

# Teacher's Guide

## Speak

<b>Reading Level</b>	Lexile 680
<b>Genre/Length</b>	Contemporary Fiction; 240 pages
<b>Language Register</b>	Conversational, Play on Words, Sarcasm
<b>Content Load</b>	School, Peers, Harassment
<b>Selected Awards</b>	2000 Printz Honor Book 1999 National Book Award Finalist Edgar Allan Poe Award Finalist

This book contains mature content. Educators and parents should read the book and determine its appropriateness for use with their students.

### THE EXCHANGE QUESTION

**How can silence be more powerful than the truth?**

## Overview

**Background** As a teenager, Laurie Halse Anderson could never find the type of book that she wanted to read. She was searching for the type of characters who were troubled by the same things that she was troubled by. Sexual assault is an issue that Anderson feels strongly about. This issue is explored in *Speak*. In order to get a sense of how high school students speak, she spent a lot of time at Taco Bell and the food court at the mall. She also was able to draw on her two teenage daughters and her own memory of how she felt in high school.

**Book Summary** *Speak* examines the painful issue of sexual assault and its destructive effects on victims. *Speak* is the story of Melinda Sordino, who is raped at a party the summer before her freshman year of high school. Melinda calls the police from the party, but when the police come, she runs away. Because she was unable to speak about what happened to her, she becomes an outcast because she ruined the big party. No one knows what happened to Melinda that night. Melinda goes through her school year suffering from the effects of the rape and continues to withdraw from everything she used to enjoy. Melinda finally faces what happened to her and finds the courage to speak out.

## About the Author

Laurie Halse Anderson was born on October 23, 1961, in Potsdam, New York. She graduated from Georgetown University with a bachelor's degree in Languages and Linguistics in 1984. Anderson was formerly a journalist for the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and other newspapers. Since 1998, she has been a full-time writer. She also speaks at numerous schools and conventions about the writing process.

Anderson writes in a wide variety of genres, and for all ages. She has written novels, short stories, picture books, nonfiction books, and the "Wild at Heart" fiction series. *Speak* was Anderson's first work of fiction for young adults.

# Reading the Book

There are several options for reading *Speak*. They include:

- Whole Class** Assign sections of the book and discussion dates using the planner on **Student Journal, page 1**. After students read a section and respond to the corresponding **Student Journal** pages, have a class discussion. At the end of the book, the class meets for **The Exchange**.
- Small Groups** Read the book **Introduction** with the group. Group members then read an agreed-upon number of pages, complete the corresponding **Student Journal** pages, and meet to discuss. When they finish the book, they meet again for **The Exchange**. Use the planner on **Student Journal, page 1** to establish meeting times.
- Independently** Students read the book on their own and then meet as a group for **The Exchange**. Use the planner on **Student Journal, page 1** to establish the meeting time.
- Guided Reading** Have students read **Student Journal, page 2** and monitor their discussion of the **What If?** scenario. Read aloud the book **Introduction** to give students background on the book. As students read, use the **Before You Move On** questions to guide comprehension. Use the **Look Ahead** to set a focus for reading the next set of pages. At the end of each section, assign the appropriate **Student Journal** pages. Discuss the pages before starting the next section. Establish a date for **The Exchange** and record it on the planner.

# Getting Started

Have students read **What If?** on **Student Journal, page 2** and discuss the scenario. Encourage students to describe the similarities and differences between the scenario and their lives and imagine how the situation would affect them.

- Have students write their responses to the three questions below the scenario and compare answers with a partner or the group.
- Have students discuss how the situation might relate to **The Exchange** question and then write a brief summary of their discussion in the **Student Journal**.

## Student Journal, page 1

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Journal**

**Speak**  
by Laurie Halse Anderson

**Reading Schedule**

Group members: \_\_\_\_\_

Speak	Student Journal	Due Date	Discussion Date
Introduction	Pages 2-4		
First Marking Period	Pages 5-6		
Second Marking Period	Pages 7-8		
Third Marking Period	Pages 9-10		
Fourth Marking Period	Pages 11-12		
The Exchange			
Assessment			

How can silence be more powerful than the truth?

## Student Journal, page 2

Speak

**Getting Started**

**What If?**

You are about to take the most important exam of the year. Everyone has been studying for weeks. One of the football players says he needs you to help him cheat on the exam. If you do not agree, he is going to tell the teacher that you are the one planning on cheating! You decide to let him copy your answers, and you do not get caught. You even hear that because of his high grade on the test, the football player received a scholarship to college.

Now the football player wants you to help him for the rest of the school year. You know you need to tell someone about what is happening, but you decide to stay silent about it.

Make notes about how this would affect you.

- How would keeping this secret affect you?
- What would have to happen before you spoke up?
- Would it have been better if the teacher caught you cheating?

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**Connect to The Exchange Question** Discuss how this situation could relate to The Exchange Question: **How can silence be more powerful than the truth?** Summarize your discussion.

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# Introduction

Have students read the book **Introduction**. Check their comprehension with the three follow-up questions on **Student Journal, page 3**.

## Student Journal, page 3

**Speak**

### Introduction

Read the Introduction on pages 7–9 in *Speak*. The Introduction will help you understand key concepts in the book. Knowing them will help you discuss and write about the book.

The Introduction includes information about

- how the author’s personal experiences influenced her writing
- the author’s unique writing style
- teenage issues that the book addresses

After you read the Introduction, answer these questions to check your understanding.

1. What inspired the author to write this book?  
She had a nightmare about a girl crying and could not forget the sound. She felt that the character had an important story to tell because teenagers struggle with significant issues.
2. How is the writing and structure of the book unique?  
The story is interrupted by dialogue in a way that is similar to a play. Instead of chapters, the book is divided into four marking periods. Within each marking period, sections with funny and ironic titles divide the action.
3. What are some of the teenage issues that the book addresses?  
The book addresses being an outcast, dealing with harassment, depression and other emotional issues, and withdrawing or having difficulty communicating with others.

# Introduction: Key Concepts

Have students study the first **Key Concept** with the help of the graphic organizer on **Student Journal, page 4**. After studying the example, they should create similar graphic organizers to focus their understanding of the remaining **Key Concepts**.

## Student Journal, page 4

**Speak**

### Introduction: Key Concepts

#### Personal Experience Chart

Study the **Personal Experience Chart** for *withdrawal*. Write a sentence using the word *withdrawal*.

**Key Concepts**

communicate  
harass  
outcast  
resolution  
withdrawal

**Personal Experience Chart**

**Key Concept:** withdrawal

**Define or rename:** social and emotional detachment; staying away from people

**Specific Examples**

His withdrawal from school activities caused the teachers to question if everything was ok.

She no longer wanted to be class president so she submitted a withdrawal note to the election committee.

My withdrawal from my friends happened because they started doing things I was not interested in.

**Personal Connection:** \_\_\_\_\_

On a separate sheet of paper, create a similar **Personal Experience Chart** for each of the **Key Concept** words.

## First Marking Period

### PAGE 29

- 1. Conflict** Reread pages 14–15. What is the problem that begins the story?

*Melinda has lost her friends and is being treated like an outcast. Something happened that her friends are angry about.*

- 2. Conclusions** Reread page 20. Why does Melinda not tell Mr. Neck what happened?

*She feels that nobody really cares about what she has to say and it's easier and less scary to just take the blame rather than talk about what really happened.*

### PAGE 47

- 1. Inference** Reread pages 42–43. Everyone is angry that Melinda called the police at Kyle's party. Why did she do it? Something happened to her that she hasn't told anyone about. She was scared and needed help.

- 2. Character's Motive** Reread page 42. Why does Melinda take abuse from the other students and not talk about what happened?

*It is too traumatic for her to even think about. She wants to forget that it ever happened.*

### PAGE 63

- 1. Inference** Melinda gets in trouble because of her grades. What does Melinda's talk with her parents reveal about their relationship? They don't communicate well. Melinda's parents do all the talking. Melinda doesn't speak or look at them. She describes herself as a victim.

- 2. Plot** Reread page 63. Who is IT? How does Melinda feel about IT? IT is someone at school. Melinda doesn't like IT. She refers to IT as a nightmare and someone that makes her want to throw up. IT probably has something to do with what happened to her.

## Student Journal, page 5

Speak

### Respond to First Marking Period

- 1. Personal Response** Melinda feels like her room does not express who she is, but she is not sure how she wants to change it. How does your room express who you are?

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- 2. Mood** What mood does the author create by making Melinda an outcast? How does the author create this mood? Use the word *outcast* in your response.

*The mood is sad and depressing because Melinda is lonely and has no friends. Melinda is sarcastic and negative towards everything in her life because she's an outcast.*

- 3. Inference** What is Melinda's relationship with her parents like? How could it be affecting Melinda's actions?

*It is not good. Everybody in the family avoids each other. They only communicate through notes. When they do speak to each other, it is to fight. Melinda has learned that avoiding a confrontation is the best solution.*

- 4. Generate Questions** Write a question about this section for someone else reading this book. Exchange questions with them. Do you agree with their answer?

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## Student Journal, page 6

Speak

### Respond to First Marking Period, continued

- 5. Character** In this section, we learn about Melinda, Heather, and Rachel. List what each character does and what this shows about the character.

Character Description Chart

Character	What the Character Does	What This Shows About the Character
Melinda	mopes around school and the house; doesn't talk to anyone; doesn't want to get involved	Something bad must have happened to make her behave this way and suddenly lose all her friends.
Heather	plans ways to get involved and be a part of the in-group	She really wants to fit in, make new friends, and be involved.
Rachel	is purposely mean to Melinda even though they used to be best friends	She is not concerned about Melinda and has moved on and met new people.

How is Melinda different from Heather and Rachel? What do Melinda's actions and relationships reveal about her?

*Unlike Heather and Rachel, Melinda is not interested in anything. She doesn't want to be involved or talk to anyone. Melinda is sad and depressed. She has trouble enjoying the things she used to enjoy. Something bad must have happened to her for all of this to happen. Melinda needs help.*

Pages 67–116 **Answers for Before You Move On**  
**Second Marking Period**

Student Journal, page 7

PAGE 90

- Character's Point of View** Reread page 69. Why is Melinda able to talk to Heather but not to her parents or teachers?  
*She can't speak because she feels so much fear and anger. She can't relax. Everyone else harasses her, but with Heather she is more comfortable.*
- Comparisons** David disagrees with Mr. Neck. How does he handle the problem? How does this differ from how Melinda handles her problems?  
*David stands up to Mr. Neck. He is willing to speak up for himself and doesn't worry about his reputation, which Melinda can't do. He is emotionally strong.*

PAGE 116

- Cause and Effect** Reread page 93. Why does Melinda almost tell her parents what happened after she opens her gifts?  
*Her parents get her art supplies because they notice she has been drawing. It makes Melinda feel loved and understood. She thinks they will understand what happened that night and help her.*
- Mood** Reread pages 112–113. How does the mood of the story change when IT walks into the room?  
*The mood before he entered was just typical teenage behavior. It becomes dark and fear-filled after he enters. Melinda is so upset by his presence that she vomits.*

Speak

**Respond to Second Marking Period**

1. **Personal Response** Melinda's closet is her place to escape to when things are difficult. Describe a place where you escape to think or be alone. How does this help you cope?

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2. **Character's Motive** Why does Melinda remove the mirror in her room and the one in her closet at school? Use the word *withdrawal* in your response.

*She cannot deal with what happened to her. She is hiding and in withdrawal from everything, including herself.*

3. **Inference** What makes Melinda pass out during the frog dissection?

*The frog reminds her of a defenseless person and she equates that with what happened to her at the party.*

4. **Generate Questions** Write a question about this section for someone else reading this book. Exchange questions with them. Do you agree with their answer?

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Student Journal, page 8

Speak

**Respond to Second Marking Period, continued**

5. **Conclusions** In this section, Melinda is still struggling to forget what happened at the party. List her encounters with IT and how she reacts in a T Chart.

T Chart

Encounters with IT	Melinda's Reaction
Melinda sees IT in the hallway and IT smiles and winks.	Melinda feels like she is going to be sick.
IT creeps up behind Melinda and whispers, "Freshmeat."	Melinda cannot believe he is focusing his attention on her. She drops what she is doing and runs.
IT stands behind Melinda and twirls her ponytail.	Melinda runs to the bathroom and gets sick.

Melinda describes Andy Evans as "the Prince of Darkness." What happens when she has to be near him, and what does that tell the reader?

*Being near IT makes Melinda afraid and unable to function normally. She runs to the bathroom and throws up. This tells the reader that IT is the cause of all of Melinda's pain. Melinda wants to forget that night completely, but being silent is affecting her just as much.*

Third Marking Period

PAGE 139

- 1. **Cause and Effect** Reread pages 129–132. Why does Heather tell Melinda they are no longer friends?  
*Heather regrets their friendship. She thinks they are too different and Melinda is too depressed. Spending time with Melinda will ruin Heather’s reputation.*
- 2. **Character** Melinda gets very upset after she opens the valentine on her locker. What does that tell you about her?  
*She wants to be loved and accepted. She is very hurt and traumatized by what happened to her. It has affected everything in her life and she is very lonely.*

PAGE 166

- 1. **Comparisons** Why do Melinda’s parents think she is not speaking? How does this compare to Melinda’s reasons?  
*Her parents think that her behavior is caused by an attitude problem or bad influences at high school. Melinda isn’t speaking because she doesn’t think anyone will believe her.*
- 2. **Summarize** Reread pages 162–165. Describe what happened at the party last summer.  
*Melinda and Rachel went to a party. Melinda drank too much beer. Andy flirted with her and then raped her. She called 911 and everyone got mad at her because the police came and ended the party. But Melinda ran away before telling anyone she was raped.*

Speak

**Respond to Third Marking Period**

- Personal Response** What do you think about Heather’s decision to end her friendship with Melinda? If you were Heather, what would you have done?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Dialogue** What do the adults say at the meeting with Principal Principal? What does Melinda say? What does this suggest about Melinda’s situation? Use the word *communicate* in your response.  
*Melinda says nothing. Her parents argue with the counselor and principal. Melinda is going through a tough situation and it won’t get better if they are unable to communicate.*
- Flashback** Melinda finally thinks about what happened on the night of the party. What prompts her flashback?  
*The excitement of the basketball game makes her want to be “a part of it all.” When David invites her to his house, she wants to go. But part of her is scared that something bad will happen. She wants to participate in life again but has to face her past.*
- Generate Questions** Write a question about this section for someone else reading this book. Exchange questions with them. Do you agree with their answer?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Speak

**Respond to Third Marking Period, continued**

- Inference** Melinda’s life is affected further because of her silence. List what happens to Melinda in the Cause column and how Melinda is affected by these events in the Effects column on the Cause and Effect Chart.

**Cause and Effect Chart**

Causes	Effects
<p><i>has an encounter with JT walking to school</i></p> <p><i>loses Heather’s friendship</i></p> <p><i>Valentines Day is celebrated in a big way</i></p> <p><i>sees sick people at the hospital</i></p> <p><i>David invites her to a party</i></p>	<p><i>ditches school; thinks about telling someone what happened</i></p> <p><i>feels very lonely and needy</i></p> <p><i>is devastated that no one likes her</i></p> <p><i>decides there is nothing wrong with her</i></p> <p><i>is conflicted because she wants to go but is scared</i></p>

What is Melinda beginning to realize about her life? Is there any way for Melinda to help herself?  
*She wants to change. She wants to be part of a group and have friends again. The only way for Melinda to help herself change is if she speaks out about what happened to her. Only then will she be able to start to heal and become the happy person she used to be.*

**Pages 169–237**    **Answers for Before You Move On**  
**Fourth Marking Period**

Student Journal, page 11

**PAGE 182**

- Plot** Reread pages 178–182. What changes after Melinda learns that Rachel wants to date Andy Evans?  
*Melinda worries that Andy will hurt Rachel like he hurt her. Melinda finally takes action and writes a warning note.*
- Predict** What do you think will happen when Rachel gets the note from Melinda?

**PAGE 201**

- Character's Movie** Reread page 190. Melinda refuses to read her report. Why does David tell Melinda she should speak up for herself?  
*He wants her to know that staying silent isn't helping her. He is her friend so he wants to help her.*
- Conclusions** Reread pages 196–197. What does Melinda start to realize?  
*It is not her fault. It doesn't matter that she had been drinking and thought Andy was cute. Andy is to blame.*

**PAGE 222**

- Character** Melinda refuses to help Heather and tells Rachel what happened that night. What does this tell you about her?  
*She is more confident and is no longer acting like a victim.*
- Conclusions** Melinda says “I feel like I can fly.” Why? What does she mean?  
*She writes on the bathroom stall that Andy Evans is a guy to stay away from. Many girls respond. She realizes she is not alone. There are other victims. She feels free and that her nightmare is almost over.*

**PAGE 237**

- Conclusions** Melinda is able to get away from IT this time. Why?  
*She is stronger and no longer a victim.*
- Inference** Why is Melinda finally able to draw her tree?  
*She is no longer emotionally blocked. Her thoughts and feelings are out in the open, she is no longer an outcast, and she is back to being that girl she was before the rape.*

**Speak**

**Respond to Fourth Marking Period**

- Personal Response** Looking at the poster of Maya Angelou inspires Melinda to be brave. Who inspires you?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- Cause and Effect** What happened as a result of David telling Melinda that she needs to speak up for herself? Use the word *resolution* in your response.  
*Melinda slowly begins to speak up for herself. She is able to stand up to Heather, and start speaking with her parents. Melinda is beginning to find a resolution to all of her pain. This is the start of Melinda's recovery.*
- Theme** How does Melinda's realization as she draws her tree relate to the theme Moment of Truth?  
*She is finally able to accept that the rape happened and deal with it instead of run from it. She won't let it kill her. She is able to grow and draw her tree.*

**What If?**

- Connect** Look at your notes on Student Journal, page 2. Think about how keeping a secret can affect you more than telling the truth. Compare this to *Speak*. What happened to Melinda because of her silence?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Student Journal, page 12

**Speak**

**Respond to Fourth Marking Period, continued**

- Conclusions** In this section, Melinda is finally able to deal with what happened between her and Andy Evans. List the events that led to her speaking up. Use the **Sequence Chart** to answer the question.

**Sequence Chart**

**First:** David tells Melinda that she cannot expect to make a difference in the world if she does not speak up.

↓

**Next:** Melinda realizes that what happened was not her fault.

↓

**Last:** Melinda finds out that she is not the only one that knows about Andy's reputation after she starts the bathroom list.

How does Melinda find the courage to speak up for herself? What happens to Melinda as a result of breaking her silence?  
*People need support to find courage. David and Ivy encourage Melinda. When Melinda realizes that the rape wasn't her fault, she gains confidence. When Melinda finds out others hate Andy, she is able to gain more strength. Because she finally speaks up, Melinda is able to start her recovery.*

# Exchange Discussion

## THE QUESTION

How can silence be more powerful than the truth?

- **What does Melinda communicate through her silence?**  
*Her fear, loneliness, and confusion. She feels that no one wants to hear what she has to say. She is also communicating guilt for calling the police because her friends don't know the truth.*
- **Tell about a time you were scared to tell the truth. How did you feel when you finally told someone?**
- **When Melinda breaks her silence, she is finally able to draw her tree. What activities, such as art, music, or sports, help you express yourself?**

Speak, inside back cover

**THE EXCHANGE**

Review the work you did in your Student Journal. Take your book and your Journal with you to The Exchange book discussion.

**EXCHANGE IDEAS**

- Tell the group why you would recommend or not recommend this book.
- Compare this book to something it reminded you of, such as another book, a movie, song, or a personal experience.
- What questions would you ask the author about this book? What do you imagine the answers would be?

**THE QUESTION**

**How can silence be more powerful than the truth?**

- What does Melinda communicate through her silence?
- Tell about a time you were scared to tell the truth. How did you feel when you finally told someone?
- When Melinda breaks her silence, she is finally able to draw her tree. What activities, such as art, music, or sports, help you express yourself?

**REFLECT**

Summarize your Exchange. How did this book change the way you see something? What questions do you still have? How will you answer them?

# Evaluate the Discussion

Use the reproducible master from page 9 of this **Teacher's Guide** to evaluate **The Exchange** discussion. The form may also be used by students for group assessment.

## Discussion Rubric

**Evaluate the Discussion**

Excellent	Good	Fair
<input type="checkbox"/> Everyone participated.	<input type="checkbox"/> Most people participated.	<input type="checkbox"/> Only a few people participated.
<input type="checkbox"/> Everyone spoke clearly.	<input type="checkbox"/> Most people spoke clearly.	<input type="checkbox"/> Some people did not speak clearly.
<input type="checkbox"/> Everyone listened carefully.	<input type="checkbox"/> Most people listened carefully.	<input type="checkbox"/> Some people did not listen carefully.
<input type="checkbox"/> We stayed on the topic throughout the discussion.	<input type="checkbox"/> We stayed on the topic most of the time.	<input type="checkbox"/> We did not stay on the topic all the time.
<input type="checkbox"/> We responded to each other's thoughts and ideas often.	<input type="checkbox"/> We commented on each other's thoughts and ideas sometimes.	<input type="checkbox"/> We did not make many comments on each other's thoughts and ideas.
<input type="checkbox"/> Most people used examples from the book to support their points.	<input type="checkbox"/> Many people used examples from the book to support their points.	<input type="checkbox"/> Only a few people used examples from the book to support their points.
<input type="checkbox"/> Most people gave detailed answers using their experiences and even other texts.	<input type="checkbox"/> Many people gave detailed answers using their experiences.	<input type="checkbox"/> Only a few people gave detailed answers.

Notes:

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# Evaluate the Discussion

Excellent	Good	Fair
<input type="checkbox"/> Everyone participated.	<input type="checkbox"/> Most people participated.	<input type="checkbox"/> Only a few people participated.
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<input type="checkbox"/> We responded to each other's thoughts and ideas often.	<input type="checkbox"/> We commented on each other's thoughts and ideas sometimes.	<input type="checkbox"/> We did not make many comments on each other's thoughts and ideas.
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# Assessment

Assess students' understanding of *Speak* by administering the multiple-choice test and essay questions. (**Teacher's Guide, pages 11–13**)

How you administer the **Assessment** depends on your objective. You may choose to use the test as:

- an open-book test to allow students to continue practicing reading strategies and/or become familiar with a typical standardized test format
- a closed-book test to check students' comprehension of the book and their abilities in various reading skills
- a take-home test to allow students to practice reading strategies as well as test-taking skills

Suggested point values are as follows:

**Assessment Part I:** 5 points per question for a total of 50 points

**Assessment Part II:** 40 points possible (see **Scoring Guide, page 14**)

## Assessment Part I

**Speak** Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Assessment Part I**

Circle the best answer.

- Which of these is the best plot summary?
  - A Melinda Sordino begins high school as an outcast. Her friends are not speaking to her because she called the police at a party. Melinda cannot tell her friends that she was raped. She withdraws and has trouble communicating with others. The only thing she is interested in is art. But when her ex-best friend begins dating the boy that raped her, Melinda has to tell the truth.
  - B Melinda Sordino called the police at a party over the summer. Nobody wants to talk to her anymore because she ruined the fun. Melinda becomes an outcast and no longer has any friends. Her grades begin to drop and her parents get very angry with her. Melinda has no idea how she will ever be happy again.
  - C Andy Evans raped Melinda. Now Melinda must hide from Andy in school. She takes over an abandoned janitor's closet. She decorates it and makes it her own. She avoids Andy Evans as much as possible. Melinda finally tells the truth about what Andy did to her over the summer.
  - D Melinda becomes friends with Heather from Ohio who is starting school and does not know anyone. Even though Melinda and Heather do not have much in common, they continue to do things together. However, Heather decides they can no longer be friends. Melinda is ruining her reputation. Melinda is upset with Heather and decides that Heather is not a nice person.
- Melinda has a hard time trying to \_\_\_\_\_ her feelings. She suffers because of her silence.
  - A communicate
  - B harass
  - C outcast
  - D overcome
- What happens when Melinda finally thinks about what happened on the night of the rape?
  - A The reader sees that Melinda only called the police because she did not like any of her classmates.
  - B Melinda realizes why no one is her friend anymore.
  - C Melinda thinks she is so hurt that she will never be the same again.
  - D Melinda finally starts to accept what happened to her.
- Melinda refuses to tell anyone what happened at the party. She thinks the only resolution to her problem is to ignore it. In this sentence, what does *resolution* mean?
  - A beginning
  - B question
  - C solution
  - D contribution

## Assessment Part II

**Speak**

**Guidelines for Short Essay**

Have students write a short essay in response to one of the writing prompts below. Use the **Scoring Guide** to assist in your evaluation of their essays.

- What obstacles does Melinda face in coping with being raped? What helps her to accept what happened? What is the importance of having a support system during life's greatest challenges?  
Responses should include that she had no friends to give support. Her parents were always angry with her so she had no support from them. Finally realizing that it is not her fault and that there are others to help her through it allows her to accept what happened.
- How does Melinda's silence about the rape affect her life? How do you think the story would have been different if Melinda had told someone? What should you do if you suspect that a friend needs help?  
Responses should include how Melinda loses all of her friends. Her grades begin to drop and she stops caring about anything. Melinda's relationship with her parents gets worse. If Melinda had told someone about the rape, she would have started high school with her friends and had a support system. She may have received counseling.

**Scoring Guide**

	Description of the response:
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpretation is accurate and thoughtful</li> <li>• Explanation is fully developed</li> <li>• Support includes specific and relevant text evidence</li> <li>• All parts of the question are clearly addressed</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpretation is adequate</li> <li>• Explanation is developed but may lack some insight</li> <li>• Support includes most specific and relevant text evidence</li> <li>• All parts of the question are addressed to some degree</li> </ul>
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1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpretation is weak</li> <li>• Explanation is vague</li> <li>• Support includes few, if any, relevant details from the text</li> <li>• Only one part of the question is minimally addressed</li> </ul>
0	Response is totally incorrect or irrelevant

## Assessment Part I, continued

**Speak** Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Assessment Part I, continued**

Circle the best answer.

- Why does Melinda tell Rachel the truth about Andy?
  - A Rachel is going to the prom with Andy and Melinda is jealous.
  - B Melinda wants Rachel to be happy.
  - C Melinda fears Andy will harm Rachel.
  - D Melinda is angry at Rachel and wants Rachel to be miserable.
- The author changes the mood to one of hopefulness at the end of the story by—
  - A showing that Melinda failed art class and is moving to New York City
  - B showing that Melinda is able to draw her tree and talk about what happened
  - C showing how Melinda and David become friends
  - D showing that Melinda and Heather reconcile their differences
- Why does Melinda refuse David's offer to go to his house and celebrate the team's win?
  - A Melinda is not a sports fan.
  - B Melinda does not like David.
  - C Melinda is afraid that David will want to touch her or kiss her.
  - D Melinda's parents will not let her go.
- How does Heather prove that she is not a true friend?
  - A She is worried that Melinda will ruin her reputation.
  - B She spreads rumors about Melinda.
  - C She lies to Melinda about where she is from.
  - D She is only friends with Melinda so that she has someone to sit with at lunch.
- The tree and Melinda's inability to complete it is a symbol of—
  - A her unhappiness at home
  - B her future and how she does not know what she will become after high school
  - C the fact that Heather treats her poorly because of the rape
  - D the way she has stopped developing because of the rape
- Which sentence from this story supports the idea that Melinda will recover from the effects of the rape?
  - A *I will not be buying a yearbook.*
  - B *It wasn't my fault. And I'm not going to let it kill me. I can grow.*
  - C *The house is quiet, dark. Cool breeze slides in between the curtains.*
  - D *Tears pop up from some hidden spring. Damn. I sniff and wipe my eyes on my sleeve.*

## Assessment Part I

Circle the best answer.

1. Which of these is the best plot summary?
  - A Melinda Sordino begins high school as an outcast. Her friends are not speaking to her because she called the police at a party. Melinda cannot tell her friends that she was raped. She withdraws and has trouble communicating with others. The only thing she is interested in is art. But when her ex-best friend begins dating the boy that raped her, Melinda has to tell the truth.
  - B Melinda Sordino called the police at a party over the summer. Nobody wants to talk to her anymore because she ruined the fun. Melinda becomes an outcast and no longer has any friends. Her grades begin to drop and her parents get very angry with her. Melinda has no idea how she will ever be happy again.
  - C Andy Evans raped Melinda. Now Melinda must hide from Andy in school. She takes over an abandoned janitor's closet. She decorates it and makes it her own. She avoids Andy Evans as much as possible. Melinda finally tells the truth about what Andy did to her over the summer.
  - D Melinda becomes friends with Heather from Ohio who is starting school and does not know anyone. Even though Melinda and Heather do not have much in common, they continue to do things together. However, Heather decides they can no longer be friends. Melinda is ruining her reputation. Melinda is upset with Heather and decides that Heather is not a nice person.
2. Melinda has a hard time trying to \_\_\_\_\_ her feelings. She suffers because of her silence.
  - A communicate
  - B harass
  - C outcast
  - D overcome
3. What happens when Melinda finally thinks about what happened on the night of the rape?
  - A The reader sees that Melinda only called the police because she did not like any of her classmates.
  - B Melinda realizes why no one is her friend anymore.
  - C Melinda thinks she is so hurt that she will never be the same again.
  - D Melinda finally starts to accept what happened to her.
4. Melinda refuses to tell anyone what happened at the party. She thinks the only resolution to her problem is to ignore it. In this sentence, what does *resolution* mean?
  - A beginning
  - B question
  - C solution
  - D contribution

**Assessment Part I**, continued

Circle the best answer.

5. Why does Melinda tell Rachel the truth about Andy?
- A Rachel is going to the prom with Andy and Melinda is jealous.
  - B Melinda wants Rachel to be happy.
  - C Melinda fears Andy will harm Rachel.
  - D Melinda is angry at Rachel and wants Rachel to be miserable.
6. The author changes the mood to one of hopefulness at the end of the story by—
- A showing that Melinda failed art class and is moving to New York City
  - B showing that Melinda is able to draw her tree and talk about what happened
  - C showing how Melinda and David become friends
  - D showing that Melinda and Heather reconcile their differences
7. Why does Melinda refuse David's offer to go to his house and celebrate the team's win?
- A Melinda is not a sports fan.
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8. How does Heather prove that she is not a true friend?
- A She is worried that Melinda will ruin her reputation.
  - B She spreads rumors about Melinda.
  - C She lies to Melinda about where she is from.
  - D She is only friends with Melinda so that she has someone to sit with at lunch.
9. The tree and Melinda's inability to complete it is a symbol of—
- A her unhappiness at home
  - B her future and how she does not know what she will become after high school
  - C the fact that Heather treats her poorly
  - D the way she has stopped developing because of the rape
10. Which sentence from this story supports the idea that Melinda will recover from the effects of the rape?
- A *I will not be buying a yearbook.*
  - B *It wasn't my fault. And I'm not going to let it kill me. I can grow.*
  - C *The house is quiet, dark. Cool breeze slides in between the curtains.*
  - D *Tears pop up from some hidden spring. Damn. I sniff and wipe my eyes on my sleeve.*



## Guidelines for Short Essay

Have students write a short essay in response to one of the writing prompts below. Use the **Scoring Guide** to assist in your evaluation of their essays.

- A.** What obstacles does Melinda face in coping with being raped? What helps her to accept what happened? What is the importance of having a support system during life’s greatest challenges?

Responses should include that she had no friends to give support. Her parents were always angry with her so she had no support from them. Finally realizing that it is not her fault and that there are others to help her through it allows her to accept what happened.

- B.** How does Melinda’s silence about the rape affect her life? How do you think the story would have been different if Melinda had told someone? What should you do if you suspect that a friend needs help?

Responses should include how Melinda loses all of her friends. Her grades begin to drop and she stops caring about anything. Melinda’s relationship with her parents gets worse. If Melinda had told someone about the rape, she would have started high school with her friends and had a support system. She may have received counseling.

## Scoring Guide

	Description of the response:
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