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ENGL 112B

Dr. Warner

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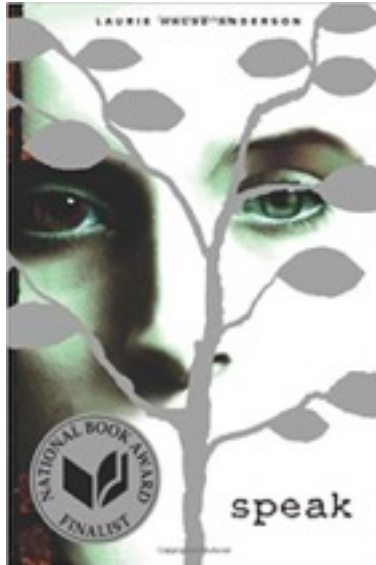
Annotated Bibliography:
Identity Issues in Contemporary Realistic Fiction

<https://youtu.be/F9IAY6upi0E>

Young Adult literature, when written correctly, can serve as a guideline for surviving through the adolescent years of our lives. Growing up, my favorite books were by Sarah Dessen. All of her young adult, hopeful romantic novels focus on the identity issues of a young girl and I read book after book whenever I could. Dessen's novels gave me a sense of comfort and made me feel not alone against the world, which is what I tried to do with the novels I picked to annotate. While everyone has struggled with their self-identity at one point or another, there is no reason to feel alone because you can connect with a character in a novel who is facing something similar and be connected to something. The novels I chose discuss the hard topics that cause identity issues which include; rape, drug addiction, school shooting, death, cancer, terrorism/patriotism and much more. Reading and discussing the chosen novels will teach empathy, awareness and raise the curiosity of the world outside oneself. The biggest problem that teens have when facing these difficulties is that they cannot remove themselves from the situation and see another perspective on their lives. In the novels I chose, there are at least two different perspectives on the main characters; their opinion on themselves and what they think others think of them.

When deciding what novels to choose for my project, I knew immediately that I wanted to go back to reading the Young Adult literature I had once loved so dear, Sarah Dessen. Instead of focusing directly on her novels only, I decided to choose novels that encompassed the attributes that I most loved from her novels. The identity issues of teens who had been through or were going through a traumatic experience. After picking the subgenera and topic I looked at what books we had read in class that fit into my category. Luckily, three books we had read for class and the one I did my book talk on all fit into the category. These novels include; *Speak*, *Whale Talk*, *After the First Death*, and *Endgame*.

Anderson, Laurie H. *Speak*. New York: Alberta Education, 2008.

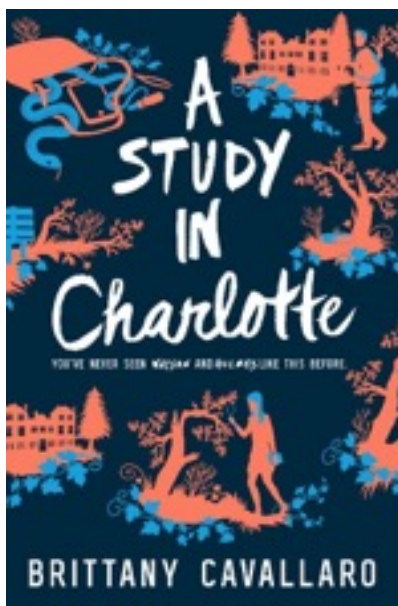


After a sexual assault at a summer high school party, Melinda struggles through her freshmen year and through living with her traumatic experience that she keeps secret. Melinda's inner conflict begins to show through as she starts to skip class and school to avoid her rapist in the school hallways. Through art and friendship she starts healing, but Melinda only speaks the truth of her traumatic experience when her former best friend is in danger of being sexually assaulted by the same man too.

I read this novel and saw the movie. This novel helps inspire confidence and shows the importance of speaking up for yourself and others even if you are afraid. Melinda's journey to find her identity after she has it ripped away from her is an unfortunate experience that sadly many other people and youths have faced. Exeter Qualities three and seven best relate to

Anderson's *Speak* because the novel has "characters who reflect experiences of teen readers, something that is not found in much of the literary canon, especially when it comes to strong female protagonists" and "themes that allow the possibility of emotional and intellectual growth through engagement with personal issues"(LFTYA).

Cavallaro, Brittany. *A Study in Charlotte: a Charlotte Holmes Novel*. Katherine Tegen Books, an Imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers, 2016.



Once they start being framed for the murder of classmates, Charlotte Holmes and Jamie Watson must figure out the mystery or be blamed themselves. Being descendants from the famous detectives, both characters have inherited the talent for deduction and the need for justice. Charlotte gains suspicion for being the real murderer when it is revealed that a murdered classmate has sexually assaulted her and when her drug addiction is revealed.

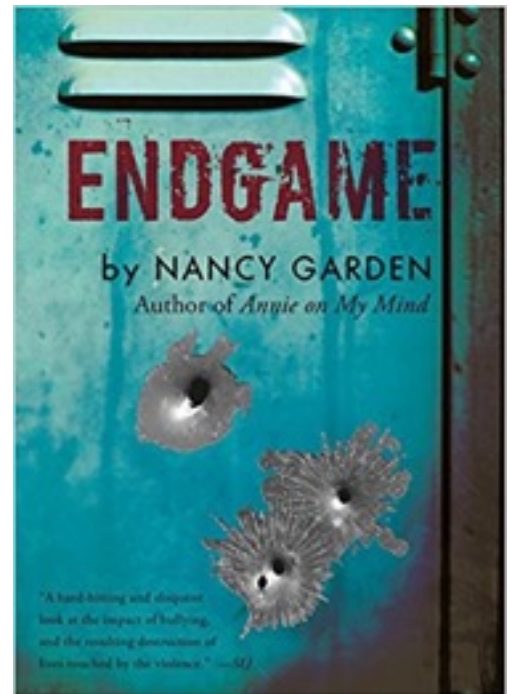
I did not read this novel, but learned about it from a book talk. This novel allows the reader to escape to a prep school mystery. Charlotte and Jamie are both confused teenagers who don't know where they belong in the world. Through the novel they learn more about themselves and help build their identity and clear their names. The Exeter Qualities two, three and five

are best represented in Cavallaro's novel because it has; "exciting plots that include secrecy, surprise, and tension brought about through narrative hooks and a fast pace", "characters who reflect experiences of teen readers, something that is not found in much of the literary canon, especially when it comes to strong female protagonists", and "lively, varied, and imaginative language that is grammatically correct while being neither patronizing and simplistic nor unnecessarily confusing through lexical density or complexity"(LFTYA).Coelho, Tiffany. "Review: A Study in Charlotte by Brittany Cavallaro." Flare, 22 May 2017, flare.flagler.edu/review-a-study-in-charlotte-by-brittany-cavallaro/.

Garden, Nancy. *Endgame*. Graphia/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012.

Gray Wilton is a fourteen year old freshman in high school who has just moved to a new town to work on his anger issues and escape bullies. He suffers through high school with one friend, and together they face horrible abuse from the jocks. Gray is unable to escape the abuse at home because his father physically and mentally destroys him for being a failure of a son. Gray reaches a breaking point and feels that he must do the extreme to put an end to his pain, but his plan is only partly successful.

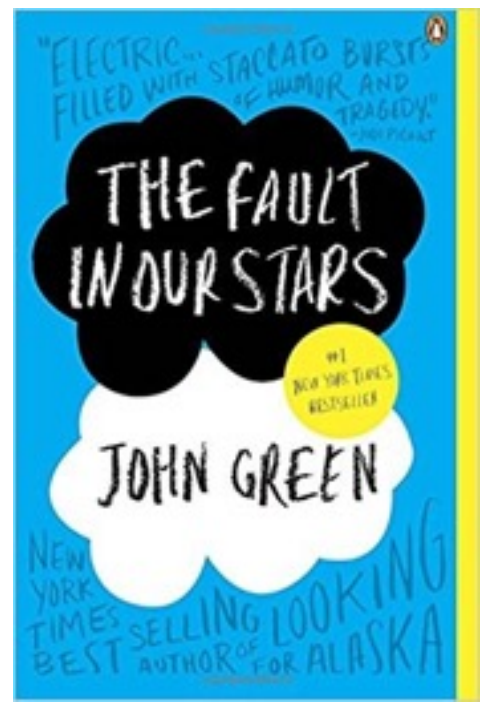
I read this novel. The novel shows the harm in ignoring bullying while teaching empathy, awareness, and how not to treat students. Gray struggles with his identity as a murderer in the beginning and end of the novel. He mentions several times what other people label him as and wonders himself throughout. All the Exeter Qualities can be found in this novel except number eight, which says, "varied levels of sophistication that will lead to the continual development of reading skills" because there is no variety shown. *Endgame* allows people to see inside the mind of a school shooter and that is especially valuable after so many recent U.S. shootings.



Green, John. *The Fault in Our Stars*. Dutton Books, 2012.

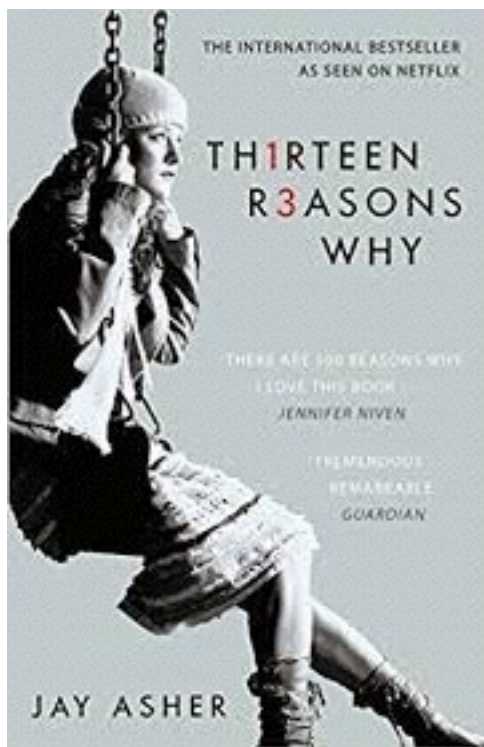
After being diagnosed with lung cancer, Hazel reluctantly starts attending a cancer support group where she meets Augustus Waters. A self-proclaimed cancer survivor, Augustus and Hazel embark on a journey to Amsterdam to find the author of their favorite book. While on their trip, Augustus reveals heartbreaking information to Hazel and both their worlds start to crumble again.

I have not read this novel. This novel shows importance of time. Both main characters are fighting cancer and struggle to live a normal teenage life around their health restrictions. Hazel and



Augustus try to escape their identity of being cancer patients/survivors, but Hazel cannot because of the physical aspect she has to carry around with her everywhere. Exeter Qualities three and seven are best represented in Green's novel because it has "characters who reflect experiences of teen readers especially when it comes to strong female protagonists" and "themes that allow the possibility of emotional and intellectual growth through engagement with personal issues"(LFTYA). Pagulayan, Danica. "Book Review: 'The Fault in Our Stars.'" The Macaulay Messenger, 15 Mar. 2012, macaulay.cuny.edu/eportfolios/messenger/2012/02/28/book-review-the-fault-in-our-stars/.

Asher, Jay. *Thirteen Reasons Why*. Penguin Group, 2007.

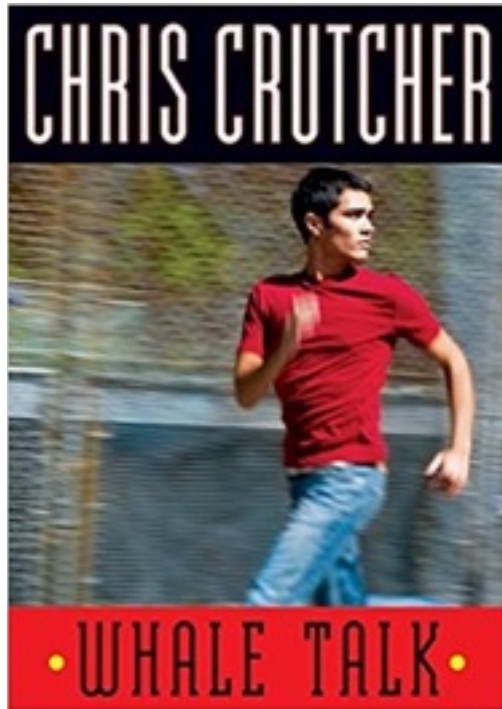


After he finds a mysterious box full of seven double-sided cassette tapes on his front porch, Clay Jensen discovers exactly why Hannah Baker committed suicide. The emotional auto diary of Hannah's thirteen reasons for ending her life reveals bullies, sexual assault, and much more. Clay has a hard time listening to the pain his classmate and crush was feeling and the horrible experiences she had.

I have read this novel and seen the Netflix series. This novel shows the horrors of bullying, sexual assault, and suicide. This novel teaches empathy and awareness about bullying and the severe consequences it has. Clay doesn't know where to put himself, the classmates that surround him every day are the reasons why Hannah killed herself. He struggles with his identity though-out. Exeter Qualities two and seven best fit with Asher's novel because it has "exciting plots that include secrecy, surprise, and tension brought about through narrative hooks and a fast pace" and "themes that allow the possibility of emotional and intellectual growth through engagement with personal issues"(LFTYA).

Crutcher, Chris. *Whale Talk*. Harpercollins Childrens Books, 2018.

After agreeing to help his English teacher recruit students for his swim team, T.J. decides to choose unusual students to undercut the obvious favoritism his high school has for its athletes. The group of outcasts begin to thrive socially and emotionally as they develop a team bond and sense of belonging. T.J. school life may be improving, but his home life is not. His adoptive father listens to whales when he is depressed and lives his life in regret. The calm and serene



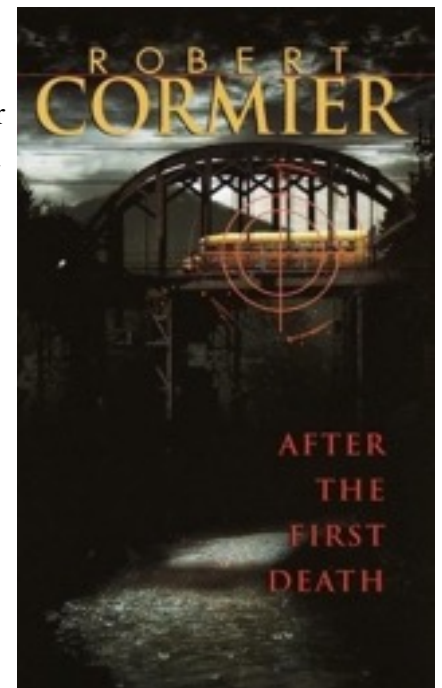
quality of the whales and water contrast against the dysfunctional environment T.J. is usually surrounded by.

I have read this novel. This novel shows the difficult struggle of adolescence and the importance of friendship when confronting serious issues. T.J. faces the struggle with identity because he is adopted and racially-ambiguous. While the main character also struggles with his identity, his swim teammates show the biggest change in how they identify themselves as abnormal people in the world in the beginning and change to accept themselves more. The Exeter Qualities found in Crutcher's novel would be numbers two and seven which means the novel has "exciting plots that include secrecy, surprise, and tension brought about through narrative hooks and a fast pace" and "themes that allow the possibility of emotional and intellectual growth through engagement with personal issues"(LFTYA).

Cormier, Robert. *After the First Death*. Perma-Bound, 1988.

After the bus of little children she is driving is overtaken by terrorists, Kate tries to work with the hijackers to keep the death toll to a minimum as they try to gain freedom for their homeland they have never seen. When a hijacker, Miro, is told to gain the trust of Kate they instead form a loose friendship until they are alone.

I have read this novel. This novel addresses the self-consciousness of growing up too fast and the different perspectives of patriotism. Kate struggles with inner uncertainty about her identity. She is unable to work through or talk with anyone about her feeling because of the hostile environment. Miro struggles with his outward identity and fears being seen weak. Cormier's novel fulfills all the Exeter Qualities, but the most interesting it has "imaginative and well-structured plots going beyond simple chronologies to include time shifts and different perspectives"(LFTYA).



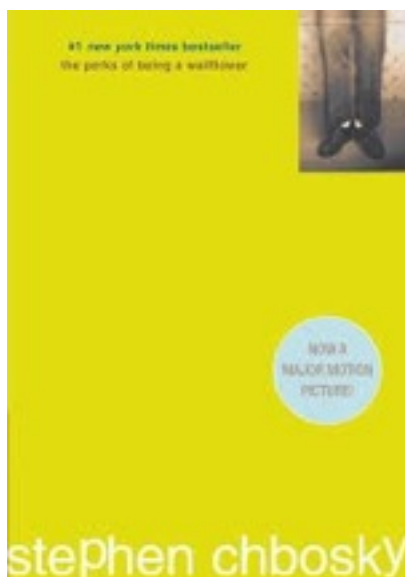
Cabot, Meg. *Princess Diaries*. HarperCollins, 2007.

After abruptly learning that her deceased father was the prince of Genovia, Mia Thermopolis is asked to step up and take his place to keep the royalty in the family by her grandmother and queen of Genovia. Mia is an insecure high school freshmen just trying to survive who quickly becomes a highly publicized figure with fans and is expected to transform into a princess instantly as well. Mia must learn to balance the wishes of her father, grandmother and herself.

I have not read this novel. This novel shows the struggle young adults have trying to find their own identity, but increases it by adding on the secret history of her father. Mia is thrown into a totally new identity and forced to find herself along the way. Exeter Qualities two, three and four can be noticed in Cabot's novel because it has; "exciting plots that include secrecy, surprise, and tension brought about through narrative hooks and a fast pace", "characters who reflect experiences of teen readers especially when it comes to strong female protagonists" and "characters who go beyond typical experiences so that readers can use the fictional experiences to learn and develop in their own lives"(LFTYA).Emilypotter, and Guardian children's books site young reviewer. "The Princess Diaries by Meg Cabot - Review." The Guardian, Guardian News and Media, 3 Aug. 2015, www.theguardian.com/childrens-books-site/2015/aug/03/the-princess-diaries-meg-cabot-review.



Chbosky, Stephen. *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*. Pocket Books, 1999.

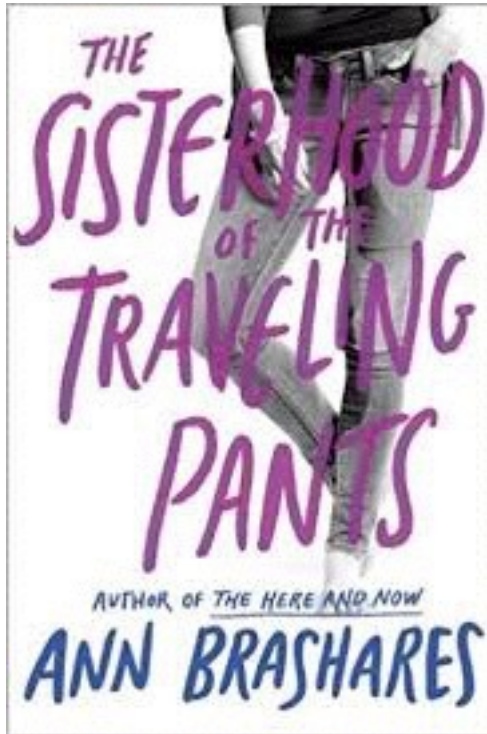


Troubled after the suicide of his friend and nervous about starting high school, Charlie begins to write a series of letters to an unnamed friend. Charlie struggles to make friends, until an older student named Patrick who is different from everybody else. Charlie is introduced and accepted into Patrick's group of friends and all seems good, until a secret Charlie has hidden deep from himself resurfaces.

I have read this novel. This novel shows how to deal with isolation and traumatic experiences. Charlie struggles to fit in and make others happy, but he doesn't focus on himself until he is forced to in the hospital. Charlie struggles with his identity as a rape victim and suppresses all the memories until they burst and cause a mental break. The novel's ending shows the importance of speaking inner truths and working through

the difficult experience rather than suppressing it all. Exeter Qualities seven and eight are best expressed through Chbosky's novel because it has "themes that allow the possibility of emotional and intellectual growth through engagement with personal issues" and "varied levels of sophistication that will lead to the continual development of reading skills"(LFTYA).

Brashares, Ann. *The Sisterhood of the Travelling Pants*. Corgi, 2002.



Before four best friends since birth spend their first summer apart they find a seemingly magical pair of jeans that fit all of them perfectly despite being different sizes. The girls make a pact to share the confidence inspiring pants throughout the summer and ship them to each other throughout. The summer is challenging for different reasons for all the girls, but the pants and friendships will help them get through it.

I have not read this novel. This novel shows the importance of strong, supportive friendships while going through life's challenges. Each main character faces a different identity crisis throughout the novel. Whether caused by family issues or death, the girls discover something about themselves. Exeter Qualities one and three are best seen in Brashares' novel because it has "imaginative and well-structured plots going beyond simple chronologies to include time shifts and different perspectives" and "characters who reflect experiences of teen readers, something that is not found in much of the literary canon, especially when it comes to strong female

protagonists"(LFTYA). Berman, Matt. "Book Review." Common Sense Media: Ratings, Reviews, and Advice, Common Sense Media, 11 Aug. 2003, www.common sense media.org/book-reviews/the-sisterhood-of-the-traveling-pants.