily based on the discussion techniques as presented by Stephen Brookfield from two books: *Teaching for Critical Thinking* (2011) and *The Discussion Book: 50 Great Ways to Get People Talking* (2015), the latter of which is co-authored with Stephen Preskill. Although each lesson uses *13 Reasons Why* as the text, other young adult books can be substituted using the same activities and appropriate accommodations.

Chapter 5 provides an overall conclusion to the creative component by analyzing the two research questions with the results of my study and by discussing the merits and concerns of teaching *13 Reasons Why* or other young adult literature about suicide. The paper concludes with suggestions for future studies of literature with teen suicide.
Chapter 2: Review of Literature

Overview:

Literature has a double purpose: while literature is often a form of entertainment—for example, people read books for pleasure—literature is also used to inform via storytelling. Indigenous civilizations used oral storytelling to pass down histories, traditions, and beliefs. Similarly, people in modern times tell stories to entertain and inform. The very fabric of a story is intertwined with the zeitgeist of the age in which it is written or told.

Today, there is arguably an overemphasis on entertainment. Movies will often distort history for, what writers and directors might determine as a better plot. Certainly, literature has a better track record, but the value to entertain often blurs the boundaries of the message. Contemporary young adult fiction, while still highly entertaining, has also evolved into a teaching tool. Classroom teachers will often select titles that best-fit issues students are dealing with and use them as opportunities to discuss difficult topics in the classroom.

The first part of this study focuses on how the topic of suicide is portrayed in young adult literature by answering the following questions:

1. How is suicide portrayed in 21st-century young adult literature?
2. How do YA books about teen suicide compare to actual statistics in race/ethnicity, tone, gender, and setting/location?

But before delving into the history of the problem novel and facts relating to suicide, let us examine various definitions of “adolescence.”

Adolescence

Merriam-Webster defines adolescence as “the period of life when a child develops into
an adult: the period from puberty to maturity terminating legally at the age of majority.” Most people remember it through awkward interactions, feelings of confusion, anxiousness, extremes in emotions, disagreements with parents and authority figures, or if nothing else, zits. Students in this age range desire, if not demand, equal treatment as adults one moment but in the same breath Mom to bring them cookies and ice cream while watching reruns of their favorite cartoon TV shows. One might liken it to the turbulent waters where oceans meet. This is a time of great social upheaval all youth must face. It is critical as educators and all who serve youths to understand how to best approach any social issue with delicacy. Especially when dealing with social issues such as suicide, it is imperative for educators to be aware of adolescent characteristics when discussing them with students.

In her book *Act Your Age!: a Cultural Construction of Adolescence*, Nancy Lesko categorizes four, what she calls, “confidant characterizations” of adolescents. The first is “Adolescents ‘come of age’ into adulthood” (2). A coming-of-age is that point when a child becomes aware there is another world of influence and the choices imposed upon them by family or tradition no longer have a complete bearing upon them. This can include but is not limited to religious beliefs, career aspirations, or sexual identity. Authors have been writing books on the subject for centuries. Still included in the contemporary canon are titles such as *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Little Women, Catcher in the Rye* to more recent titles such as *Looking for Alaska, The Perks of Being a Wallflower*, or even a title at the center of the study: *13 Reasons Why*. The coming-of-age story is about the boy who becomes a man, the girl who becomes a woman, or the complexities of changing sexual norms and identities, transgender youth, or LGBTQ issues. The coming-of-age story spans far and wide. The entire catalog of young adult literature is vastly rich in such stories.
Lesko’s second characterization is “adolescents are controlled by raging hormones” (3). This almost comes across as cliché, but it couldn’t be more accurate. This is a time period defined by changes in the physical body: “height and weight spurts, breasts, deeper voices, facial hair, and broadened hips” (3). These physical changes wreak havoc upon an adolescent who one minute feels on top of the world and the next is overcome by worry about the look a popular friend gave at lunch. Adolescents are also caught off guard by their outward sexual characteristics and un-welcomed or welcomed negative or positive attention that comes with those characteristics by the same or opposite sexes.

Lesko’s third characterization is “adolescents are peer-oriented” (3). Anyone can step into a middle or high school and almost instantaneously observe the peer dynamic. Many adolescents intertwine their personal identities with their peers’ identities. While this happens to lesser extents at all stages of development, it reaches its peak during adolescence. Those with less confidence often find it difficult to fit in as opposed to their more well-adjusted peers. This is where adults, parents, and educators have an incredible influence to help guide adolescents through this time of life. Lesko also discusses the generalizations of peer pressure as a time that all adolescents succumb to peer pressure. She writes that “To demean peer pressure also has the effect of privileging an individualism that is historically associated with middle-class, white males and is largely alien to the experiences of many people of color and women” (4).

Lesko’s last characterization is “Adolescence is signified by age” (4). This is almost a moot point, but she asserts that “age has become the main entry point to thinking within a developmental perspective” (4). The legal age of an adult in our society is eighteen. This is the time legal ramifications become permanent. Eighteen-year-olds are able to vote, participate, and advocate for themselves politically. Whereas certain actions were unavailable to them before
eighteen, young adults are now independent, at least in the legal sense, to live out their own lives. The boundary between a child and an adolescent is blurry, but the ages might be estimated at twelve or thirteen. Puberty often sets in earlier for females and later for males, and puberty is typically the dividing line between the child and adolescent. Lesko puts it another way in her essay “Past, Present, and Future Conceptions of Adolescents”:

The emphasis on age in conceptions of youth is especially salient and notoriously difficult to critique. The distinctiveness of adolescence is captured and condensed in age. When we state, Rachel is 16, we communicate a world of difference. Teenagers are deemed worlds apart from adults on the basis of age; they are said to inhabit a different time, which is radically separate from the time of adulthood or childhood. Adolescence is a confusing stage of development filled with questions about the world and the way it works. Teens are building individual agency and want to be left alone but still need guidance to make appropriate decisions.

**Problem Novels**

Mike Cadden, in an essay titled “Genre as Nexus” discussing the characteristics of young adult (YA) literature, writes:

While YA books can be both episodic and comedic, it is far more likely that a YA book will be about change and growth, reflecting Romantic, modern, postmodern, and notions of self that can combine all of these movements. The YA novel is often either a full blown novel of growth (Bildungsroman) or of character change (Entwicklungsroman), (310).
One of the key characteristics of YA novels is the focus on a problem. Also called the social problem novel, it is defined as a “work of fiction in which a prevailing social problem, such as gender, race, or class prejudice, is dramatized through its effect on the characters of a novel,” (Britannica). *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton is often credited as the first problem novel that spurred the growth of the YA genre. *The Outsiders* tells the story of two young adolescent males who kill another teenager in self-defense and go on the run. The protagonists Ponyboy and Johnny belong to a gang known as the Greasers for their greased-up hair. The teen they kill belongs to a group called the Socs (short for “social”), kids who come from money and privilege and drive fancy cars. The killing ignites a sort of gang war between the two groups. Although the work is fiction, Hinton used Tulsa, Oklahoma, as the setting of the novel (although never directly referenced). She was also 16 at the time she wrote it.

The YA novel is a coming-of-age for the characters. Cadden further writes in the essay mentioned above:

Young adult novels and children’s novels continue to share some elements and tendencies, though perhaps fewer than one might think. The young adult novel, caught in the continuum between childhood and adulthood, is parallel to children’s literature mostly as a genre named for an implied audience. There are times when the young adult novel is more closely allied with the novel more generally . . . and times when novels for children or young adults are indistinguishable. In what ways do the children’s and young adult novels continue to be comparable? Clearly, fake or superficial realism is alive and well in both and fantasy is the great unifier (310).

The key thing Cadden points out is the continuum between childhood and adulthood: again, the coming of age. The YA novel seeks to entice young readers in problems they face day to day,
immersing them in the struggle to become an adult. Adolescents or teenagers want to experience adulthood and sometimes contrive situations to make themselves feel older than they are. Whether it be through relationships or situations, it’s not uncommon for teens to go from discussing the hypocrisy of Trump’s words and actions to watching Riverdale to coloring Disney characters in a coloring book.

Traditionally, problem novels focused on such themes as family relationships, friends and society, living in a multicultural world, body and self, and sex-related problems (Nilsen and Donelson 125-140). However, YA literature has shifted and broadened post-Columbine spawning books with the same themes but approaching topics such as bullying, first-person shooters, and school violence such as Walter Dean Myer’s Shooter. After 9/11, YA literature started dealing with the persecution of Muslim Americans in books such as N. H. Senzai’s Shooting Kabul. YA literature continues to challenge social norms with topics dealing with homophobia, LGBTQ issues, issues of consent, rape, child abuse, sexual misconduct, and many more.

It’s difficult to trace exactly when suicide first appeared in YA literature; it is now commonly found in books on the shelves of libraries everywhere. The most recent book to create controversy is 13 Reasons Why, the story of Hannah Baker who left 13 tapes for 13 people whom she felt were complicit in her suicide.

**Current Facts and Statistics on Suicide**

To understand the purpose of this study along with the portrayal of suicide in young adult literature, educators need to be familiar with the current suicide statistics.
First of all, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), suicide is defined as “death caused by injuring oneself with the intent to die.” And a suicide attempt is defined as “when someone harms themselves with the intent to end their life, but they do not die as a result of their actions” (“Preventing Suicide”).

Statistically, according to the World Health Organization in 2016, there were 222,093 suicides between the ages of 10 and 29 (the age range on which this study is most closely focused) worldwide. Of those numbers, 94,553 were female and 127,540 were male. The total amount of suicides worldwide amounted to an estimated 793,000. In comparison, in the United States, there were 21.1 suicide deaths per 100,000 for males and 6.4 suicide deaths per 100,000 for females (“Suicide Data”). The CDC states that suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States in 2016. There were close to 45,000 suicide deaths, which amounts to one death every 12 minutes. Approximately 9.8 million people seriously thought about committing suicide, 2.8 million people made a plan to commit suicide, and 1.8 million attempted suicide (“Preventing Suicide”). The state of Iowa ranks suicide as the second leading cause of death for the ages between 15 and 24 with 15.13 deaths per 100,000, which is higher than the national average of 14.0 deaths per 100,000. Iowa ranks 29th of the 50 states for the highest rate of suicide (“State Fact Sheets”).

According to the National Institute for Mental Health with statistics provided by the CDC, suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death in the United States between the ages of 15 and 24 as of 2017 with 6,252 suicide deaths preceded by unintentional death and followed by homicide. Not classified by overall age but according to race, according to the Suicide Prevention Resource Center, “Suicide rates vary by race and ethnicity. In 2017, the age-adjusted rate of suicide among American Indians/Alaska Natives was 22.15 per 100,000 and among non-
Hispanic whites, it was 17.83. In contrast, the suicide rate among Asian/Pacific Islanders was 6.75; the rate for blacks was 6.85, and the rate among Hispanics was 6.89” (“Racial and Ethnic Disparities”).

The most common method of suicide is firearms followed by suffocations and then poisoning (such as taking pills). However, by gender, the most common method for females is poisoning with 31.4 deaths per 100,000 compared to males with 9.0 deaths per 100,000. The most common method for males is firearms with 56.0 deaths per 100,000 compared to females with 31.2 deaths per 100,000. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, “The suicide rate among males remained nearly four times higher (22.4 per 100,000 in 2017) than among females (6.1 per 100,000 in 2017)” (“Suicide”). Suffocation is identified as the 3rd most common method for both genders: 27.9 for females and 27.7 for males.

According to the CDC, “A combination of individual, relationship, community, and societal factors contribute to the risk of suicide. Risk factors are those characteristics associated with suicide—they might not be direct causes.

Risk Factors

- Family history of suicide
- Family history of child maltreatment
- Previous suicide attempt(s)
- History of mental disorders, particularly clinical depression
- History of alcohol and substance abuse
- Feelings of hopelessness
- Impulsive or aggressive tendencies
- Cultural and religious beliefs (e.g., belief that suicide is a noble resolution of a personal dilemma)
- Local epidemics of suicide
- Isolation, a feeling of being cut off from other people
- Barriers to accessing mental health treatment
- Loss (relational, social, work, or financial)
- Physical illness
- Easy access to lethal methods
- Unwillingness to seek help because of the stigma attached to mental health and substance abuse disorders or to suicidal thoughts” (“Preventing Suicide”)

While suicide is high for ages 15-24, the percent of these suicides by LGBTQ youth is particularly alarming. The Trevor Project website lists “Facts about suicide:

- Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among young people ages 10 to 24.
- LGB youth seriously contemplate suicide at almost three times the rate of heterosexual youth.
- LGB youth are almost five times as likely to have attempted suicide compared to heterosexual youth.
- Of all the suicide attempts made by youth, LGB youth suicide attempts were almost five times as likely to require medical treatment than those of heterosexual youth.
- Suicide attempts by LGB youth and questioning youth are 4 to 6 times more likely to result in injury, poisoning, or overdose that requires treatment from a doctor or nurse, compared to their straight peers.
In a national study, 40% of transgender adults reported having made a suicide attempt. 92% of these individuals reported having attempted suicide before the age of 25.

LGB youth who come from highly rejecting families are 8.4 times as likely to have attempted suicide as LGB peers who reported no or low levels of family rejection.

1 out of 6 students nationwide (grades 9–12) seriously considered suicide in the past year.

Each episode of LGBT victimization, such as physical or verbal harassment or abuse, increases the likelihood of self-harming behavior by 2.5 times on average.” (“Facts About Suicide”).

These high statistics make learning about suicide an important topic for secondary students.

An Overview of Young Adult Literature Featuring Suicide

The purpose of this section is to provide the reader with an understanding or summary of the twenty-five books reviewed and charted. This is not an exhaustive summary but a very brief overview of the subject matter which includes sub-themes an instructor might desire for a whole class unit.


Lia is obsessed with weight loss. She already lost her best friend Cassie due to excessive dieting, but she cannot stop pushing herself to lose weight amid her parents’ and doctor’s
serious urgings to eat. Delusional, she begins to hear Cassie calling her to join her, to just let go. *Wintergirls* not only deals with suicide but also crosses over themes of body image and weight loss as well as the mental health issues that cause such obsessions.


Before Hannah Baker takes her own life, she makes 13 recordings on cassette tapes and sends them to 13 people she believes played a part in her taking her own life. The story is told through the perspective of Clay, who was one of the recipients of the tapes as well as Hannah’s voice on the tapes. This is a rather brutal story examining the social pressures of high school and constantly urges the reader to determine whether Hannah wanted her story to be told or just wanted cold-blooded revenge.


Dan is a bully or used to be a bully. Due to his actions at his former school, a picture he sent of another student and his subsequent suicide, Dan hopes for a new beginning at his new school only to be confronted with his past when he steps in between a bully and his victim. He should know. He knows first-hand what such actions can lead to. This is a great book not only to discuss the consequences of bullying but pushes readers to examine what we should do with the perpetrator in such cases. Is there room for redemption?


What happens to social media accounts after a person dies? Many people use them as a memorial for the deceased. It becomes something more for Tess Fowler whose friend Jonah commits suicide for unknown reasons. She begins using the private message feature to “talk” to Jonah until one evening, he talks back. No, this is nothing...
supernatural. Jonah’s roommate is also reeling after Jonah’s death and doesn’t want to lose him, so he pretends to be Jonah for a short time. Eventually, he confesses to Tess, and they begin a search for the real Jonah trying to piece together the reasons why he wanted his life to end. This book takes the reader on a journey across the United States and Italy although it’s centered on the Midwest for the first half of the book.


Set in Washington, D.C., most of the characters are somehow related to political figures. Main character Miles, who gets her name from the movie *8 Mile*, loses her friend Laura due to an overdose of pills at the beginning of the story. Miles, an overweight near 18-year-old who uses food to reduce anxiety, struggles with her own addictions as well as body image issues. Miles tries to find meaning in her own life and comes close to the same fate as her friend Laura.


Brent is obsessed with fitting in with his high school classmates. After an embarrassing scene at a party, let alone in front of the girl he likes, Brent decides to end his life but winds up taking a life in the process. Instead of going to jail, however, the other family asks that Brent make four whirligigs and place them at four different locations across the United States. This really is a story of redemption, not to mention a true coming-of-age novel. Although it begins with such a tragic event, all that follows is absolutely heartwarming. This is an excellent book to use for finding the meanings of life.


The author, Michael Thomas Ford, is a strong advocate for LGBTQ rights for students. The story features Jeff who wakes up in an institution and decides to keep a diary. He’s
forced to be there for 45 days. During this time, he has to uncover what made him slit his
wrists to end his life. Little does he know, it’s something he’s been trying to hide from
himself for a long, long time. This story is very LGTBQ empowering. For use in the
classroom, the reader should know it does contain quite a few sexually graphic explicit
scenes.


This is a story of best friends. Cody thinks she knows everything there is to know about
Meg until Meg goes away to college. They keep in touch over email until Meg suddenly
and without warning checks herself into a hotel room and ends her life. Cody goes to her
apartment to try and figure out why she did this and what she uncovers completely
unnerves her. This book really demonstrates that not everything is as it seems. People are
good at hiding secrets. It also demonstrates the struggles and the lengths people go to hide
their mental health struggles.


Blake, Sim, and Kenny have lost their best friend, Ross after he was hit by a car while
riding his bike. As best friends, they feel the need to give him a proper send-off, so they
sneak into his house and steal his ashes. They then plan a trip across England to Ross,
Scotland where they will spread his ashes. However, their journey is fraught with ills from
the beginning when Kenny forgets his bag on the subway. After speaking with their friend
Nina, they begin to wonder if Ross actually committed suicide. After some thought and
conversation, all but Blake agree to head home. They cannot complete the trip for someone
who intentionally caused others harm by taking his own life. Only Blake persists to finish
the trip. But what will he find when he arrives at the end of the journey? This story is quite
comical and one that ends with a surprise.


Venessa, Tony, and Carter are in Aspen Spring, a psychiatric hospital for teens who’ve attempted suicide. Each has their own issues and struggles. The story culminates with a camping trip into the desert, the last phase of their treatment. Their counselors are confident in their recovery. Each character learns something new about themselves, but not necessarily what they wanted to know. In some cases, this experience brought out the darkness inside of them. The story ends with a horrific tragedy. Teachers may wish to use this text with extreme caution or preview the ending before using it with students.

Hubbard, Jenny. *And We Stay*. Ember, 2015.

At midterm, Emily transfers into an all-girls’ school. It was her choice after learning she was pregnant. Her boyfriend wanted to propose to her and help raise the baby, but after telling her parents, she decides the best decision for her future is an abortion. Days later, her boyfriend becomes distraught and confronts Emily in the school library with a shotgun. Eventually, he turns the gun on himself and pulls the trigger. Now at this new school, rumors spread about her sudden transfer, but she soon finds solace in poetry, especially the poetry of Emily Dickinson. With the help of her words, she overcomes her trauma and finds a new meaning to life.


Caitlin’s best friend Ingrid committed suicide, and she’s completely devastated. However, after finding her friend’s diary, she uncovers a completely unknown side to Ingrid, one she never knew existed that dealt with suicidal obsessions, depression, and risky relationships. As Caitlin deals with her own trauma, she befriends a boy named Taylor and a girl named
Dylan. With her friend’s help and the help of Ingrid’s diary, she finds a new peace. This story also contains LGBTQ themes.


The story is made up of five different narrators—Simone, Mallory, Stephen, Owen, and Kent—and takes place in fictional North Shore, Illinois. Each character adds a personality that draws the readers into the emotional drama and trauma of high school life. The story is both humorous and bittersweet. It tells the story of these five characters who bond together to become “the gatekeepers,” a group of students dedicated to helping other students who struggle with suicide after a handful of students at their school take their own lives. It also exposes the conflict between the public at large who believe they know what’s in the best interest of teens and what teens believe they need most.


What happens when you decide to get back at a friend by creating a fake social media profile? Ask Bree. Lara suffered from anxiety and depression throughout middle school. She also struggled with her weight. But when she loses the weight and tries out for cheerleading, she makes the squad. However, former best friend Bree has always been on the cheer squad, spent summers at cheer camp, and spent countless dollars on lessons. When she doesn’t make the squad, she decides to get back at Lara by feeding on her insecurities creating a fake profile pretending to be a boy from another school. If that’s not bad enough, when Bree’s mother finds out what she’s doing, she doesn’t necessarily object to Bree’s actions. This book is a constant nail-biter that keeps the reader on edge until the end. This is the perfect example of what could happen to teens who don’t think before they act on their impulses in the age of the digital footprint.

What happens when a bully has a change of heart? For Sara and a group of friends, it was harmless fun that caused their classmate Emma to commit suicide. But Sara and the friends who participated in their incessant torment of Emma face legal consequences. And in the midst of this, Sara now becomes the bullied. After deep reflection, Sara finally sees the monster she was and forbids herself to return to that state. But is that enough to stop the consequences coming her way? Should they stop those consequences? The story is told from two time periods—before and after Emma’s suicide—in alternating chapters. This is an amazing story for students to understand the potential effects of bullying.


Yuki, twelve, comes home one evening to discover her mother had committed suicide. After her father remarries, Yuki is discouraged from keeping any contact with her mother’s side of the family without her father’s permission as dictated by Japanese tradition. But Yuki is certain that her father’s new wife hates her. This is a coming-of-age story where Yuki discovers and reconnects with herself. After word about her maternal grandfather’s passing and her father’s blessing to pay her respects, she chooses to reconnect with the past that matters.


The story is told from two perspectives, narrative form (not diary): Theodore Finch (or just Finch) and Violet Markey. It is essentially a love story between Violet and Finch. During a school day, Violet climbs up to the top of a bell tower on campus. She wants to see what it might feel like to jump off and die. While she’s up there, Finch is also up there standing at the edge. Once Violet is on the edge, she can’t find the nerve to bring
herself down, so Finch must encourage her back onto the platform. One day, Finch announces Violet as his partner for a class project in which they travel the state of Indiana in search of landmarks that make the state unique and special. He does this in order to court Violet. Over the course of the novel, it is revealed that Finch suffers from bipolar disorder. He hits a manic phase and disappears for extended periods of time. Eventually, he runs away but doesn't return forcing Violet to confront her past.


While Leigh spends the evening with a boy and shares her first kiss, Leigh’s mother is at home and commits suicide. Leigh cannot forgive herself for not staying home believing if she had been there, she could have saved her. While retreating further and further into herself, she has a nightmare. When she wakes up, she sees a crimson-colored bird she believes is her mother telling her to travel to Taiwan to visit her maternal grandparents who’ve never met Leigh. While there, she finds what her mother never could: the ability to love herself for who she is. Pan’s description and use of color throughout this novel is exquisite and well worth the investment.


Daelyn cannot speak at the beginning of the book and wears a neck brace. Does she have a disability? What is known is that she plans on committing suicide. This decision is very clear seeing as though she joined a website titled Through the Light. The website provides people with a number for how many days they have until they must end their life. During that time, members can interact with one another about the means by which they want to die as well as their thoughts and feelings regarding their decision. Daelyn has 23 days until she must end her life. But will she? The book reveals much information
about her past and the reason why she cannot speak. It also warns readers about the
dangerous side of social media.


Caden suffers from delusions and is committed to a hospital after believing another
student at school wants to kill him. In the midst of this, in his mind, he is visited by a
pirate captain and his parrot whose real identities are later revealed. The Schustermans do
a wonderful job of blurring fiction and reality together until the end when Caden reaches
the bottom of the “Marianna’s Trench” at which time Caden becomes aware of his
alternate realities. This is a wonderful story about mental illness, which really pulls the
reader into the alternate world Caden has created.


Deathcast is an app that will notify people when they’re within twenty-four hours of their
death. It does not say how they’ll die or exactly when, just within twenty-four hours of
notification. Two teens, Mateo and Rufus, are notified and use The Last Friend app that
allows people to meet other people who are also about to die, so no one has to die alone.
After Mateo browses through and speaks with different people, he’s almost scared off until
he stumbles upon Rufus. They decide to meet and spend the day together.


Vicky attempts suicide by pills. Her nanny, Juanita, finds her when the cat Galileo comes
to get her attention. She wakes up after having her stomach pumped in the hospital. She
meets Dr. Desai whom she finds somewhat hard and distant at first, but the relationship
grows on her. Dr. Desai takes the four friends to her ranch where their experiences solidify their friendships. However, at the ranch, E.M. goes to the hospital after nearly drowning while rafting down the river. Gabriel starts hearing voices more intensely and needs further care beyond the needs Dr. Desai can provide. Mona stops taking her bipolar meds and takes the van in order to meet her “boyfriend” Rudy who says he can help her find Lucy, her daughter. This is an excellent story dealing with suicide weaving in bits of Latino culture that focuses on the recovery from a suicide attempt and not the events that led up to a suicide attempt.


Eddie’s father, a famous photographer, commits suicide. His work was very well known at one time. He was also a teacher at the local high school. Eddie’s mother has a mild breakdown constantly wearing her husband’s coat around the house. Her aunt Beth comes to live with them to help make things normal. Beth is a naturalist, and personalities clash between Eddie and Beth sometimes resulting in a major conflict. Eddie eventually meets Culler Evans, a former student of her father’s, who is taking pictures at an old abandoned building named Tarver’s. After a series of conflicts, Eddie begs Culler to take her to the locations in her father’s final six pictures after finding a message scrawled on a wall in Tarver’s. She hopes these will lead to the reason why her father took his life. But what are Culler’s real intentions?


Craig Gilner suffers from anxiety/depression. While he’s attending a new elite school for gifted students, the academic pressure drags him down. His psychiatrist prescribes him Zoloft. He takes it for a little while, but once he feels better, he stops and doesn’t think he
needs it anymore and falls into a deep depression again. This time, he makes a plan to kill himself, but before going to throw himself off a bridge, he calls 1-800-SUICIDE. The lady on the phone tells him he needs to go to the hospital. He does. He is placed in the adult ward of the psychiatric unit. He feels completely lost at first, but quickly realizes he’s not that different from the people there. While there, he discovers his talent for art and develops a love for painting. Not only is this a beautiful story, but it’s also somewhat comical and shows a healthy sense of humor when dealing with mental illness.


Aysel visits a website called Smooth Passages to assist people in finding a “suicide partner,” a person to help hold one accountable and make sure each person follows through with the act. Aysel befriends Roman through the site. She hates her life because her father killed an up-and-coming Olympic student at his convenience store. The teen was throwing things around and harassing him when her father became enraged and attacked him, killing him. Roman was babysitting his little sister who was prone to seizures. He sent his sister to take a bath, so he could have time to make-out with his girlfriend. His sister died by drowning as a result. He wants to drown himself, so he can die just like his sister. Over the course of their relationship and getting to know one another, both characters find a “reason to live.” This is another novel that warns of the dangers of social media.
Critiques of *13 Reasons Why*

Perhaps one of the most controversial young adult novels focusing on teen suicide is *13 Reasons Why* by Jay Asher, published in 2007. The protagonist Clay Jensen comes home from school one day to find a package waiting for him with no return address. He opens it and finds seven cassette tapes numbered 1-13, (odd numbers side A, even numbers side B, not including the final tape). On these tapes is the voice of Hannah Baker, a girl at Clay’s high school who committed suicide just a few weeks prior. Each tape is directed to a specific person citing a specific reason why his or her actions contributed to her suicide. The package began with the person on the first tape. That individual sent it on to the person on the second tape. The second sent it to the third person, and so on, all the way through to the thirteenth person, after which, as Hannah Baker says, “That person can take them to Hell.” Hannah indicates that another copy of the tapes exists and will be released in a very public manner if the tapes do not make it all the way through to number thirteen.

The novel saw a boost of popularity in 2017 upon the release of the Netflix series of the same name, an adaptation of Asher’s novel. According to *USA Today*, the novel was the 16th bestselling novel in 2017 (Schnaars and McClurg). However, the air of controversy still surrounds the novel. According to the online publication *Banned Books Week*, *13 Reasons Why* was number six out of ten in 2018, down five places from number one in 2017. The only other year it made the list was in 2012 when it was listed at number three preceded by *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie and followed by *Fifty Shades of Grey* by E. L. James. Interestingly, the reasons for its banning in 2012 include “drugs/alcohol/smoking, sexually explicit, suicide, unsuited for age group.” Its banning in both 2017 and 2018 is cited for its simply addressing teen suicide and nothing more. Its banning in 2017 and 2018 is also likely
due to the Netflix series of the same name that graphically portrays the main character Hannah’s suicide in much more vivid detail compared to the book possibly indicating confusion between the two. The book reveals very little about the suicidal act itself.

Reviews both praise and condemn the novel for its subject matter. According to Kathryn Hughes of *The Guardian*, “This first book by Jay Asher is remarkable for its technical elegance in weaving words from Hannah's tapes with Clay's reactions and memories. Occasionally there are stumbles in meaning and tone, but the suspense is wound tight as we wait to find out who is next on Hannah's hit list.” While praise for the elegance and grace is rightful, the mention of “hit list” indicates a motive of revenge. Readers might interpret Hannah’s actions as revenge, which is a crucial question considering the topic is suicide. However, this tension does add well to the pacing of the book as Motoko Rich of the *New York Times* writes, “With its thrillerlike pacing and scenes of sexual coercion and teenage backbiting, the novel appeals to young readers, who say the book also gives them insight into peers who might consider suicide.” One of the greatest takeaways of the story, however, is the classroom discussion it can generate surrounding the suicide. Valerie Sawicki Bellomo of the *School Library Journal* writes, “The sharing of those thoughts is incredibly crucial at their age and I think any educator who has this book in their library should be thinking about how to make sure they are effectively reaching kids to have that conversation.” Having a safe space for which students can go and talk about these kinds of issues is necessary to keep it from repeating, but this is also a point of contention amongst critics who see the novel, especially the Netflix series, as encouraging the teens to follow through with such urges and not teaching them the critical skills needed to overcome negative thinking. For instance, “There is a great concern that I have ... that young people are going to overidentify with Hannah in the series and we actually may see more suicides as a result of this television series,”
said Dan Reidenberg, the executive director for Suicide Awareness Voices of Education, a nonprofit group with the mission of suicide prevention (Thorbecke). This, however, refers to the series, not the book. The article does reference the author as saying, “Jay Asher, the author of the book *13 Reasons Why*, said, ‘Suicide is an uncomfortable thing to talk about, but it happens, and so we have to talk about it’” (Thorbecke). Ultimately, the book wasn’t an overt controversy until talk of the series began at which point various people and groups became concerned.

The next portion of my creative component, Chapter 3, describes my analysis of young adult fiction featuring suicide. A teaching unit on *13 Reasons Why* is provided at the end of the creative component.
Chapter 3: Analysis of YA Books with Suicide

Twenty-five books were chosen from a total of fifty recommended books. This book list was garnered from the “Best of YA Books on Suicide” from Goodreads and Amazon.com. Other book titles came from various YA book groups on Facebook. In some cases, the books were recommended by librarians or other teachers. After conferring with these individuals, the list was narrowed to twenty-five books based on desirability for classroom use as either whole-class, literature circle, or individual reading.

In order for the book to qualify for this study, the suicidal act must have directly or indirectly affected the protagonist’s life in some way. In some cases, the act was completed. In other cases, the act was prevented. Throughout these novel selections, the acts of suicide were carried out by the protagonist, friends, and-or family members. In some of these books, the suicide takes place at the beginning of the book and others at the end. Some of these stories focus on the protagonist’s recovery from the loss of a loved one or friend while some focus on the character’s struggle with suicide itself, as in one of the main characters overcoming their own personal struggle with whatever issues drive them to consider the act of suicide.

This chapter will focus on information gathered after the reading of the twenty-five young adult (YA) fiction books in order to answer the two guiding questions:

1. How is suicide portrayed in 21st-century young adult literature?
2. How do YA books about teen suicide compare to actual statistics in race/ethnicity, tone, gender, and setting/location?

The four areas examined in the tables to follow consider the race and ethnicity of the authors and protagonists of each book, the tone of the book’s conclusion, the gender of the author as well as the gender of the book’s protagonist, and the setting/location. The final chart also examines the
location or setting of the book (considering whether or not these factors contribute to the suicidal
act). The significance of this data is to help determine whether or not the depictions of suicide in
these novels resemble the actual statistics of what’s happening in the United States and whether
or not YA literature provides an accurate portrayal of suicide.

Race/Ethnicity of Authors and Protagonists

As discussed in chapter two, according to the Suicide Prevention Resource Center, the
ethnicity with the highest incidence rate of suicide is Native American or Alaskan Native at
22.15 per 100,000 people followed by whites or Caucasians at 17.83 per 100,000. The rates of
suicide for Asians or Pacific Islanders are 6.75 per 100,000. For Hispanics, it is 6.89 per
100,000. For blacks, it is 6.85 per 100,000 (“Racial and Ethnic Disparities”).

Table 1 examines the race and ethnicity of the authors and protagonists in each of the
twenty-five novels. The chart provides both the race of the author and the race of the protagonist
of each story to provide an assessment of whether or not YA literature is an accurate portrayal to
the CDC statistics provided.

Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Race—Author</th>
<th>Race—Protagonist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wintergirls</td>
<td>Anderson, Laurie Halse</td>
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<td>Caucasian</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 Reasons Why</td>
<td>Asher, Jay</td>
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<td>Send</td>
<td>Blount, Patty</td>
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<td>Bognanni, Peter</td>
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</tr>
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<td>You Know Where to Find Me</td>
<td>Cohn, Rachel</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whirligig</td>
<td>Fleischman, Paul</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
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<td>Suicide Notes</td>
<td>Ford, Michael Thomas</td>
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<td>Caucasian</td>
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<td>I Was Here</td>
<td>Forman, Gayle</td>
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<td>Caucasian</td>
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<td>Ostrich Boys</td>
<td>Gray, Keith</td>
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<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
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<td>Impulse</td>
<td>Hopkins, Ellen</td>
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<tr>
<td>And We Stay</td>
<td>Hubbard, Jenny</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hold Still</td>
<td>LaCour, Nina</td>
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<td>Tease</td>
<td>Maciel, Amanda</td>
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<td>All the Bright Places</td>
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<td>The Astonishing Color of After</td>
<td>Pan, Emily X.R.</td>
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<td>Fall for Anything</td>
<td>Summers, Courtney</td>
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<td>My Heart and Other Black Holes</td>
<td>Warga, Jasmine</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ethnicity of Author**

- **C** = Caucasian (84.0%)
- **L** = Latino/a (8.0%)
- **AS** = Asian American (8.0%)
As shown in Table 1, two books or 8% of the books were written by Latino authors and two books or 8% of the books were written by Asian American authors while the majority, twenty-one books or 84%, were all written by Caucasian authors. There were no African American or Native American authors or protagonists even when statistically, Native Americans/Alaskan Natives at 22.15 per 100,000 have the highest incidence rate of suicide nationally over Caucasians at 17.83 per 100,000.

Since whites or Caucasians are second in their incidence rate of suicide at 17.83 per 100,000, the literature is somewhat reflective of the predominant culture, but it does raise the question of whether or not the literature is reflective of society and if authors simply write from their own perspectives. As one can notice in Table 1, the ethnicity of the author matches the ethnicity of the main character and is not representative of the data regarding Native Americans/Alaskan Natives. Also, since African Americans have a suicide rate of 6.85 per
100,000 and Hispanics have a rate of 6.89 per 100,000, this is certainly in conflict with 0% as found by this study.

**The Tone of the Book’s Conclusion**

Another characteristic examined as part of this study was the tone of the book’s conclusion, whether the book’s ending was considered hopeful, sad, happy, or concluded with a sense of justice. “Hopeful” means the concluding tone left the reader with a sense of hope. This means the characters in the novel arrived at a satisfying resolution and left the reader feeling hopeful for their future. “Sad” means the novel ended with an unsatisfying resolution such as the protagonist or another character passes away as the result of suicide or another negative event taking place in the novel. “Happy” means the concluding tone of the book ends on a positive note but slightly differs from hopeful in that the characters reach a resolution that does not imply the need for future healing. The final tone was a “sense of justice”, which means the conflict was one in which the characters were working against a pursuant antagonist, such as a bullying character, who is caught and brought to justice. Table 2 and the following pie chart indicate the tone of the books in the study.

Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book Title</th>
<th>The Tone of Book’s Conclusion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wintergirls</td>
<td>Hopeful</td>
</tr>
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<td>13 Reasons Why</td>
<td>Sad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send</td>
<td>Hopeful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Things I’m Seeing Without You</td>
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<td>You Know Where to Find Me</td>
<td>Hopeful</td>
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<td>Whirligig</td>
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<td>Suicide Notes</td>
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<td>I Was Here</td>
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<td>Ostrich Boys</td>
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<td>My Heart and Other Black Holes</td>
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</table>

### Tone of Book's Conclusion

- **Hopeful**: 64.0%
- **Sad**: 12.0%
- **Happy**: 4.0%
- **Sense of Justice**: 20.0%
Of the twenty-five books read, 16 (64%) concluded with a hopeful tone. Five books (20%) concluded with a sad tone such as the novel *Impulse* wherein one of the main characters commits suicide in the final pages of the book. Three books (12%) concluded with a sense of justice. For example, in the book *Tease*, the protagonist Sara is also one of five characters facing criminal charges for bullying a fellow schoolmate which results in her suicide. During the book’s resolution, the main character comes to terms with what she did and takes ownership of the act leaving the reader satisfied in that the guilty parties were held accountable for their actions. At the same time, there is also a great deal of sympathy for Sara who was herself the victim of peer pressure. The only book with a happy concluding tone was *The Ostrich Boys*, which is the story of a group of boys who journey to Ross, Scotland with the ashes of their friend whom they suspect may have committed suicide.

The fact that the majority of these books end with a hopeful tone is not a negative trait. In fact, at least in the context of how to deal with suicide and suicidal tendencies, it is best to use books associated with a positive ending as not to further encourage students to commit the act of suicide as a result of reading the book.

**Gender of the Author and the Main Character**

The gender of the author of each novel along with the gender of the protagonist was also considered and charted to measure whether or not these characteristics match the actual suicide statistics in the United States. In Chapter 2, it was noted that males are four times more likely than females to commit suicide (“Suicide”). The gender of the author and the main character is provided in the table that follows. The reader should also take note here that the main character is not always the suicidal person as will be seen in Table 4.
Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Gender--Author</th>
<th>Gender--Main Character</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wintergirls</td>
<td>Anderson, Laurie Halse</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Reasons Why</td>
<td>Asher, Jay</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send</td>
<td>Blount, Patty</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Things I'm Seeing Without You</td>
<td>Bognanni, Peter</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You Know Where to Find Me</td>
<td>Cohn, Rachel</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whirligig</td>
<td>Fleischman, Paul</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide Notes</td>
<td>Ford, Michael Thomas</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Was Here</td>
<td>Forman, Gayle</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ostrich Boys</td>
<td>Gray, Keith</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impulse</td>
<td>Hopkins, Ellen</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And We Stay</td>
<td>Hubbard, Jenny</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hold Still</td>
<td>LaCour, Nina</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Gatekeepers</td>
<td>Lancaster, Jen</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backlash</td>
<td>Littman, Sarah</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tease</td>
<td>Maciel, Amanda</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shizuko’s Daughter</td>
<td>Mori, Kyoko</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All the Bright Places</td>
<td>Niven, Jennifer</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Astonishing Color of After</td>
<td>Pan, Emily X.R.</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By the Time You Read This, I’ll be Dead</td>
<td>Peters, Julie Anne</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenger Deep</td>
<td>Shusterman, Neal</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They Both Die at the End</td>
<td>Silvera, Adam</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Memory of Light</td>
<td>Stork, Francisco</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall for Anything</td>
<td>Summers, Courtney</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's Kind of a Funny Story</td>
<td>Vizzini, Ned</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Heart and Other Black Holes</td>
<td>Warga, Jasmine</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Of the twenty-five books, 17 books (68%) were female authors while eight books (32%) were written by male authors. At least in regard to this genre and subject matter of books, there are far more female than male authors. Regarding the gender of the protagonists, there were eight male characters and seventeen female protagonists of the twenty-five books, the same as author genders. In two of the books, Patty Blount (female), author of *Send*, wrote with a male main character and Peter Bognanni (male), author of *Things I’m Seeing Without You*, wrote with a female protagonist. Although not directly charted, only two books contained any LGBTQ themes: *Suicide Notes* by Michael Thomas Ford and *They Both Die at the End* by Adam Silvera.

Based on this data, the literature seems to trend by featuring a female protagonist over a male protagonist. However, as previously stated, the protagonist is not always the suicidal person in the story. Also, as noted in the analysis of Table 1, this may be another instance where authors write best about what they know. In only two of the books does an author write from the opposite gender’s point of view. In an article featured in *The Atlantic* regarding the compilation of a top 100 list of young adult titles, Meghan Lewit writes, “More than 75,000 votes were cast to cull the list of 235 finalists to the top 100. Also, notable: Of those 235 titles, 147 (or 63 percent) were written by women—a parity that would seem like a minor miracle in some other genres.” It is clear, at least in this particular genre, that female authors far outnumber male authors. Again, this perhaps pertains to whether or not authors are writing from points of view of which they’re familiar.
Suicidal Person and Location or Setting of the Novel Including Urban, Suburban, Small Town, or Rural Classification

The identification of the suicidal person and various data on the location of the book were the final data collected and charted. The identification of the suicidal person determines whether the story portrays someone overcoming the loss of a family member or loved one. In some cases, the protagonist struggled to overcome the urge to commit suicide such as in *It’s Kind of a Funny Story*. In other stories, the protagonist is overcoming the loss of a parent as in *Shizuko’s Daughter*. The other area of location considered whether or not the setting influenced the narration or the suicidal act itself. Location was categorized by whether or not the book was set in an urban, suburban, small town, or rural location. The actual setting of the book was also tracked but only if it was known because, in many of the books, the exact location of the novel was never identified. To further understand the location of the book, especially if it was never identified in the novel, some research was done as to the location or current living residence of the author.

Table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book Title</th>
<th>Suicidal Person</th>
<th>The setting of Book (if known)</th>
<th>Residence or Birthplace of Author</th>
<th>Urban, Suburban, Small Town, Rural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wintergirls</td>
<td>F PT</td>
<td></td>
<td>Potsdam, New York</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Reasons Why</td>
<td>F PT</td>
<td></td>
<td>Arcadia, California</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send</td>
<td>M MC</td>
<td></td>
<td>Whitestone, NY</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Things I’m Seeing Without You</td>
<td>M MC</td>
<td>Minneapolis, MN (other Midwest locations including Iowa)</td>
<td>Saint Paul, Minnesota</td>
<td>Small Town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You Know Where to Find Me</td>
<td>F MC</td>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
<td>Los Angeles, CA</td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whirligig</td>
<td>F MC</td>
<td></td>
<td>Monterey, California</td>
<td>Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide Notes</td>
<td>M PT</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rural Maryland</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Was Here</td>
<td>F MC</td>
<td></td>
<td>Los Angeles, California</td>
<td>Small Town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ostrich Boys</td>
<td>M MC</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>Grimsby, United Kingdom</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Setting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impulse</td>
<td>M PT</td>
<td>Long Beach, California</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And We Stay</td>
<td>M MC</td>
<td>Amherst, Massachusetts</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hold Still</td>
<td>F MC</td>
<td>San Francisco, CA</td>
<td>Small Town</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Gatekeepers</td>
<td>M MC</td>
<td>Salisbury, North Carolina</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backlash</td>
<td>F PT</td>
<td>Danbury, CT</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tease</td>
<td>F MC</td>
<td>Brooklyn, New York</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shizuko’s Daughter</td>
<td>F MC</td>
<td>Kobe, Hyōgo Prefecture, Japan</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All the Bright Places</td>
<td>M PT</td>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>Small Town</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Astonishing Color of After</td>
<td>F MC</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By the Time You Read This, I'll be Dead</td>
<td>F PT</td>
<td>Lakewood, Colorado</td>
<td>Small Town</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenger Deep</td>
<td>M PT</td>
<td>Southern California</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They Both Die at the End</td>
<td>M PT</td>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Memory of Light</td>
<td>F MC</td>
<td>Monterrey, Mexico</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall for Anything</td>
<td>F MC</td>
<td>Belleville, Ontario</td>
<td>Small Town</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's Kind of a Funny Story</td>
<td>F MC</td>
<td>New York City, NY</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Heart and Other Black Holes</td>
<td>M PT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F PT</td>
<td>Cincinnati, OH</td>
<td>Small Town</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F PT = Female Protagonist  
M PT = Male Protagonist  
F MC = Female Minor Character  
M MC = Male Minor Character

In six books (24%), the suicidal person was the male protagonist. In five books (20%), the suicidal person was the female protagonist. In nine books (36%), the suicidal person was a female minor character. In five books (20%), the suicidal person was a male minor character. To look at this information from another angle, there were a total of eleven male characters who committed suicide and fourteen female characters who committed suicide. Table 3 examines the gender of the authors and protagonists where there are eight male authors and eight male protagonists. The data here is only increased by three for males, which is not a significant difference. Females are much more likely to be featured as the suicidal person in young adult novels; however, males are four times more likely to commit suicide in actual statistics (“Suicide”).
The location or setting of the novel was particularly difficult to determine. In some books, there were identifying features that reminded one of the certain places, but those places were never identified by name. Unless one knew of the birthplace or residence of the author did the setting make sense to the reader. A good example of this is *They Both Die at the End* by Adam Silvera. The setting sounds and feels like New York but is never outright stated in the text. Silvera, however, currently lives and grew up in New York, so it makes sense that the story “feels like” New York. Therefore, if the location was not known, the residence or birthplace of the author might help determine—in some cases, not all—the setting or location of the novel. Much like the section on gender, it appears that authors write what they know. These trends, therefore, do not coordinate with current statistics although it is interesting to connect the author’s writing with the inspiration for the story.

To further try and understand the influence of location on suicide, the classifications of urban, suburban, small-town, and rural were added. The idea is largely based on the idea that rural counties have higher suicide rates per 100,000 people than their urban and suburban counterparts. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention actually stated in a press release from October 7, 2017:

The new report examined annual county level trends in suicide rates during 2001-2015 for rural counties, medium/small metropolitan counties, large metropolitan counties, as well as demographics and mechanism of death. Overall, suicide death rates for rural counties (17.32 per 100,000 people) were higher than medium/small metropolitan counties (14.86) and large metropolitan counties (11.92) (“CDC Newsroom”).
Specifically relating to age group, the press release stated, “Findings by age group revealed increases in suicide rates for all ages with the highest rates and greatest rate increases in rural counties” (“CDC Newsroom”).

It was difficult to narrow down exactly what type of setting each book possessed, but the findings were that twelve books (48%) featured a suburban setting, seven books (28%) featured a small-town setting, four books (16%) featured an urban setting, and two books (8%) featured a rural setting. Based on the data provided and the studies indicating a higher incidence rate of suicide in rural areas, young adult literature does not reflect these trends. In fact, suburban settings seem to dominate most of the young adult fiction, at least those examined in this study, and the statistics do not correlate with these trends again bringing into consideration that authors write what they know. Another subtopic this study did not consider—but would be interesting
for further research—is whether or not sales trends likely influence character and subject matter. In other words, are authors writing with the intent to appeal to readers who make up a certain sales demographic?

The following chapter provides a unit using the novel *13 Reasons Why*. The unit is provided as a starting point for teachers to begin the process of using conversations with students to talk about the issues surrounding them. The problems throughout the novel are not overtly suicide but issues which can result in the act of suicide if not confronted soon after their occurrence. There is a careful balance used in these activities and discussions to maintain a positive and proactive approach when approaching a topic such as suicide. Students are encouraged to share their feelings with the ultimate hope of confronting these issues up front rather than hindsight.

Chapter 5 will further analyze the results of this data presented in Chapter 3 and the study's connection to teachers and teen readers.
Chapter 4: *13 Reasons Why* Instructional Teaching and Discussion Unit

To help teachers navigate discussions in their classrooms surrounding the difficult topic of suicide and mental health, a unit using the novel *13 Reasons Why* has been included. As stated in the introduction, the importance of having authentic discussions with adolescents is critical, but how to approach them in roles not involving a counselor is challenging (although a counselor could co-teach the class.) The unit was also designed so that another novel could be included in the place of *13 Reasons Why*, although some of the activities would need adjustment. Teachers are encouraged to review the activities used each day and plan according to the needs of their students.

Teachers serve as a conduit between home and school. Often times, students do not want to share their social concerns with parents while teachers inadvertently receive a front-row seat for what happens in the social circles of day-to-day school life. Additionally, today’s generation is faced with more mental health needs than many past generations combined. The reasons for suicide often can be traced to social media, media influences, traumatic experiences, and other causes. An unfortunate byproduct of these reasons is suicide, whether students have personally contemplated suicide or known someone who has contemplated or attempted suicide. This is something teachers and school professionals can no longer ignore. This unit using *13 Reasons Why* has no set agenda other than to get students talking about the issues creating social trauma in their lives. This unit culminates with asking students to draw their own conclusions regarding the book’s intent. The heart of this unit is for students to have a safe space in which to discuss the issues at the center of their lives and discuss the matters that might lead one to take his or her life. Many times, teens complain that no one listens, and this unit is designed to provide a time, place, and content for students to talk about the issues and an adult to listen to them.
TEACHER NOTE: The instructor should let students know the topic of this book. Students might be triggered by the events taking place in the book. This text features references to suicide, bullying, and sexual assault. If a student does not feel comfortable reading this particular book, a substitute book could be used as an alternative.

Day 1: Introduction to the Unit

Standards:

SL.11–12.1
Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

- Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.
- Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.
- Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

Learning Outcomes:

- I can participate in a group, teacher-led discussion.
- I can work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions, and decision-making.
- I can respond thoughtfully to the perspectives of my peers, perspectives I may not agree with.

Materials:

- Constructive Conversations Skills Poster, either as handouts or online
- Copies of “Influences of the Media on Suicide”

Introduction:
1. Have students sit in a circle.

2. Explain to students that this particular text may elicit emotional responses, and it’s important to be sensitive to one another’s feelings. Simply put, tell students,
   - “A comment you consider humorous could be considered deeply offensive by another student, so please be aware of what you say; consider your words wisely. Also, be aware that other people process their feelings differently. Sometimes people use humor to mask feelings of hurt or guilt. Avoid the use of sarcasm. At the same time, understand that if someone makes a laugh-like gesture or comment under his or her breath, it may not be intended as offensive. Be respectful. Please make your instructor aware of any concerns that arise, and he or she will mediate for you. Most disagreements are often just a misunderstanding.”

3. Provide students with the Constructive Conversation Skills Poster (provide this as a handout or online). It is essentially a support document for students to use when framing comments or questions. Guide them in using it during the beginning discussions and move them away from it as the discussions become more natural.

Procedures:

4. Have students share what they know about the book (13 Reasons Why). (Allow students to share feelings… there’s no need to go around the circle and force everyone to share, but the circle helps students feel more at liberty to share. The instructor should prepare for various student responses and consider reframing student responses if and when students share something unclear. The instructor should also be ready to redirect inappropriate comments, sneers, gestures if they should arise.)
   - What have they heard regarding the book?
   - What about the series?

Closure:

5. When the discussion comes to a close, explain to students that the media has a powerful influence on our lives. The students are going to read the article “Influences of the Media on Suicide”. Use a digital reading device or handouts for students to read individually or in pairs.

6. When finished, have students summarize the main idea of the article using a think-pair-share. Students will then randomly share their thoughts with the class. Do students agree or disagree? Challenge them to share “why” they hold that position.
### Assessment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussion</th>
<th>Journal</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formative--students will follow the Constructive Conversations Skills Poster guidelines in discussing their thoughts and listening to others’ thoughts regarding this book and the article.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Day 2: Setting up notebooks…

Standard:

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

Learning Outcomes:

- I can produce writing that is clear and easy for others to read.
- I can organize my writing from the beginning, middle, and end.
- I can select an audience best suited to read my writing based on the writing task and purpose.

Materials:

- Students’ journals
- Paper copies of journal notebook rubric
- Computers/digital reading device

Procedure:

1. Set up journal notebooks:
   - Students should label the first page in their notebooks “Table of Contents.” Save the first two (2) pages to use as the table of contents.
   - After these two (2) pages, students should number the pages, front to back, from 1 to 100.
   - Tell students--
     - When you make an entry, title it as directed in relation to the prompt. Write down the title in your Table of Contents along with the number or numbers depending on the length of your entry.

2. Explain the journal notebook rubric.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mastery</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Progressing</th>
<th>Standard Not Met</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support for the controlling idea is expressed using data, facts, and-or evidence from the text in the form of quotes or page references.</td>
<td>Support for the controlling idea is expressed.</td>
<td>Minimal support for the controlling thought or idea expressed.</td>
<td>Not attempted or unintelligible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic sentences relate to the main idea of the entry harmonize for clarity and comprehension.</td>
<td>Topic sentences express a clear thesis.</td>
<td>Vague or no topic sentences used throughout the entry.</td>
<td>Does not relate to the writing task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The flow of the entry expresses a clear theme.</td>
<td>Overall, the entry demonstrates clarity when transitioning from one idea to the next, transitional devices present.</td>
<td>The entry lacks clarity, wanders from one idea to another without transitional devices.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional devices are clearly present.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Students should respond to the following prompt:
   - What would you do if someone you know is “really” struggling emotionally or psychologically?
   - Have students write the prompt into their notebooks.
   - Provide them with 10-15 minutes to write this first prompt.

4. Have students go to the following website:
   - [https://www.helpguide.org/articles/depression/teenagers-guide-to-depression.htm](https://www.helpguide.org/articles/depression/teenagers-guide-to-depression.htm)
   - Provide students 15-20 minutes to review the article.

5. Have students find and write 8 facts in their journals that either agree or disagree with their earlier journal responses.
Closure:

6. Read aloud the introduction to *13 Reasons Why* and “Yesterday One Hour After School”. Provide a brief overview of the text to come.

Homework:

- Discuss the reading for students to complete for tomorrow.
  - Cassette One: Side A

Assessment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussion</th>
<th>Journal</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will respond to the prompt and provide a rationale for their response. They will include 8 facts from the article in their journals and explain whether these facts agree or disagree with their original thoughts.</td>
<td>The journal entries should earn a 3 or higher on the rubric.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Day 3: Justin (1st recipient of the tapes)

Standards & Learning Outcomes:

For Journaling:

W.11–12.4
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

Learning Outcomes:
- I can produce writing that is clear and easy for others to read.
- I can organize my writing from the beginning, middle, to end.
- I can select an audience best suited to read my writing based on the writing task and purpose.

For Discussion:

SL.11–12.1
Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Learning Outcomes:
- I can participate in a group, teacher-led discussion.
- I can work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions, and decision-making.
- I can respond thoughtfully to the perspectives of my peers, perspectives I may not agree with.

For Reading:

RL.11–12.5
Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

Learning Outcomes:
I can determine (through writing) how the author creates specific parts of the story.
I can identify the story’s overall structure thus far.
I can determine the message of the story, what the author intends to communicate with the reader.

Materials:

- Journals
- Student copies of *13 Reasons Why*

**Summary of Text:** Clay, the main voice from whom the story is told, receives cassette tapes from former classmate Hannah Baker who had recently committed suicide and goes to listen to them in the garage, the only place he can think of there being a cassette player. He is shocked to hear Hannah’s voice telling about thirteen people who impacted her decision to end her life. She instructs the current recipient of the tapes that they are to send the tapes on to the next person after their spot on the tapes. If the tapes don’t make it all the way through to the last person, another copy of the tapes was made and will be exposed in a very public manner. It begins with Justin, her first kiss. Justin meets her at the park. Hannah imagines this will be a wonderfully beautiful experience. After the fact, Justin starts spreading rumors that much more happened than just a kiss.

**Introduction:**

1. Students will respond to the following writing prompt:
   a. How do you think the tapes will affect the characters in the long term? What will they (the recipients) do going forward?

**Procedure:**

2. Have students sit in a circle again like on Day 1.
3. Do a brief review of yesterday’s reading and the overnight reading. Review character names.
4. Remind students to take out their Constructive Conversation Skills handouts to use for the discussion.
5. Discuss the following questions with students:
   ○ How is this book organized?
   ○ Why does Hannah use cassette tapes?
   ○ Hannah says, “If you’re listening to these tapes, you’re one of the reasons why,” referring to her taking her own life. Does that sound threatening? What is her intent with these tapes?
○ What if the tapes don’t make it through everyone on her list? What does she mean they’ll be revealed in a very public manner?
○ How do you feel about Hannah’s being labeled a “slut” because of Justin? How does that make you feel about Justin?
○ Did Justin deserve to be on Hannah’s list? Why or why not? (Did anyone deserve to be on Hannah’s list?)

Closure:

6. Consider one big takeaway from the discussion. Write for five (5) minutes in your journals reflecting on the conversation about Justin’s tape.

Homework:

• Discuss the reading for students to complete for tomorrow.
  ○ Cassette One: Side B

Assessment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussion</th>
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<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formative--students will follow the Constructive Conversations Skills Poster guidelines in discussing their thoughts and listening to others’ thoughts regarding this book and the article.</td>
<td>The journal entries should earn a 3 or higher on the rubric.</td>
<td>During the discussion, students will discuss the characters’ awareness of their actions and guilt and Hannah’s revenge.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Day 4:** Alex (2nd recipient of the tapes)

**Standards & Learning Outcomes:**

*For Journaling:*

**W.11–12.4**
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

Learning Outcomes:
- I can produce writing that is clear and easy for others to read.
- I can organize my writing from the beginning, middle, to end.
- I can make a personal connection from the text to my own life (Audience).

*For Discussion:*

**SL.11–12.1**
Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Learning Outcomes:
- I can participate in a group, teacher-led discussion.
- I can work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions, and decision-making.
- I can respond thoughtfully to the perspectives of my peers, perspectives I may not agree with.

*For Reading:*

**RL.11–12.5**
Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

Learning Outcomes:
- I can make predictions related to the text.
● I can determine (both orally and through writing) how the author creates specific parts of the story.
● I can identify the story’s overall structure.
● I can determine the message of the story, what the author intends to communicate with the reader.

Materials:

● Student copies of 13 Reasons Why
● Journals
● Variety of Expo markers
● Large whiteboard or butcher paper

Summary of Text: The next individual on the tapes is Alex. Alex put Hannah on a list as “Best Ass in the freshman class”. Her best friend at the time, Jessica Davis, was also on the list voted as “worst ass”. Alex only put Hannah on there to make Jessica, who he’d been going out with, mad. This action causes Hannah’s and Jessica’s friendship to dissolve.

Introduction:

1. Students will respond to the following writing prompt:
   ○ How do you, personally, manage stress?

Activities:

2. Use a whiteboard or a large stretch of butcher paper
3. Number students one through six (1-6).
4. Provide each group number with a different color of marker. For instance, provide the ones with a red marker, twos with a blue marker, threes with a black marker, etc.
   a. In addition, the teacher should select a color for his or her use that is different from that of the students.
5. Assign each group of students a question:
   a. Ones: How do you think Alex’s list would make people feel?
   b. Twos: How do you feel about Hannah’s encounter at the Blue Spot? Would you consider what happened to be assault?
   c. Threes: How do you feel about Clay? Why do you think he’s on these tapes?
   d. Fours: Based on the writing prompt, how do you think stress affects people to do things they might not ordinarily do?
   e. Fives: What might happen if the tapes are made public?
6. On the whiteboard or butcher paper, each group should respond to their assigned question silently in their appropriate color.

7. The instructor should look for common ideas and connections within and between groups. Circle those ideas and draw lines between them to demonstrate those connections. (See the article “Creative Approaches to Stimulate Class Discussion” for a further discussion on this strategy along with examples under Chalk Talk.)

8. When finished, take pictures of the activity or save the butcher paper, so you can return to it at a later time (if desired).

**Closure:**

9. Write for five (5) minutes regarding Justin’s actions and their impact upon Hannah. How did his actions contribute to her overall state of mind?

**Homework:**

- Discuss the reading for students to complete for tomorrow.
  - Cassette Two: Side A

**Assessment:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussion</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formative Assessment--students will follow the Constructive Conversations Skills Poster guidelines by writing responses on the whiteboard or butcher paper, identifying how Hannah’s state of mind affected her actions and her overall state of mind.</td>
<td>The journal entries should earn a 3 or higher on the rubric.</td>
<td>On the whiteboard, students will identify various ways in which Justin’s actions and others’ actions affected Hannah’s state of mind.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Day 5: Jessica (3rd recipient of the tapes)

Standards & Learning Outcomes:

For Journaling:

W.11–12.4
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

Learning Outcomes:
- I can produce writing that is clear and easy for others to read.
- I can organize my writing from the beginning, middle, to end.
- I can select an audience best suited to read my writing based on the writing task and purpose.

For Discussion:

SL.11–12.1
Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Learning Outcomes:
- I can propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe for further reasoning and evidence.
- I can ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue.
- I can clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions.
- I can promote divergent and creative perspectives.

For Reading:

RL.11–12.5
Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

Learning Outcomes:
● I can determine (both orally and through writing) how the author creates specific parts of the story.
● I can defend whether I agree or disagree with the author’s choice of resolution.
● I can identify the story’s overall structure.
● I can determine the message of the story, what the author intends to communicate with the reader.

Materials:

● Student journals
● Pens/pencils
● Student computers
● Copies of 13 Reasons Why

Summary of Text: Jessica, (Jessica from the previous section), slaps Hannah after meeting her at Monet’s, a local coffee shop. She blames Hannah for stealing Alex away from her. However, Jessica uses Justin’s rumors (from the first tape) to substantiate her claim that Hannah was interested in Alex and wanted to “steal” him away from her out of jealousy.

Introduction:

1. Students will respond to the following writing prompt:
   ○ Do you think all stress is “bad”? What would life be like if we never experienced stress?
2. Spend some time deconstructing the discussion activity from yesterday.
   ○ What did you like? What didn’t you like?
   ○ What do you think could have been different?
   ○ What would have been helpful?
     i. This should be in the form of a popcorn discussion (students can randomly respond). No special organization is needed.

Discussion Activity:

3. Divide students into groups of 3-4, no more than 4.
4. Students should create a GoogleDoc of which all members can edit.
5. Students should refer to their books: Cassette Two, Side A.
   ○ This section deals with Jessica, the friend Hannah meets when her counselor asks her to come in before the first day of school and involves Alex’s list from the previous section.
6. Tell students to consider the incident where Jessica hits Hannah in the face hard enough to embed her fingernail into her forehead all due to Alex’s list. Say: “Come up with as many questions as you can if you could talk to Jessica. Do not stop to discuss or attempt to answer these questions. Do your best to turn all comments into questions, as much as possible.”

7. Allow students to brainstorm and record their questions on the GoogleDoc. You might set a time limit on this or move to the next step when you see students starting to wind down.
   ○ If students are struggling to generate questions, tell them to put themselves into Jessica’s shoes. How do you think she feels? Encourage them to look at her perspective as opposed to Hannah’s perspective since so much attention is focused on her.
   ○ There are no “specific” questions to answer necessarily. The questions should be student-generated.

8. Next, tell students to review their questions and eliminate the ones that seem repetitive or combine them with similar questions.

9. After that, students should narrow their questions down to 1 or 2 questions. Tell students to focus only on those truly critical questions, questions to get the best response out of Jessica.

10. Once groups are finished, students should share their 1 or 2 questions with the entire class. The instructor should keep track of those questions on a whiteboard or something to display the questions for all students to see.

**Closure:**

11. Ask students to respond to one of the questions in their journals.

**Homework:**

- Discuss the reading for students to complete for tomorrow.
  ○ Cassette Two: Side B

**Assessment:**

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formative Assessment--students verbally participate in the question making the process and contributing to the overall list of questions.</td>
<td>The journal entries should earn a 3 or higher on the rubric.</td>
<td>The created questions should align with the reading material.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Differentiation:** Encourage group members to work together. If a student or a group have difficulties coming up with questions, work together with that group for a few minutes and provide them with suggestions to get them started.
Day 6: Tyler (4th recipient of the tapes)

Standards & Learning Outcomes:

For Journaling:

W.11–12.4
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

Learning Outcomes:
- I can produce writing that is clear and easy for others to read.
- I can organize my writing from the beginning, middle, to end.
- I can select an audience best suited to read my writing based on the writing task and purpose.

For Discussion:

SL.11–12.1
Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Learning Outcomes:
- I can participate in a group, teacher-led discussion.
- I can work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions, and decision-making.
- I can respond thoughtfully to the perspectives of my peers, perspectives I may not agree with.

For Reading:

RL.11–12.5
Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

Learning Outcomes:
I can determine (through writing) how the author creates specific parts of the story.
I can identify the story’s overall structure thus far.
I can determine the message of the story, what the author intends to communicate with the reader.

Materials:

- Student journals
- Pens/pencils
- Student computers
- Copies of 13 Reasons Why

Summary of Text: Tyler is the yearbook photographer known for taking his camera with him everywhere he goes. It turns out that Tyler was also a peeping Tom, who often stood outside Hannah’s window taking pictures of her at night. She catches on to it and confides in a classmate who thinks the idea of a peeping Tom is “cool.” She comes home with Hannah one night, and she pretends to find a drawer full of sex toys in Hannah’s dresser. They then hear the camera clicking. Hannah runs to the window but doesn’t see the person’s face. Hannah confronts her male classmates at school the next day and discovers it was Tyler by his reaction when she asks him what he was doing last night.

Introduction:

1. Students will respond to the following journal prompt:
   a. Based on this reading, do you think Hannah was the victim of a sexual assault?

Discussion Activity:

2. This chapter concerns Tyler, the peeping tom. It is one of the more visceral chapters of the book. Readers usually feel extreme contempt for Tyler’s character.
3. Begin the discussion by asking students to respond with their responses to the journal prompt… Do you think Hannah was the victim of sexual assault? Assure students they do not need to respond as this is a contentious topic.
4. Create a circle in which the students will sit.
5. The discussion begins with a volunteer and will proceed with a student to his or her left. When the prompt is presented, tell students to consider their journal responses at the beginning of class.
6. The idea of this discussion is for students to build off each other’s responses. The student following the student who first shared can either build upon the previous response or
defer in another direction. Disagreement is encouraged, but the instructor should encourage students to use appropriate language in doing so by acknowledging the other students’ contributions.

7. When taking turns around the circle, students should paraphrase one another’s contributions before sharing their own.

8. In order for students to fully participate, students will need to paraphrase. This video is provided for the instructor to use to assist students with paraphrasing and summarizing—https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=osqCjBx6lZE

9. Student responses should only be about a minute long.

**Closure**

10. Once all students in the circle have spoken, students are free to respond to the whole group adding additional comments or disagreements and confusion about what was stated.

**Homework:**

- Discuss the reading for students to complete for tomorrow.
  - Cassette Three: Side A

**Assessment:**

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<tr>
<td>Formative Assessment--students verbally participate in the question making the process and contributing to the overall list of questions.</td>
<td>The journal entries should earn a 3 or higher on the rubric.</td>
<td>Student responses, especially in the paraphrasing, should reflect responses to the content assigned for the day.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Differentiation:** The instructor may decide to allow students to “pass”. Some students may need extra time processing their thoughts. Students could also be provided with time to write their responses first, although this will take significant additional time.
Day 7: Courtney (5th recipient of the tapes)

Standards & Learning Outcomes:

For Journaling:

W.11–12.4
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

Learning Outcomes:
- I can produce writing that is clear and easy for others to read.
- I can organize my writing from the beginning, middle, to end.
- I can select an audience best suited to read my writing based on the writing task and purpose.

For Discussion:

SL.11–12.1
Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Learning Outcomes:
- I can participate in a group, teacher-led discussion.
- I can work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions, and decision-making.
- I can respond thoughtfully to the perspectives of my peers, perspectives I may not agree with.

For Reading:

RL.11–12.5
Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

Learning Outcomes:
I can determine (through writing) how the author creates specific parts of the story.

I can identify the story’s overall structure thus far.

I can determine the message of the story, what the author intends to communicate with the reader.

Materials:

- Student journals
- Pens/pencils
- Students computers
- Copies of 13 Reasons Why

Summary of Text: Courtney is the girl Hannah was with in the last section. She invites Hannah to a party, but it turns out the invite was only a means for Courtney to uphold a proper reputation since Hannah is seen as a good student. It becomes clear to Hannah at the party that she’s being used and almost leaves when a cute boy comes over to talk to her. The boy reveals he didn’t come over because Courtney told him to but because Courtney told him and the other boys about all the sex toys (which were not there) in Hannah’s dresser drawers. She then grabs Tyler (yearbook photographer) and demands he take a picture of her and Courtney. He agrees and snaps the picture right at the moment when Hannah whispers into Courtney’s ear that she knows Courtney told everyone.

Introduction:

1. Students will respond to the following journal prompt:
   a. How do you think the tapes will affect the characters’ lives in the long term?

Discussion Activity:

2. Tell students: “Today, your conversation will be taking place virtually in a chatroom. The advantage here is that you will need to think through and process your comments before you post them. Also, I want you to incorporate some textual evidence today, which is simply another way of saying you need to use the book--portions of text from the book--that will back up your argument. Everyone is expected to participate, which will help those of you who don’t feel as comfortable speaking in front of a group.”

3. The following website is one the instructor may use:
   https://www.commonsense.org/education/website/mentimeter
   a. There are several other sites available for use as well. You can find them by doing a Google search. Use a site that best serves your needs.
b. An instructor may also use Twitter and form the discussion on a Twitter thread. Use discretion if you wish for students’ comments to be made public.

4. Allow students time to enter the website.

5. Begin with the prompt: “What are Courtney’s personality traits? How did her actions affect Hannah? Did she deserve to be on Hannah’s list? Why or why not?”

6. The instructor should participate in the discussion and guide it to any desired conclusions. This is a good opportunity to segway into a discussion of whether anyone really deserves to be on Hannah’s list. Remind students to back up their decision with evidence.
   a. During this and forthcoming discussions, begin asking students to consider Hannah’s intentions with the tapes. This is key to the overall text and will assist students with the final project.

7. Provide students with a two-minute warning to put in any last-minute thoughts.

Conclusion:

8. Have students reflect in their journals: What are your takeaways regarding Hannah’s list? Did anyone deserve to be on her list? Why? Back up your conclusions with evidence.

Homework:

- Discuss the reading for students to complete for tomorrow.
  - Cassette Three: Side B

Assessment:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formative Assessment--students should participate by writing questions and/or comments in the chatroom.</td>
<td>The journal entries should earn a 3 or higher on the rubric.</td>
<td>All students should provide at least one piece of text evidence in at least one comment or question in the chatroom.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Differentiation:** For students who struggle with creating questions or comments on the spot, the instructor might prompt them the day before to mark certain portions of text using post-it notes or some sort of notation system, so the student has time to consider and select the most appropriate text evidence to use in the discussion.
Day 8: Marcus (6th recipient of the tapes)

Standards & Learning Outcomes:

For Journaling:

W.11–12.4
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

Learning Outcomes:
- I can produce writing that is clear and easy for others to read.
- I can organize my writing from the beginning, middle, to end.
- I can select an audience best suited to read my writing based on the writing task and purpose.

For Discussion:

SL.11–12.1
Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Learning Outcomes:
- I can participate in a group, teacher-led discussion.
- I can work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions, and decision-making.
- I can respond thoughtfully to the perspectives of my peers, perspectives I may not agree with.

For Reading:

RL.11–12.5
Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

Learning Outcomes:
● I can determine (through writing) how the author creates specific parts of the story.
● I can identify the story’s overall structure thus far.
● I can determine the message of the story, what the author intends to communicate with the reader.

Materials:

● Student journals
● Pens/pencils
● Copies of 13 Reasons Why

Summary of Text: The cheerleaders at school are doing a “date-match” game where for five dollars, students can enter their names into a program, and it will match them with someone from their class. It matches Hannah with Marcus. He asks Hannah to go out for coffee after school. He arrives nearly 45 minutes late, and when he does arrive, he starts making advances at Hannah such as running his hand up her leg. When she refuses his advances, Marcus gets upset and leaves.

Introduction:

1. Students will respond to the following journal prompt:
   a. What is Hannah’s ultimate end goal with the tapes? What does she ultimately want to accomplish?

Discussion Activity:

2. The goal of this activity is to help quieter students participate in the discussion.
   a. The discussion takes place as a popcorn discussion. The instructor should treat it as he or she would in a traditional discussion; however, every five (5) minutes or so, the instructor should stop and ask one of the quieter students, someone who hasn’t contributed yet: What are you hearing? The instructor should make sure to tell students they will be doing this before the conversation begins to help them prepare, so students are not caught off guard.
3. As the discussion takes place, the instructor should take notes of what’s being said throughout the discussion, so he or she can bring it back on point as needed.
   a. If students are not generating questions or struggle asking relevant questions, the instructor might try the following:
      i. How would you feel put in Hannah’s shoes?
      ii. Why do you think Marcus is included in the tapes?
iii. Are Marcus’s actions truly nefarious (wicked or sinister intent)? Or are his actions typical of a teenage adolescent?

b. Throughout the discussion, encourage students to consider the overall intent with the tapes. What is Hannah’s purpose with the tapes? Why did she create them? The instructor should keep pushing this question and keep note of student responses to see how their responses evolve throughout these series of discussions.

Closure:

4. This will take a few extra minutes, so the instructor should plan accordingly. Students should go around the room and share a one-sentence summary regarding something they took from the discussion that day.

Homework:

- Discuss the reading for students to complete for tomorrow.
  - Cassette Four: Side A

Assessment:

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formative Assessment--students verbally participate by asking questions or providing clarifying statements.</td>
<td>The journal entries should earn a 3 or higher on the rubric.</td>
<td>Student responses should reflect textual evidence from the assigned reading.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Differentiation: Students who struggle to participate in large-group discussions might be prompted ahead of time with questions or given time to generate responses.
Day 9: Zach (7th recipient of the tapes)

Standards & Learning Outcomes:

For Journaling:

W.11–12.4
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

Learning Outcomes:
● I can produce writing that is clear and easy for others to read.
● I can organize my writing from the beginning, middle, to end.
● I can select an audience best suited to read my writing based on the writing task and purpose.

For Discussion:

SL.11–12.1
Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Learning Outcomes:
● I can participate in a group, teacher-led discussion.
● I can work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions, and decision-making.
● I can respond thoughtfully to the perspectives of my peers, perspectives I may not agree with.

For Reading:

RL.11–12.5
Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

Learning Outcomes:
I can determine (through writing) how the author creates specific parts of the story.
I can identify the story’s overall structure thus far.
I can determine the message of the story, what the author intends to communicate with the reader.

Materials:

- Student journals
- Pens/pencils
- Copies of *13 Reasons Why*

Summary of Text: In Mrs. Bradley’s peer communications classroom, all students have a brown paper bag at the back of the classroom where students can put written compliments for each other. The person taking them is Zach Dempsey. Zach appears in the story just after Marcus leaves the restaurant. He comes over to check on Hannah who is alone at her table. She is visibly upset. However, Zach is hurt that he went over to check on her and feels Hannah has rejected him when she says she just wants to be left alone. To get back at her, he’s been stealing the notes from her paper bag. This section is also where Tony is identified as the person who Hannah left a second copy of the tapes with in case they don’t make it all the way through to the last person. In this section, Hannah also reveals to her audience that this is the first time she seriously considered suicide.

Introduction:

1. Students will respond to the following journal prompt:
   a. Where are Hannah’s parents in the story? What role did or didn’t they play in Hannah’s suicide? Why did the author choose not to include them?

Discussion Activity:

2. Divide the class into groups of six (6). Each group will be given a character.
   a. Group 1: Alex
   b. Group 2: Jessica
   c. Group 3: Tyler
   d. Group 4: Courtney
   e. Group 5: Marcus
   f. Group 6: Zach
      i. The groups should have as many members as there are subtopics. If there’s a smaller class, the instructor should divide appropriately. It is not
necessary to profile all characters. Justin, the first character was
deliberately omitted because he appears again later in the text. The other
characters are all the characters featured thus far in the text.

3. Student groups should create a character profile for their assigned character(s). The
profile can be completed on a separate sheet of paper. Students should note the following
traits for each character:
   a. Name
   b. Identifiable characteristics (appearance, hobbies, relationship to Hannah)
   c. Reason(s) for inclusion on Hannah’s list
   d. On a scale of 1-5, students should rate their character’s impact on Hannah.
      There’s no need for a rubric or identifying scale to rate each character. This is just
      an informal rating to prompt students to consider the character’s impact on
      Hannah.

4. When finished with the profile, students should determine which information is essential
for understanding the assigned character by conferring with one another.

5. Students will then represent their character(s) in another group comprised of one member
from each other group. Students will take turns sharing information about their
character(s).

6. During each conversation, students in their jigsaw groups should come to a consensus
regarding their character’s impact upon Hannah, 1-5.

7. After all group members have shared, have each group go around the room and share
their responses with the entire class. The instructor should write the numbers (1-5) on the
board for each group.

Closure:

8. Ask each group to defend their rationale for their character rating.
   a. This would also be an appropriate time for students to journal about their
      conclusions.

Homework:

● Discuss the reading for students to complete for tomorrow.
   ○ Cassette Four: Side B
Assessment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussion</th>
<th>Journal</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formative Assessment--Students participated with their groups and completed their character profiles.</td>
<td>The journal entries should earn a 3 or higher on the rubric.</td>
<td>Students’ oral and journal responses should reflect textual evidence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Differentiation:** The instructor should walk around and monitor groups. If students are struggling to come up with information to provide in the profile, the instructor should discuss the assignment with him or her specifically to identify what the problems may be. The instructor might also create a more specific writing template for the information on each character. That may help students struggling with what to write.
Day 10: Ryan (8th recipient of the tapes)

Standards & Learning Outcomes:

For Journaling:

W.11–12.4
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

Learning Outcomes:
- I can produce writing that is clear and easy for others to read.
- I can organize my writing from the beginning, middle, to end.
- I can select an audience best suited to read my writing based on the writing task and purpose.

For Discussion:

SL.11–12.1
Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Learning Outcomes:
- I can participate in a group, teacher-led discussion.
- I can work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions, and decision-making.
- I can respond thoughtfully to the perspectives of my peers, perspectives I may not agree with.

For Reading:

RL.11–12.5
Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

Learning Outcomes:
• I can determine (through writing) how the author creates specific parts of the story.
• I can identify the story’s overall structure thus far.
• I can determine the message of the story, what the author intends to communicate with the reader.

Materials:
• Student journals
• Pens/pencils
• 3x5 notecards
• Copies of 13 Reasons Why

Summary of Text: Hannah liked writing poetry. She used it as her own form of therapy. She begins sharing her poetry with a classmate named Ryan, who decides to take one of her poems and have it published in the Gazette against her will. Not only that, but while Ryan and Hannah both feel the poem held promise, her teachers and classmates begin critiquing it and criticizing it. The underlying subject is even about suicide. Some people claim it’s written by somebody just looking for attention.

Introduction:

1. Students will respond to the following writing prompt(s):
   a. Discuss Hannah’s mental state of mind. Why does she do what she did?
   b. What were her motivations?
   c. Do you think Hannah suffers from a psychological disorder?

Discussion Activity: (Structured Silence p. 153)

2. Students will need a 3x5 notecard for this activity.
3. This discussion takes place as a full class discussion; however, the instructor stops, asks, and prompts them at various points to fill out their notecards and to write down what’s confusing or what’s missing from the discussion--maybe there’s a point that’s not being mentioned that the student completing the card thinks should be included. This activity helps with quieter classes, quieter students, and/or with classes that have 2 or 3 dominant speakers.
   a. Names do not need to go on notecards. That’s up to the instructor. It is nice to know who brings up a valid question, but it also might discourage some students from writing down something they don’t feel comfortable verbally sharing or being identified for.
4. For this discussion, focus on the journal prompt: Hannah’s state of mind. What state of mind do you think she was in while making the tapes?
   a. Based on the text, she had already made up her mind to commit suicide. A question the instructor might prompt the students with is how Hannah may be convinced to not commit suicide.

Closure:

5. Once the conversation comes to a close, have students write their thoughts in their journals about how they felt this conversation went by writing down their questions and submitting them.

6. Students should also comment in their journals their thoughts about Hannah’s state of mind. Students should use one reference from the text to support his or her analysis.

Homework:

- Discuss the reading for students to complete for tomorrow.
  ○ Cassette Five: Side A

Assessment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussion</th>
<th>Journal</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students should either orally participate in the discussion or complete a notecard to contribute to the discussion.</td>
<td>The journal entries should earn a 3 or higher on the rubric.</td>
<td>Students should use one reference in their journals to connect the text to their analysis of Hannah’s state of mind at the time of this reading.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Day 11: Clay (9th recipient of the tapes)

Standards & Learning Outcomes:

For Journaling:

W.11–12.4
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

Learning Outcomes:
● I can produce writing that is clear and easy for others to read.
● I can organize my writing from the beginning, middle, to end.
● I can select an audience best suited to read my writing based on the writing task and purpose.

For Discussion:

SL.11–12.1
Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Learning Outcomes:
● I can participate in a group, teacher-led discussion.
● I can work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions, and decision-making.
● I can respond thoughtfully to the perspectives of my peers, perspectives I may not agree with.

For Reading:

RL.11–12.5
Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

Learning Outcomes:
● I can determine (through writing) how the author creates specific parts of the story.
● I can identify the story’s overall structure thus far.
● I can determine the message of the story, what the author intends to communicate with the reader.

Materials:

● Student journals
● Pens/pencils
● Student computers
● Access to GoogleDocs
● Copies of 13 Reasons Why

Summary of Text: Hannah says Clay is the only person who shouldn’t be on the tapes. She wanted to have a real conversation with Clay. They worked together at the movie theater. She had sort of flirted with him, but after hearing some of the rumors, he wasn’t sure he wanted to get involved with her (not that she knew that part). At a party, Hannah and Clay start making out, but Clay notices the scar above her eye where Jessica slapped her, and Hannah is overcome with emotion. She tells Clay to leave her alone, and Clay exits the room.

Introduction:

1. Students will respond to the following journal prompt:
   a. Explain how Clay’s character is a foil. In literature, a foil is a character that shows qualities that are in contrast with the qualities of another character. The objective is to highlight the traits of the other characters. The term foil, though generally being applied to a contrasting character, may also be used for any comparison that is drawn to portray a difference between two things (“Foil - Examples and Definition of Foil”).

Discussion Activity:

NOTE: Preface this activity by telling students they may choose to sit it out if they feel it is too emotionally upsetting, which it may be for some students. They will be participating in a mock conversation between Hannah and Clay.

2. Students will create a mock conversation between Hannah and Clay. The premise of the conversation is to communicate feelings and what’s happening in each character’s mind. A question to begin this activity with students might be:
a. If you were Clay and were able to have a conversation with Hannah, knowing about her struggles, what might you say to her?

3. Students should consult the following website from the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention while creating their conversation.

4. Number students off 1-8 or depending on how many students are in each class to place them into groups.

5. Students should create a transcript using a GoogleDoc or some other form of recording. (To differentiate, students could use the “speech to text” feature on GoogleDocs and record the conversation through that means.)

6. The idea behind the conversation is for students to practice what he or she might say to someone considering suicide.

7. Emphasis should be given on who to contact if someone were considering suicide. This website from the Mayo Clinic is an excellent resource for students to use in such cases: https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/suicide/in-depth/suicide/art-20044707.

Closure:

8. When students are finished with these conversations, students may share at the end highlights from their conversations.

9. For willing students, perhaps they may perform their conversation for the class.

Homework:

● Discuss the reading for students to complete for tomorrow.
   ○ Cassette Five: Side B

Assessment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussion</th>
<th>Journal</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students should participate in the creation of the Hannah/Clay conversation by discussion and contributions through the Google document.</td>
<td>The journal entries should earn a 3 or higher on the rubric.</td>
<td>Do the questions in the interview relate back to the text reporting what took place between Clay and Hannah in the bedroom the night of the party and/or other evidence regarding the relationship between Clay and Hannah? The instructor should look for text evidence reflected in the conversation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Day 12: Justin (10th recipient of the tapes)

Standards & Learning Outcomes:

For Journaling:

W.11–12.4
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

Learning Outcomes:
- I can produce writing that is clear and easy for others to read.
- I can organize my writing from the beginning, middle, to end.
- I can select an audience best suited to read my writing based on the writing task and purpose.

For Discussion:

SL.11–12.1
Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Learning Outcomes:
- I can participate in a group, teacher-led discussion.
- I can work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions, and decision-making.
- I can respond thoughtfully to the perspectives of my peers, perspectives I may not agree with.

For Reading:

RL.11–12.5
Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

Learning Outcomes:
I can determine (through writing) how the author creates specific parts of the story.
I can identify the story’s overall structure thus far.
I can determine the message of the story, what the author intends to communicate with the reader.

Materials:

- Student journals
- Pens/pencils
- Student computers
- Access to the link provided in the lesson below
  - The instructor should post the documents on GoogleClassroom or another sharing platform
- Copies of 13 Reasons Why

Summary of Text: Hannah hears someone coming up the stairs and hides in the closet. It’s here that Justin makes his second appearance on the tapes. He brings a girl into the bedroom. He wanted to have sex with her, but she passes out. Justin goes outside of the bedroom and stands in front of the door. However, another guy who is identified as Bryce Walker asks to go in to have sex with the unconscious girl. At first, Justin says no, but as Bryce persists, he lets him go in. Hannah is so overcome with anger, guilt, fear, and the like, she just sits in the closet banging her head against the coats while it happens.

Introduction:

1. Students will respond to the following journal prompt:
   a. What would you do if you witnessed a friend assault someone you knew, whether physically or sexually?

Discussion Activity:

2. For this discussion, use the following website that discusses Marcy’s Law: https://www.marsyslawforiowa.com/faqs?gclid=Cj0KCQjw84XtBRDWARIaAAU1aM2OK9RsnNgel2PZ_plCYEwhxIGZm76GS07VBXtLjQiOFN062Wq-F1MaArS5EALw_wcB.
3. The intent of Marcy’s Law is to protect the victim of a crime and make sure that person receives the same constitutional rights as the accused.
4. The discussion activity for this class period is called “Conver- Stations” (“The Big List of Class Discussion Strategies”), a technique developed by Sarah Brown Wessling.
a. Students are put into groups of four. The instructor should number students off 1-6 or 1-7 depending on the size of the class.

b. Each group will discuss a key question for five minutes after which two members of the group will move on to another group to recap their discussion with the new group. The students who didn’t move should recap their discussion.

c. What new insights can be garnered from both discussions that reveal new learning about the text?

d. Students continue this process until the instructor wants to bring the discussion to a close. The discussion can continue as long as the instructor would like.

5. The key questions for students to discuss are:
   a. How should the girl who was raped respond to the assault?
   b. How should Hannah respond to the assault she witnessed?
   c. What legal protections do you think both girls need to protect themselves?

Closure:

6. Students should journal reflections about their conversations. What was one big takeaway from the stations they visited?

Homework:

- Discuss the reading for students to complete for tomorrow.
  - Cassette Six: Side A

Assessment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussion</th>
<th>Journal</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formative Assessment--students orally participate in the discussion activity. The instructor can record which students are participating on a roster of students’ names placing a checkmark next to the names of students contributing to the discussion as he or she monitors the classroom.</td>
<td>The journal entries should earn a 3 or higher on the rubric.</td>
<td>Students journal entries should reflect connections to the text providing textual evidence of the materials.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Day 13: Jenny (11th recipient of the tapes)

Standards & Learning Outcomes:

For Journaling:

W.11–12.4
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

Learning Outcomes:
- I can produce writing that is clear and easy for others to read.
- I can organize my writing from the beginning, middle, to end.
- I can select an audience best suited to read my writing based on the writing task and purpose.

For Discussion:

SL.11–12.1
Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Learning Outcomes:
- I can participate in a group, teacher-led discussion.
- I can work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions, and decision-making.
- I can respond thoughtfully to the perspectives of my peers, which may be perspectives with which I do not agree.

For Reading:

RL.11–12.5
Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

Learning Outcomes:
● I can determine (through writing) how the author creates specific parts of the story.
● I can identify the story’s overall structure thus far.
● I can determine the message of the story, what the author intends to communicate with the reader.

Materials:

● Student journals
● Pens/pencils
● Student phones or computers
● Voxer account (to be set up in class)
● Copies of 13 Reasons Why

Summary of Text: Jenny happens to be the cheerleader from the earlier section featuring Marcus. Jenny offers Hannah a ride home from the party, but it’s obvious Jenny probably shouldn’t be driving and refuses to get a ride for herself or call a cab. Hannah is so numb; she just gives up and gives in. While on their way home, Jenny misses a stop sign and slams on the brakes. She winds up slamming into the sign knocking it over. Instead of reporting it, even anonymously, Jenny forces Hannah to get out of her car to which Hannah complies. Jenny drives away. It is later revealed that an accident occurred that same night at the stop sign. A grandfather is killed after colliding with another car at that intersection.

Introduction:

1. Students will respond to the following journal prompt:
   a. How do our actions affect others around us even if they don’t directly affect them in the short term? Re-read the portion of text for students beginning on page 241 of the text, the line starting with “What happened next, I’m not entirely sure,” and ending with “I sat for a long time with my eyes shut, listening to the rain and the wipers.”
   b. Does Jenny have any responsibility for the car crash involving the grandfather? How? Why?

Discussion Activity: Voxer

2. Show students the Voxer app via the following YouTube video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oyHv62md24c&feature=youtu.be)
   a. Voxer is an app that allows students to leave voice messages for each other at any time. One might think of it as a voicemail everyone has access to. Each student
can access the voice messages and leave another message to contribute to the discussion.

3. Students should download this app on their phones. If students don’t have a phone, they may use their computers.

4. Divide students preferably into groups of three, maybe four.

5. The instructor should relate the discussion back to the journal prompt:
   a. How do others’ actions affect other people directly or indirectly? Most people do not consider the long-term, indirect effects upon innocent people based on the actions of the present. Instead of having students think about the negative, encourage students to think about instances where they helped lift other students or people up. How did those actions potentially affect the person?

6. The instructor should spend class setting up the app in class and allowing students to begin messaging.

7. Consider assigning students to separate spaces so student voices are not competing with each other.

8. Students should leave at least three messages in order to receive full credit.

Closure:

9. Assign the rest of the messaging as homework.

10. Students should plan on sharing out the next day in class.

11. Ticket out the door:
   a. Provide students with a post-it note.
   b. Have students respond as to whether or not they would have reported themselves for knocking down the stop sign and why.

Homework:

- Discuss the reading for students to complete for tomorrow.
  - Cassette Six: Side B
- Finish Voxer discussion

Assessment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussion</th>
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<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students are required to leave at least three voice messages via Voxer in response to their peers.</td>
<td>The journal entries should earn a 3 or higher on the rubric.</td>
<td>Ticket out the door: Provide students with a post-it note. Have students respond as to whether or not they would have reported themselves for knocking down the stop sign and why.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Day 14: Bryce (12th recipient of the tapes)

Standards & Learning Outcomes:

For Journaling:

W.11–12.4
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

Learning Outcomes:
- I can produce writing that is clear and easy for others to read.
- I can organize my writing from the beginning, middle, to end.
- I can select an audience best suited to read my writing based on the writing task and purpose.

For Discussion:

SL.11–12.1
Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Learning Outcomes:
- I can participate in a group, teacher-led discussion.
- I can work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions, and decision-making.
- I can respond thoughtfully to the perspectives of my peers, perspectives I may not agree with.

For Reading:

RL.11–12.5
Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

Learning Outcomes:
I can determine (through writing) how the author creates specific parts of the story.
I can identify the story’s overall structure thus far.
I can determine the message of the story, what the author intends to communicate with the reader.

Materials:

- Student journals
- Pens/pencils
- Copies of 13 Reasons Why

Summary of Text: Hannah introduces this tape during one of the last weekends of her life. There’s a party happening at Courtney’s house. She takes a walk by there just to see what’s happening with no intention of stopping. As she does, Hannah hears her name. Bryce Walker from Justin’s tape is calling her over inviting her to get into Courtney’s hot tub. Here, Bryce assaults Hannah but Hannah doesn’t resist since she feels completely numb.

Introduction:

1. Students will respond to the following journal prompt:
   a. Write one sentence that summarizes Hannah’s plea for help.

Activity:

2. Show the following TEDTalk video:
   a. Stopping Suicide with Story--https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BE428HoKoLk
3. Tell students to turn to a partner and discuss:
   a. What’s one talking point from the video that stands out to you? Why?
4. The instructor should ask the whole class and request responses:
   a. Why does the story have such power over people? What do you think? Why?
5. This question should be followed with another question:
   a. If Hannah were alive, how do you think her story would have affected people? Why?

Closure:

7. Students will respond to the following journal prompts:
   a. What value, if any, did Jessica have in Hannah’s friendship?
b. Why did Jessica allow Bryce to violate Hannah? Or did she have a choice?

**Homework:**

- Discuss the reading for students to complete for tomorrow.
  - Cassette Seven: Side A
  - Cassette Seven: Side B
  - The Next Day After

**Assessment:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussion</th>
<th>Journal</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students must orally participate in the discussion activity by turning to a partner and discussing with a peer.</td>
<td>The journal entries should earn a 3 or higher on the rubric.</td>
<td>Students will respond to the journal prompt at the end of the lesson using textual evidence to defend their answers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Day 15: Mr. Porter** (final recipient of the tapes)
Standards & Learning Outcomes:

For Journaling:

W.11–12.4
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

Learning Outcomes:
- I can produce writing that is clear and easy for others to read.
- I can organize my writing from the beginning, middle, to end.
- I can select an audience best suited to read my writing based on the writing task and purpose.

For Discussion:

SL.11–12.1
Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Learning Outcomes:
- I can participate in a group, teacher-led discussion.
- I can work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions, and decision-making.
- I can respond thoughtfully to the perspectives of my peers, perspectives I may not agree with.

For Reading:

RL.11–12.5
Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

Learning Outcomes:
● I can determine (through writing) how the author creates specific parts of the story.
● I can identify the story’s overall structure thus far.
● I can determine the message of the story, what the author intends to communicate with the reader.

Materials:

● Student journals
● Pen/pencil
● Computer-access to GoogleClassroom
● Copies of 13 Reasons Why

Summary of Text: As one final attempt to seek help, Hannah goes to see Mr. Porter, her school counselor. She confides to him what Bryce did to her without revealing his name. Mr. Porter basically says that unless she reveals who did it and presses charges, nothing can be done, and she should simply move on. Hannah’s entire world collapses. She even records the conversation with him and features it on the tape. She runs out of his office hoping he’ll try to run after her; he does not.

Introduction:

1. Students will respond to the following writing prompt:
   a. What are your thoughts on Mr. Porter’s actions or lack of actions towards Hannah?

Activity:

2. Think-pair-share: ask students to turn to a partner quick and discuss their responses.
3. Allow students to share their responses with the entire class.
4. Students will complete the following questionnaire adapted from Stephen Brookfield’s “Critical Incident Questionnaire” (Brookfield 59-63).
   a. At what moment were you most engaged as a learner?
   b. At what moment were you most distanced as a learner?
   c. What activity was most helpful to you as a learner?
   d. What activity caused you to question your own thinking the most?
   e. What surprised you the most about reading this book?
5. Use a GoogleForm to collect responses.
6. Students should have 10-15 minutes to work on their responses and submit them.
7. The instructor may wish to have a brief discussion as a whole class as to what they enjoyed or didn’t enjoy about the unit.
   a. Again, the instructor may consider using a think-pair-share first and then allowing students to share at will with the entire class.

Closure:

8. Explain to students that beginning next week, they will be writing a persuasive paper arguing one of three questions:
   a. Should 13 Reasons Why be used in the classroom? Be taught as a whole class novel? Why or why not?
   b. Were Hannah’s motives in the book an act of revenge?
   c. Does 13 Reasons Why send an effective message to readers regarding the dangers of suicide?
   d. If you have your own idea you’d like to argue regarding the book, talk to your instructor for approval.

Assessment:

<table>
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<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students must orally participate in the discussion via think-pair-share.</td>
<td>The journal entries should earn a 3 or higher on the rubric.</td>
<td>Student responses in their journals should align with the text and contain textual evidence of the assigned reading.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Days 16: Unit Reflection

SL.11–12.1
Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Learning Outcomes:
- I can participate in a group, teacher-led discussion.
- I can work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions, and decision-making.
- I can respond thoughtfully to the perspectives of my peers, perspectives I may not agree with.

Materials:
- Student computers
- Access to GoogleClassroom or another means of sharing digital documents
- Student journals (as needed)
- Pen/pencils (as needed)
- Student copies of 13 Reasons Why

Introduction:
1. Provide students with a post-it-note.
2. Ask students to write down one big take-away lesson from the unit and put those responses on the board. Instruct students to spread their responses out, so students can read each other’s responses as they’re standing at the front or side of the room, wherever the board is located.
3. While putting up their responses, instruct students to look over the other responses on the board. For students who are the first ones placing their responses on the board, tell them to wait a few moments until other students have placed theirs up there.

Discussion Activity:
4. Have students complete a reflection for the student discussion. The form can be written and shared through a GoogleForm. Examples for questions students may be asked are:
   a. Which discussion strategy did you enjoy the most?
   b. Which character discussion had the most impact on you?
   c. Did any of these discussions make you feel uncomfortable? Why?
d. Is there a particular character you think we should have spent more time discussing? Why?
e. Did the tapes do Hannah justice?
   i. The instructor should consider other questions to place on the survey.
   ii. Encourage students to look over their journal responses while completing the survey.
5. The responses to the reflection do not need to be shared back with students although the instructor could share the overall responses omitting student names. The intent of the reflection is to provide the instructor specific feedback.

Closure:

6. Allow some time to discuss with the large group after students have submitted responses.

Assessment:

   Formative Assessment--Students must complete the reflection using evidence from their experiences and-or journals to support their positions on the topics questioned.
**Day 17: Persuasive Paper Instructions**

**Standards & Learning Outcomes:**

Writing Standard W.11–12.8
Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.

**Learning Outcomes:**
- I can gather information in the form of journals, articles, primary/secondary sources relevant to my writing task.
- I can gather information both in print and digitally.
- I can identify quality sources from inaccurate sources (fake news).
- I can paraphrase ideas into my paper with the appropriate citations to avoid plagiarism.
- I can select quotes from various sources with the appropriate citations to avoid plagiarism.
- I can draw from a variety of sources, not just one.
- I can appropriately apply intext citations using MLA or APA format, depending on the requirements.
- I can appropriately format a Works Cited list using MLA or APA format, depending on the requirements.
- I can appropriately format my paper (heading, double space, paragraphs, etc.), depending on the requirements.

W.11–12.5
Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grades 11–12.)

**Learning Outcomes:**
- I can revise and edit my writing to make changes that will strengthen its purpose.
- I can demonstrate the drafting process: 1st draft, 2nd draft, final draft, etc.
- I can correct for spelling, punctuation, capitalization as needed.
- I can improve on phrasing to improve my intended message.
W.11–12.9
Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. Apply grades 11–12 Reading standards to literature (e.g., "Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth–, nineteenth– and early-twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics").

Apply grades 11–12 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., "Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning [e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court Case majority opinions and dissents] and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy").

Learning Outcomes:
- I can use information from 13 Reasons Why or another literary text to support my analysis, reflection, and research.
- I can use information from other non-fiction or scholarly sources to support my analysis, reflection, and research.

Materials:
- Student computers
- Access to GoogleClassroom or another means of sharing digital documents
- Student journals (as needed)
- Pen/pencils (as needed)
- Student copies of 13 Reasons Why

Introduction:
Spend time going over the following instructions with students. Share materials via GoogleClassroom. Spend time reviewing the assignment and answering questions for students. The paper should be due the following Monday after the weekend.

Persuasive Paper Instructions:
In this paper, students will choose one of the three questions discussed last week to write a persuasive paper.

- Should 13 Reasons Why be used in the classroom? Be taught as a whole class novel? Why or why not?
- Were Hannah’s motives in the book an act of revenge?
• Does 13 Reasons Why send an effective message to readers regarding the dangers of suicide? Why or why not?
• If you have your own idea you’d like to argue regarding the book, talk to your instructor for approval.

It must be at least 1,000 words long. There must be at least twelve (6) credible and/or academic sources (peer-reviewed) minimum.

This paper should be written in third person and in MLA form. There should be both in-text citations and a works cited page.

Please follow these formatting guidelines:

• Double-space
• MLA heading (first name, last name, class, date in left corner—last name, page number in the header box, right corner...) You can put my name, and that’s fine; however, it’s not needed.
• Title
• Indented paragraphs
• Introductory paragraph
• Conclusion
• Supporting paragraphs (in the middle)
• NEVER EVER EVER bold anything in your paper (unless done the proper way).
• Use the following as an example for formatting (if needed):
  ○ https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/13/

Assessment: Persuasive Paper Rubric

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<td><strong>In-Text Citations</strong></td>
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<td>3 pts</td>
<td>0 pts</td>
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<td><strong>Works Cited List</strong></td>
<td>9 pts</td>
<td>7 pts</td>
<td>3 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Point of View</strong></td>
<td>8 pts</td>
<td>6 pts</td>
<td>4 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar / Mechanics</strong></td>
<td>8 pts</td>
<td>6 pts</td>
<td>4 pts</td>
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**Header Box**

- **2 pts**
  - Last name, page # in the upper right-hand corner (header box).
  - Make sure to use "insert page #"; otherwise, the number won't change on the following pages. See the example linked in the assignment description of you're not sure how to do this.

- **0 pts**
  - Not present or done incorrectly...

**In-Text Citations**

- **5 pts**
  - Follows appropriate formatting rules, (see text or PurdueOWL page...there are too many rules to list...)

- **3 pts**
  - Partially correct formatting

- **0 pts**
  - Rules not followed or no citations present

**Works Cited List**

- **9 pts**
  - Sources are on their own separate page, "Works Cited" titled at the top of page--centered—not in all caps or bolded, sources are alphabetized, sources are MLA formatted, the top line of each source is justified to the left, the 2nd and each following line is indented, same size and style of font as rest of document.

- **7 pts**
  - Missing 1 of the aforementioned

- **3 pts**
  - Missing 2 of the aforementioned

- **0 pts**
  - Missing 3 or more of the aforementioned

**Point of View**

- **8 pts**
  - 3rd person is used consistently throughout the entirety of the paper.

- **6 pts**
  - 3rd person is used throughout the majority of the paper--some use of 2nd person (you) is used.

- **4 pts**
  - There is some use of 1st person (I, we, she, etc.) throughout the paper.

- **2 pts**
  - Majority or all of the paper is written in 1st person.

**Grammar / Mechanics**

- **8 pts**
  - Demonstrates overall control of punctuation, capitalization, spelling, etc. Although I may make changes on the documents, this does NOT mean you lose points. It means I’m a “stickler-grammarians” who, when he sees a comma omitted in direct address, in true OCD fashion, I. Must. Mark. It. (In other words, don’t sweat the small stuff.)

- **6 pts**
  - Meets 75% of the aforementioned criteria.

- **4 pts**
  - Meets 50% of the aforementioned criteria.

- **2 pts**
  - Meets less than 50% of the aforementioned criteria.
<table>
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| **14 pts**  
Your paper begins with a well-stated argument/position/opinion or “thesis” generally located in the introduction of your paper. Your paragraphs are developed using a well-stated topic sentence followed by supporting details related to your opening/topic sentence. The information in your paper is presented in a logical matter. Your points relate directly to your thesis. All information is relevant to the overall topic. You present well-rounded information. In other words, you present enough information needed to support the points given your topic. |
| **10 pts**  
Faulty analysis--see comments from instructor. |
| **7 pts**  
Faulty analysis--see comments from instructor. |
| **4 pts**  
Faulty analysis--see comments from instructor. |
| **2 pts**  
Faulty analysis--see comments from instructor. |

Following are resources that can be used to assist in helping students to understand the appropriate citation formats for their papers:

- **MLA Works Cited Page: Basic Format**
  - [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_works_cited_page_basic_format.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_works_cited_page_basic_format.html)

- **MLA In-Text Citations: The Basics**
  - [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_in_text_citations_the_basics.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_in_text_citations_the_basics.html)

- **MLA Formatting Quotations**
  - [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_quotations.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_quotations.html)
Days 18 & 19: Work & Conference Days

Standards & Learning Outcomes: (see standards above, Day 17)

Materials:

- Student computers
- Access to GoogleClassroom or another means of sharing digital documents
- Student journals (as needed)
- Pen/pencils (as needed)
- Student copies of *13 Reasons Why*

Introduction:

1. Ask students for an informal update regarding their topics. Students could write an update on a post-it-note and pass them forward.

Activity:

2. This is the time for students to work on their papers.
3. While students are working, the instructor should move around the classroom and conference with students about their topics and assisting students as needed.

Conclusion:

4. Ask students for a progress update.
Day 20: Peer Review Workshop

Standards & Learning Outcomes: (see standards above, Day 17)

Introduction:

1. Arrange students into groups of four (4).
2. Students will share their papers using GoogleDocs.
3. There are multiple variations on what to do for a peer evaluation. The instructor is welcome to use any methods that work best.

Activity:

4. Students should use the following website to edit their papers mechanically and grammatically: [www.PaperRater.com](http://www.PaperRater.com)
   a. This website provides a report indicating mechanical and grammatical errors. It also provides students with information regarding average sentence length, transitional phrases, and vocabulary.
5. In peer groups, students should focus on the content of their papers. Suggestions include:
   a. Identify the thesis in the introduction.
   b. Does each paragraph include a topic and concluding sentence?
   c. Does each paragraph support the thesis statement?
   d. Does the last sentence of each paragraph hook into the first sentence of the following paragraph?

Conclusion:

6. Ask students for progress updates.
7. Remind students to make final edits and changes to their papers before submitting their final draft.
Chapter 5: Conclusion

Young adult literature is a booming and thriving business. In 2002, an estimated 4,700 titles were published compared with 2012 when over 10,000 new titles were published (Peterson), and the market shows no signs of slowing down. It is nearly certain that young adult authors will look for new social issues to tackle, and the fact is, mental health issues are a growing concern throughout middle and high schools across the United States. Each year, teachers have more and more responsibilities thrust upon them in the form of assessments, standards, and now mental health training. A teacher’s time is a precious commodity, and each teacher needs to know how to best negotiate a student’s needs. Fortunately, there is no shortage of young adult literature dealing with these issues for students and teachers to read and discuss. To help teachers negotiate the issue of suicide, this study posed two research questions presented at the beginning of this study:

1. How is suicide portrayed in 21st-century young adult literature?
2. How do YA books about teen suicide compare to actual statistics in race/ethnicity, tone, gender, and setting/location?

Data Conclusions

The overall question this study set out to answer was how is suicide portrayed in 21st-century young adult literature. The suicidal person might be a protagonist, friend, parent, or acquaintance. In several books, the suicide occurs before the story, while in others, it occurs in the midst or end of the book. Sometimes the reason is a mental illness such as anxiety or a sense of overwhelming despair; other times, the reason may be bullying, sexual assault, or social media harassment.
From all the information gathered, young adult literature does not provide a realistic portrayal of the data presented by the Centers for Disease Control and other organizations. In regard to ethnicity, there were a few Asian and Latinx selections, but the overwhelming majority of books sampled were written by Caucasian females. There was no representation by Native Americans/Alaskan Natives or by African Americans. In each of the books sampled, all the protagonists were the same ethnicity as the authors. The lack of representation of non-Caucasian groups provides an inaccurate view for students affected by suicide, often creating feelings of alienation.

The tone of the books, however, does not possess messages of alienation. Each book’s tone is more than likely hopeful if not positive. Even the books that end with a “sense of justice” still possess a positive or uplifting feeling. Only a few books end with a sad or negative tone. Since the adolescent mind is in a malleable state, students who read these books need a positive message. Adults and teachers will not argue that helping students to navigate through the trials and tribulations of that age are difficult enough. Leaving students to battle through such feelings mired in negativity would only worsen the problem. This is one case where it perhaps helpful that statistics do not align with the data.

One item that clearly does not align with the data is gender. Females far outnumber the number of males for both authors and protagonists. Of the twenty-five books, 17 books (68%) were written by female authors while eight books (32%) were written by male authors. There were eight male and seventeen female protagonists of the twenty-five books, the same as author genders. However, male suicides outnumber female suicides about four to one. The current YA literature provides portrayals of female students but not males working through these issues. At first glance, this may not appear to be a critical issue, but the way females discuss, process, and
exhibit feelings of suicide is far different than males. Not to mention, males are more likely to read books with male protagonists. This means that males, who have the highest incidence rate of suicide by gender, are not portrayed in literature in ways that help teachers or adults have conversations and identify the warning signs of suicide. Just as males need other positive male role models in all aspects of life, students also need positive male role models regarding mental health.

The majority of books used in this study occur in a suburban setting, but most suicides take place in rural environments. Rural residents are often faced with economic instability, being dependent upon the weather, equipment, and bank loans. Teens living in rural areas often feel the anxiety their parents are undergoing. Of all the books studied, only two take place in a rural environment. Therefore, of all four areas (urban, suburban, small town, and rural), this area may possess the greatest discrepancy. Just as males need other positive male protagonists, rural adolescents need rural protagonists with whom they can identify.

Therefore, this study found that YA literature featuring suicide is portrayed through Caucasian female authors using Caucasian female protagonists with little inclusion of diversity. The majority of these books end with a hopeful tone and take place in suburban locations. The problem with these findings is that males complete the act of suicide at four times that of females, but do not have as many authors or protagonists with whom to relate. The lack of diversity in these books is also problematic for the same reasons. Students of diverse ethnicities do not have authors or protagonists with whom they can relate. The fact that these books end with a hopeful tone is one good trait among these books. Providing students with a hopeful conclusion allows students to realize there is hope when dealing with the types of trauma that can lead students to commit suicide. Regarding location, not all students live in suburban areas,
which could further isolate students when they read about other teens in settings different from their own.

**Limitations & Further Study**

While this study did include a close reading of twenty-five young adult novels, the study does have several limitations. Perhaps the study's largest limitation was its size and scope. There were only twenty-five young adult novels selected for this study, so the data is not a full sampling of books that feature suicide. A study of two hundred or more books would be a much more comprehensive study but would require greater time and resources to conduct. At this time, based on the results of this study, it can be argued that a discrepancy is present between the data in this study and real-life statistics, but the depth of that discrepancy isn’t known without a wider assessment of books.

Another limitation of this study is the identification of the suicidal person. A further study could categorize texts into four subgroups: the protagonist who commits suicide, the protagonist who attempts to commit suicide, parental suicides (complete or incomplete) and suicides of friends (complete or incomplete). This categorization would help us see whether each subgroup is treated equally or if one subgroup is dominant and what this might mean for readers.

Regarding further study, there is also little research on how to approach topics such as suicide or mental health issues, in general, using literature in the classroom. There is much commentary and anecdotal data on these issues but little peer-reviewed research. This is a fertile field for further study to identify how to address student needs through literature in order for teachers to know whether what they are doing is objectively harming or helping their students.

As for YA literature, it would be interesting to know the driving forces behind the books
written each year. Is there a way to communicate mental health needs to authors and encourage them to write about diverse topics and characters? This is difficult to manage without first knowing how teachers should best use these books in their classrooms. However, with the rise of mental health needs among teens, action must be taken to help students navigate the social turmoil of adolescence.

**Implications**

In regard to the underlying reasons for teen suicide, social issues tend to be the driving force agitated, in some cases, by mental illness. However, as the data provided in this study would support, more opportunities for authentic discussions should be taking place in schools; hence, the purpose of the teaching and discussion unit using *13 Reasons Why*. The hope of the unit is to provide teachers with, if anything else, an example from which to design their own unit for the classroom using a text similar to *13 Reasons Why*. This way, students are being provided with a place to have such discussions with a supervising adult.

Having a teacher or counselor direct discussions of literature is a necessity since students don't always realize the resources available to them. Some teachers may worry this unit puts them into the role of counselor over student, but the purpose of the unit is to provide a place where students can have these discussions. The role of the teacher is to guide the discussion and as serious issues arise beyond the scope of the instructor, the teacher can encourage students to visit with the counselor or look for help from other resources. Resources such as the Suicide Hotline can be shared, and teachers can lead discussions about what to do if a friend says they are thinking about the act of suicide. Most students don’t know what to do in such situations.

One message to share with students is that if a friend says they want to end their life, the listener
should ask if they have a plan for carrying this out. If the student says yes, and it does appear the person is going to carry out the act, it may be best to call a counselor, 911, or the police station so a legal authority can intervene. This process may seem extreme and intimidating for teens. However, the difference between a teen’s living and dying. This can also separate those who truly intend to commit suicide and those who use it as a cry for attention. The phrase “cry for attention” is not to belittle students. In fact, students may be looking for help and not know how to request help. When faced with multiple emergency services arriving at their home, the suicidal student will realize the seriousness of their words and actions. This may provide the teen with the message that suicide is never a joking matter, and if a student needs help, help is available. Nevertheless, teens must understand their words will be heard.

Suicide prevention is critical at any time but especially for adolescents as one suicide can trigger other suicides. A finding known as the “ripple effect” should further trouble schools and politicians to act. In an article for the National Alliance for Mental Health (NAMI), Elana Sandler states, “Ultimately, in the way that a pond is changed because of a pebble, an entire community can be changed by a suicide. According to a 2016 study, it is estimated that 115 people are exposed to a single suicide, with one in five reporting that this experience had a devastating impact or caused a major-life disruption,” (“NAMI.” Home). This should instill a sense of urgency when considering how many lives a single suicide can impact, which exemplifies the need for a curriculum of some sort for teachers to be able to carry out these discussions in the classroom. *13 Reasons Why* intends to help teachers bring these topics into their classrooms in an authentic, non-lecturing way. As students are given more and more information, there is an extinction point when students simply tune out after hearing the same things repeated. Students need opportunities to reflect on their learning and be given a voice.
Often, the key to good therapy isn’t to tell the patient what they need to know but rather to help the patient come to an understanding on his or her own as to what he or she needs to know. This doesn’t happen by lecture. It happens by adults listening to students because social issues sometimes are the driving force underlying mental illness. More opportunities for authentic discussions should be taking place in schools and classrooms.

This unit can be substituted and altered to accommodate many other books. The activities are designed to be transplanted and applied to other texts. Young adult literature should reflect the actual statistics surrounding mental health and suicide. However, at least young adult literature is willing to tackle some of these topics and provide teens with a platform with which to discuss these issues. While any classroom teacher needs to exercise extreme scrutiny and discretion when selecting an appropriate text for his or her classroom, encouraging teachers to have these discussions is critical and should be encouraged.
Works Cited


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“Frequently Asked Questions.” *Marsy's Law for Iowa,* www.marsyslawforiowa.com/faqs?gclid=Cj0KCQjw84XtBRDWARIeAAU1aM2OK9Rs


Hubbard, Jenny. *And We Stay*. Ember, 2015.


“State Fact Sheets.” AFSP, 13 May 2019, afsp.org/about-suicide/state-fact-sheets/#Iowa.


13-reasons-why-t158920.


APPENDIX A: Unit Calendar

13 Reasons Why

Note: The book’s chapters are labeled with the cassette numbers of Hannah’s messages to individual people. Therefore, the reading assignments below are described by cassette numbers, not chapter numbers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 1</th>
<th>Day 2</th>
<th>Day 3</th>
<th>Day 4</th>
<th>Day 5</th>
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| Introduction  
- Read the first 4 pages, the prologue.  
- Discussion  
Read the editorial: Influences Of The Media On Suicide: Researchers, Policy Makers, And Media Personnel Need To Collaborate On Guidelines--Discuss  
Explain to students the “trigger warnings” that may arise during the reading of this book. | Set up the journal (see Day 2 & journaling document)  
Journal prompt #1--What would you do if someone you know is “really” struggling emotionally or psychologically?  
Read Introduction & Yesterday One Hour After School  
Homework:  
- Cassette One: Side A | Journal Prompt #2--How do you think the tapes will affect the characters in the long term? What will they (the recipients) do going forward?  
Discussion--Justin (First Kiss)  
Homework:  
- Cassette One: Side B | Journal Prompt #3--How do you, personally, manage stress?  
Discussion--Alex (The List)  
Homework:  
- Cassette Two: Side A | Journal Prompt #4--Do you think all stress is “bad”? What would life be like if we never experienced stress?  
Discussion--Jessica (The Scratch)  
Homework:  
- Cassette Two: Side B |

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<tr>
<th>Day 6</th>
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<th>Day 8</th>
<th>Day 9</th>
<th>Day 10</th>
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| Journal Prompt #5--Based on this reading, do you think Hannah was the victim of a sexual assault?  
Discussion--Tyler (Peeping Tom)  
Homework:  
- Cassette Three: Side A | Journal Prompt #6--How do you think the tapes will affect the characters’ lives in the long term?  
Discussion--Courtney (Fake Friend)  
Homework:  
- Cassette Three: Side B | Journal Prompt #7--What is Hannah’s ultimate end goal with the tapes? What does she ultimately want to accomplish?  
Discussion--Marcus (V-day Date)  
Homework:  
- Cassette Four: Side A | Journal Prompt #8--Where are Hannah’s parents in the story? What role did or didn’t they play in Hannah’s suicide? Why did the author choose not to include them?  
Discussion--Zach (Paper Bag)  
Homework:  
- Cassette Four: Side B | Journal Prompt #9--Discuss Hannah’s mental state of mind. Why does she do what she did? What were her motivations? Do you think Hannah suffers from a psychological disorder?  
Discussion--Ryan (The Poet)  
Homework:  
- Cassette Five: Side A |
### Day 11
Journal Prompt #10--Explain how Clay’s character is a foil. In literature, a foil is a character that shows qualities that are in contrast with the qualities of another character. The objective is to highlight the traits of the other characters. The term foil, though generally being applied to a contrasting character, may also be used for any comparison that is drawn to portray a difference between two things (“Foil - Examples and Definition of Foil”).

Discussion--Clay
Homework:
- Cassette Five: Side B

### Day 12
Journal Prompt #11--What would you do if you witnessed a friend assault, someone you knew, whether physically or sexually?

Discussion--Justin (Bystander)
Homework:
- Cassette Six: Side A

### Day 13
Journal Prompt #12--How do our actions affect others around us even if they don’t directly affect them in the short term? Re-read the portion of text for students beginning on page 241 of the text, the line starting with “What happened next, I’m not entirely sure,” and ending with “I shut for a long time with my eyes shut, listening to the rain and the wipers.” Does Jenny have any responsibility for the following car crash involving the grandfather? How? Why?

Discussion--Jenny (Accident)
Homework:
- Cassette Six: Side B

### Day 14
Journal Prompt #13--Write one sentence that summarizes Hannah’s plea for help.

Discussion--Bryce (Rapist)
Homework:
- Cassette Seven: Side A
- Cassette Seven: Side B
- The Next Day After Mailing the Tapes

### Day 15
Journal Prompt #14--What are your thoughts on Mr. Porter’s actions or lack of actions towards Hannah?

Discussion--Mr. Porter (Counselor)

### Standards:

This unit is based upon the Common Core Standards. In the following standards, “RL.” refers to Reading Literature and “W.” refers to Writing. The numbers represent the grade level strands so that 11-12 refers to 11th and 12th grade, and .2 refers to the subpoint under the standard. After each standard, I have converted the academic-written standard to learning outcomes written in student-friendly language.
**RL.Standard 11–12.2**

Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

Learning Outcomes:
- I can identify the theme (central idea) of *13 Reasons Why*.
- I can analyze (both orally and through writing) the development of the theme throughout the story.
- I can determine how the theme connects with the events of the story.
- I can provide an objective summary of the text.

**RL.11–12.5**

Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

Learning Outcomes:
- I can determine (both orally and through writing) how the author creates specific parts of the story.
- I can defend whether I agree or disagree with the author’s choice of resolution.
- I can identify the story’s overall structure.
- I can determine the message of the story, what the author intends to communicate with the reader.

**W.11–12.2**

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
• (I can…) Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic.
• (I can…) Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.
• (I can…) Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic.
• (I can…) Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
• (I can…) Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).

W.11–12.4
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

Learning Outcomes:
• I can produce writing that is clear and easy for others to read.
• I can organize my writing from the beginning, middle, to end.
• I can select an audience best suited to read my writing based on the writing task and purpose.

W.11–12.5
Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grades 11–12.)

Learning Outcomes:
• I can revise and edit my writing to make changes that will strengthen its purpose.
• I can demonstrate the drafting process: 1st draft, 2nd draft, final draft, etc.
• I can correct for spelling, punctuation, capitalization as needed.
● I can improve on phrasing to improve my intended message.

\textit{W.11–12.8}

Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.

\textbf{Learning Outcomes:}

- I can gather information in the form of journals, articles, primary/secondary sources relevant to my writing task.
- I can gather information both in print and digitally.
- I can identify quality sources from inaccurate sources (fake news).
- I can paraphrase ideas into my paper with the appropriate citations to avoid plagiarism.
- I can select quotes from various sources with the appropriate citations to avoid plagiarism.
- I can draw from a variety of sources, not just one.
- I can appropriately apply intext citations using MLA or APA format, depending on the requirements.
- I can appropriately format a Works Cited list using MLA or APA format, depending on the requirements.
- I can appropriately format my paper (heading, double space, paragraphs, etc.), depending on the requirements.

\textit{W.11–12.9}

Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

- Apply grades 11–12 Reading standards to literature (e.g., "Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth–, nineteenth– and early-twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics").
- Apply grades 11–12 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., "Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning [e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court Case majority opinions and dissents] and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy").

\textbf{Learning Outcomes:}

- I can use information from \textit{13 Reasons Why} or another literary text to support my analysis, reflection, and research.
● I can use information from other non-fiction or scholarly sources to support my analysis, reflection, and research.

SL.11–12.1
Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

● (I can…) Come to discussions (class) prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.

● (I can…) Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.

● (I can…) Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.

● (I can…) Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible, and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.