Speak
by Laurie Halse Anderson

Novel Discussion and Study Guide

Name: ____________________________

Period: __________

Teacher: ________________________

This packet is due at the end of the unit for a QUIZ grade.
It will be periodically reviewed to ensure that you understand and are keeping up with the
class readings and assignments.

Do NOT lose this, as another will NOT be provided!
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<th>SUNDAY</th>
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<th>WEDNESDAY</th>
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<td><strong>&quot;First Marking Period&quot; Quiz</strong></td>
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<td><strong>&quot;Third Marking Period&quot; Quiz</strong></td>
<td><strong>&quot;Foil – Post Mortem (Major Grade)&quot;</strong></td>
<td><strong>Theme Presentation Research Source Search</strong></td>
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**Note:** The purpose of this calendar is to help students stay ahead of readings, assignments, quizzes, and projects. Not all assignments are reflected on this unit calendar, and it is essential that students keep up with all assignments, whether noted here or not. Absent students must use this calendar as a means of keeping up with class work when out, so that valuable instruction is not lost. **Calendar is subject to change!!**
## Speak Literary Elements Log

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Literary Element</th>
<th>Exact Quote from Novel</th>
<th>Purpose/Effect of Element</th>
<th>Page Number</th>
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Melinda’s Character Map

Evidence MUST include page numbers!

Character Name

Trait #1
- Evidence
- Evidence

Trait #2
- Evidence
- Evidence

Trait #3
- Evidence
- Evidence
- Evidence
Heather’s Character Map

Evidence MUST include page numbers!

Character Name

Trait #1

Evidence
Evidence

Trait #2

Evidence
Evidence

Trait #3

Evidence
Evidence

Evidence
### Other *Speak* Characters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>One Word Description</th>
<th>Physical Appearance</th>
<th>Significance to the Story/Melinda</th>
<th>Type of character</th>
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# The Post-Mortem of a Protagonist

**Directions:**
- Within your group, answer seven (7) of the questions listed in the “body part” chart below for Melinda from *Speak*.
- Find quotes that represent each of the answers provided.
- Use either the pattern provided by your teacher or draw your own picture of the character’s body.
- Write the quotes in the appropriate location on your drawing.
- Add a title and color to the drawing.
- You will turn in two things: (1) The answers to your seven questions and the quotes on one page; (2) The body with quotes.
- Make sure all group members names are on the assignment.

**Due: Thursday, April 11**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Head</th>
<th>Intellectual side of the character—What are his/her dreams? Visions? Beliefs?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eyes</td>
<td>Seeing through the character’s eyes—What memorable sights affect him/her? How?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ears</td>
<td>Hearing through the character’s ears—What does he/she notice and remember others saying to him/her? How is he/she affected?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nose</td>
<td>Smelling through the character’s nose—What smells affect him/her? How?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mouth</td>
<td>The character’s communication—What song would symbolize the character’s philosophy of life? Include any (school appropriate) lyrics to further explain.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arms</td>
<td>Working—What is the character’s relationship to work (physical or mental) in general? Why?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hands</td>
<td>The practical side of the character—What conflicts does he/she deal with? How?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heart</td>
<td>The emotional side of the character—What does he/she love? Whom? How?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Torso</td>
<td>The instinctive side of the character—What doesn’t he/she like about himself/herself? What does he/she hide? What brings the character pain? What does he/she fear?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legs</td>
<td>The playful side of the character—What does he/she do for fun? What are his/her interests?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feet</td>
<td>The character’s mobility—Where has he/she been (literally and/or figuratively)? How has he/she been affected by travel or a geographical location?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wings</td>
<td>The character’s future—Where will he/she probably go next? What do you think the future has in store for him/her?</td>
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You will be graded based on:
- 7 “body parts” covered
- The answers you provide to your 7 chosen questions
- Quotes correctly represent your assertions about the character
- Neatness and presentation—this assignment should be final draft quality; if it is sloppy and looks like trash, it will be graded like trash.

**THIS ASSIGNMENT IS PART 1 of 2 – 50% OF A MAJOR GRADE**
The Post-Mortem of a Foil

Directions:
- Within your group, answer seven (7) of the questions listed in the "body part" chart below for Heather from *Speak*.
- Find quotes that represent each of the answers provided.
- Use either the pattern provided by your teacher or draw your own picture of the character's body.
- Write the quotes in the appropriate location on your drawing.
- Add a title and color to the drawing.
- You will turn in two things: (1) The answers to your seven questions and the quotes on one page; (2) The body with quotes.
- Make sure all group members names are on the assignment.

Due: Tuesday, April 16

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- The answers you provide to your 7 chosen questions
- Quotes correctly represent your assertions about the character
- Neatness and presentation—this assignment should be final draft quality; if it is sloppy and looks like trash, it will be graded like trash.

**THIS ASSIGNMENT IS PART 2 of 2 – 50% OF A MAJOR GRADE**
Speak Study Questions

First Marking Period

Vocabulary
- *Pas mal* – [French] “Not badly”
- *abstinence* - not engaging in sexual intercourse
- *blathers* – nonsensical talk
- *dryad* – a mythological spirit once thought to inhabit oak trees; also known as *nymphs* (tree nymphs), these spirits were believed to live as long as the tree in which they lived.
- *errant* – wandering, roaming
- *gelatinous* – having the consistency of gelatin
- *inconspicuous* – not noticeable
- *indoctrination* – an informative meeting
- *integral* – essential, imperative
- *interrogation* – a serious set of questions
- *PDA* – “Public Displays of Affection”
- *reconstituted* – reconstructed, reformed
- *suburbia* – the suburbs; residential areas outside city limits
  - pale; exhausted

1. The first sentence sets the tone for the entire book:

   “It is my first morning of high school. I have seven new notebooks, a skirt I hate, and a stomachache.” (Pg. 3)

   What do you think the narrator conveys using this tone? Do you think the narrator will maintain this tone throughout the first section?

2. What is significant about the following quote: “…I figure it’s the best chance I have to make eye contact with one of my friends, if any of them have decided to talk to me yet”? (Pg. 3)
3. While on the bus, a fellow-student unwraps a Ho-Ho and throws the wrapper at the narrator. What does this action say about the narrator’s role among her peers?

4. What is the high school mascot changed to? Why is the change ironic?

5. What does the following quote say about the narrator’s self-image?

   “I have entered high school with the wrong hair, the wrong clothes, the wrong attitude.” (Pg. 4)

6. What has happened to the narrator’s previous group of friends?

7. Anderson uses titled sections to break up the book, rather than chapters. What does Anderson’s style add to the novel? How does it improve or detract from the section?


9. What is symbolic about “Hairwoman” and the narrator’s description of her?
10. What does the narrator mean with her comment about the Vietnam War and the War in Iraq being “TV wars”?

11. Anderson implements a unique style for dialogue:
   “Mr. Neck: ‘We meet again.’
   Me:…
   Mr. Neck: ‘Where do you think you’re going?’
   Me: …” (Pg. 9)
   How does this style affect the story?

12. The narrator introduces her art teacher as “Mr. Freeman.” Up to this point, the narrator has assigned teachers and students creative nicknames. What do you think is the significance of her using his real name, as well as the name in general?

13. How is the following an instance of foreshadowing?
   “Where you can touch that part of you that you’ve never dared look at before.” (Pg. 10)

14. Reword the following quote and explain its symbolism and significance to the title of the book
   “Ask me to help you find the wind.” (Pg. 10)

15. The narrator chooses a tree as her art project. What do you suppose the tree symbolizes?
16. What literary device best describes the section entitled “Español.”

17. The narrator sarcastically mentions that her family communicates with notes on the counter. What does this say about her family life?

18. The narrator describes her mother and the problems her mother encounters at work. Since this introduction comes directly after the narrator’s comment on communication, what does this say about their mother-daughter relationship?

19. The narrator describes her ritual of eating on the white furniture without getting caught. Essentially, this description is a metaphor that is also a major theme in this novel. What theme is being described?

20. What does the narrator mean by “My room belongs to an alien”? (Pg. 15) Describe what the narrator is going through. How do her emotions correspond with the theme of identity?

21. The narrator thinks of changing her room, and although she does not even “know what [she] want[s] it to look like, anyway,” there is also another factor that makes her stifle her need to change her room. (Pg. 16) What is it? What does this reveal about the narrator?
22. The narrator comments on Nicole’s strength because Nicole can get changed in front of the entire gym class, something that is difficult for the narrator. How is the narrator also using “strength” in a figurative sense as well?

23. Rachel’s changing her name corresponds with three themes of this novel: coming of age, finding one’s identity, and the search for individuality. Explain how it fits into all three.

24. Find an example of cynicism in the “Friends” section.

25. In the beginning of “Heathering,” Heather says the she and the narrator should join some school clubs: “the tricky part is choosing the clubs that have the Right People” (Pg. 22). What is the significance of capitalizing “Right People”?

26. When the narrator goes to Heather’s house, she describes how Heather’s mother “meets us at the door. She wants to hear all about our day, how long I’ve lived in town, and asks little sideways questions about my parents, so she can figure out if I’m the kind of friend she wants for her daughter. I don’t mind. I think it’s nice that she cares.” (Pg. 22) The last part of that quote, “I think it’s nice that she cares,” shows the narrator’s true emotions. What do you suppose she’s thinking about?

27. What does Heather’s wanting to join many clubs indicate about her character?
28. Why do you think the narrator is so lethargic: “My goal is to go home and take a nap.” (Pg. 24)

29. In “Burrow,” the narrator’s name is revealed for the first time. How did this technique affect the way you read the first part of this story? How does this technique add to one of the major themes in the story?

30. This is the second instance in which Melinda uses smell as a sensory image to describe something. Why is smell an important sense to use?

   “I haven’t stumbled into a classroom; it is an old janitor’s closet that smells like sour sponges.” (Pg. 25)

31. Use “The Opposite of Inspiration Is…Expiration?” section to explain the symbolic nature of the tree Melinda has to draw in connection with her character.

32. Also within “The Opposite of Inspiration Is…Expiration?” find an example of how Melinda’s thoughts about herself are changing.

33. The “Dinner Theater” section incorporates humor into a serious situation. Why do you think Anderson uses this technique? Is it successful?
34. Why do you think David Petrakis does not get bullied at school?

35. How does Melinda’s use of gibberish, “…if anyone can explain the wangdiddler’s role in the negative hotchka theorem” exemplify her feelings about algebra? (Pg. 38)

36. Although Melinda has no interest in trick-or-treating, what does the tone of the first sentence of “Halloween” indicate about Melinda’s life?

37. Discuss two main themes employed in “Halloween.”

38. How is Merryweather High School’s changing of its mascot representative of a typical teenager?

39. Identify three similes in the “First Marking Period.”
Second Marking Period

**Vocabulary**

*abyssal* – extremely low and wretched

*conjugate* – to join together

*forestry* – the science of developing and maintaining forests

*harried* – hurried, rushed

*hypothalamus* – the part of the brain that controls the nervous system (heartbeat, blood pressure, blood-sugar levels, etc.)

*pistils* – parts of plants that contain the unfertilized seeds for reproduction; the female part

*stamens* – pollen-producing parts of plants; the male part

*tubercular* relating to tuberculosis (a deadly disease characterized by severe flu-like symptoms, lesions, and fibrosis); referring to a person with tuberculosis

*vermilion* – bright red in color

*xenophobic* – having a fear of strangers or foreigners

1. Why did the Ecology Club make posters when the high school changed its nickname to the Tigers?

2. How is Melinda affected physically by her secret?

3. How does Melinda personify the physical ramifications of her secret?

4. Melinda has to choose five Spanish verbs to conjugate. What is significant about her choices?
5. In the section entitled “Job Day,” Melinda is required to take a test. In the first question, do any of the choices pertain to Melinda? What do you suppose she chooses? Why?

6. Discuss each of the career choices Melinda receives, and explain why it would be a suitable occupation for her. Also explain why they would NOT make suitable careers for her.

7. Melinda describes trying to “draw a branch coming out of a tree trunk for the 315th time…” (Pg. 55). What does this show about her? Is her personality changing? Was she like this before?

8. “Mr. Neck” starts a serious debate about immigration, in which he shoots down every point each student makes. In relation to Melinda’s situation, what does Mr. Neck represent?

9. David stands up to “Mr. Neck.” How could David’s actions in this scene be an instance of foreshadowing?

10. In protest, Davis leaves the classroom. What popular expression is illustrated by David’s action?
11. Find an extended metaphor in the “Giving Thanks” section. Where does the metaphor begin?

12. Ivy describes Melinda’s turkey memorial as “scary…in a weird way. Not clown scary…. you don’t want to look at it too long.” (Pg. 64) Explain the figurative meaning behind Ivy’s description.

13. Find at least three examples of comic relief in the “Wishbone” section.

14. The apple smell in biology reminds Melinda of what memory? What literary device(s) is used in the description?

15. Identify three literary terms (other than sensory image) in the “Peeled and Cored” section.

16. Do you think David’s threat to sue Mr. Neck is realistic? Why or why not.
17. Melinda describes Merryweather High School as “no-cultural” instead of “multicultural.” How does this description allude figuratively to Melinda’s character and her situation?

18. In “Winter Break” Melinda reveals her low self-esteem. Find the primary example of this character trait. What incriminating information does Melinda reveal about her parents? What is significant about her statement?

19. Find a sensory image in “Winter Break.” What does this image evoke for Melinda?

20. What triggers Melinda’s emotional breakdown on Christmas Day?

21. In the Second Marking Period, where is the one unlikely place Melinda finds acceptance?

22. What type of sensory image is employed in “Hard Labor”?

23. In “Foul,” find an example of a unique writing technique or style.
24. Find two examples of imagery in “Coloring Outside the Lines.”

25. Even though the science room is filled with the scent of frogs instead of apples, find a specific connection between the apple experiment and the frog dissection.

26. What happens to Melinda during “Dead Frogs”?

27. How does Melinda justify her silence about her secret? Is her justification realistic? Why or why not?

28. Melinda has mentioned the scabs on her lips on many occasions, but she never fully explains where they come from. What do you suspect has happened to Melinda’s lips?

29. How does the “Model Citizen” section illustrate the motif of identity?

30. What project is Melinda helping Heather with? Describe what Melinda is doing?
31. When “IT” approaches Melinda in the hall, she is in complete shock. Explain how the writing style changes, and how it affects the tone and mood of the scene.

32. Describe the significance of the title of this section: “Naming the Monster.”

33. Melinda has a closet at school and one at home. What does the closet signify for her?

34. Anderson is a very descriptive writer. Her descriptions help the reader to better understand Melinda’s personality and emotions. Find at least three descriptive passages that stand out in the “Rent Round 3.”

35. After the encounter with Andy at lunch, Melinda gets sick in the bathroom. What do you learn about Heather through Melinda’s experience?

36. In the beginning of Melinda’s art project, Mr. Freeman says that he wants the students to put emotion into their assignments. Melinda says her “last tree looked like it had died from some fungal infection…” (Pg. 92) Even though Melinda is not pleased with the outcome of her last attempt, how does this tree represent her current emotion?

37. What is significant about Mr. Freeman’s radical action of slicing his picture?
Third Marking Period

Vocabulary
asphyxiated – suffocated
conundrum – a difficult situation
exile – to be cast out (usually from a community, state, or country)
jicama – a vegetable similar to a turnip
penetrate – to pierce
tenure – holding a position on a permanent basis
vespiary – a colony or nests of wasps or hornets

1. What literary allusion does Melinda make when she describes her encounter with Andy Evans in the parking lot?

2. What does Melinda do when she skips school? How is skipping school like going to school for Melinda?

3. How does Melinda personify their class’ analysis of *The Scarlet Letter*

4. What does Melinda associate with speaking up?

5. Why does Melinda think Mr. Freeman is the sanest person she knows?
6. What type of literary device is used in the following: “[Heather’s] friends scootch down to make room for her. They swallow her whole and she never looks back at me.” (Pg. 107)

7. What does Melinda find on her locker on Valentine’s Day? She does not open it right away. Who do you suspect gave it to her? Give specific reasoning as to why you came to this conclusion.

8. Why does Melinda’s “doodle” tree look better than the trees she has been trying to draw for her art project? (“I draw a picture of Ms. Keen as a robin. David smiles. He draws a branch under her feet and slides the notebook back to me. I try to connect the branch to a tree. It looks pretty good, better than anything I have drawn so far in art.” Pg. 110)

9. What type of physical reaction does Melinda experience after opening the card? What does this indicate?

10. Discuss the meaning and symbolism of the title “Cutting Out Hearts.”

11. How does Melinda end up at Mercy Hospital?
12. How does Melinda avoid attracting attention at the hospital?

13. Why do you think it is getting harder for Melinda to sleep at home?

14. At the end of “Our Lady of the Waiting Room,” Melinda thinks about taking a nap at the hospital, but she thinks twice. She replaces the gown and decides that she does not belong there because there is nothing wrong with her. She states that the patients at the hospital “are really sick people, sick that you can see.” (Pg. 113) Is Melinda sick in a way that you cannot see? How?

15. What is significant about Principal Principal calling Melinda “Melissa”? (Pg. 114)

16. Based on her parent’s reaction to the guidance counselor’s inquiry about the status of their marriage, why would the counselor know why Melinda keeps quiet?

17. Why is Melinda sent to MISS? What do you think MISS is an abbreviation for?
18. Melinda describes one of the other students in the “MISS” room as having “freaky” clothes, but that was “a misdemeanor here, not a felony.” (Pg. 117) What does this statement say about fashion and its importance for a person’s overall reputation in high school?

19. Discuss the imagery in the following passage:

“I am BunnyRabbit again, hiding in the open. I sit like I have an egg in my mouth. One move, one word, and the egg will shatter and blow up the world.” (Pg. 117)

20. Discuss Mr. Freeman’s profound statement: “You must walk alone to find your soul.” (Pg. 118)

21. Melinda connects with Picasso on an artistic level, but her connection goes deeper. How?

22. In the “Hall of Mirrors” section, what are the “thornbushes” Melinda uses to describe her feelings? (Pg. 125) Why do you think she uses this plant?

23. In “Germination,” Melinda is studying plants and how they reproduce and survive: “It’s amazing anything survives.” (Pg. 126) What else could Melinda be referring to?
24. What is significant about Melinda referring to her parents as “Them”?

25. Find two examples of personification in “Bologna Exile.”

26. Melinda uses sarcasm frequently. Find two examples of sarcasm in “Bologna Exile” and explain why she is using it.

27. In “Snow Day—School as Usual,” Melinda is in English class where they are analyzing Hawthorne. The class is discussing what Hawthorne meant by his use of the snow and cold. What else could the cold symbolize?

28. What happens to Melinda at the summertime party? Do you think she did everything in her power to stop it from happening?
Fourth Marking Period

**Vocabulary**
- arborists – plant specialists
- bichon frise – a breed of dog
- indentured – to force into servitude
- indoctrination – an instruction
- leper – a person infected with leprosy (a contagious bacterial disease that results in paralysis, deformation, and ulcers on the skin)
- mononucleosis – an infectious illness
- natter – to chatter
- suffragettes – a supporter of women’s rights
- tenacious – strong, determined

1. Discuss the title, “Exterminators,” in the first section of the fourth marking period. Why is this title relevant to the actions that take place in this section? Who or what do you think the title refers to?

2. According to Melinda, what are some of the signs of spring?

3. What does spring symbolize? What could this mean for Melinda?

4. What literary allusion does Melinda mention in “Spring Break”?

5. What is Ivy doing at the mall? Why?
6. Melinda states in “Genetics” that they will not learn about sex until the eleventh grade. What is significant about this fact?

7. Describe the way in which Melinda views herself and the traits she got from her family.

8. Elaborate on this description: “Andy Beast swoops over their heads, folds his wings, and sets himself between the girls as they start up the stairs.” (Pg. 150) What exactly do you think Melinda is imagining?

9. What does Maya Angelou represent? What literary term is used to describe Angelou’s influence on Melinda?

10. How is Melinda’s tree project like Picasso? What does she go through?

11. Explain the multiple levels of meaning found in the title “Growing Pains”
12. What advice does Mr. Freeman give to Melinda in “Growing Pains”? Why should Melinda take his advice on a personal level?

13. What do the suffragettes represent?

14. Discuss the irony in the statement Melinda writes on the board:

“The suffragettes fought for the right to speak. They were attacked, arrested, and thrown in jail for daring to do what they wanted. Like they were, I am willing to stand up for what I believe. No one should be forced to give speeches. I choose to stay silent.” (Pg. 156)

15. How is “root” a pun in the section “The Beast Prowls”?

16. Explain the following metaphor: “Her hand is cool, an island on my forehead.” (Pg. 163) How could you extend this metaphor?
17. When Melinda stays home sick from school, she watches daytime talk shows on TV. While watching, Melinda asks herself: “Was I raped?” (Pg. 164) Why is this even a question for Melinda?

18. In the “Real Spring” section, find as many literary terms as possible.

19. Find the specific event that took place earlier in this book that predicted Melinda’s innate gardening interest.

20. Why do you think “womynhood” is misspelled? (Pg. 170)

21. Who does Melinda get paired with to play tennis in gym class?

22. What does Melinda’s performance on the tennis court signify about her character development?
23. How is Melinda’s newfound confidence contradicted by the end of “Fault”?

24. What happens in “Hairwoman No More”? What could this be foreshadowing? What major theme does this illustrate?

25. What could the section, “Little Writing on the Wall” be foreshadowing?

26. How does Melinda deal with Heather at the end of “Prom Preparation”? How does this incident show Melinda? Is she changing? If so, how?

27. In “Communication 101,” Melinda attempts to approach Rachel about Andy Evans. At one point, the girls are writing notes back and forth in the library, and Melinda writes: “It’s nice to talk to you again. I’m sorry we couldn’t be friends this year.” (Pg. 182) Melinda comments on Rachel’s response to the note: “She melts a bit around the edges and writes back.” (Pg. 182) What does Rachel’s melting have to do with an earlier comment Melinda makes in this section? What does her melting have to do with her relationship with Melinda?
28. What happens when Melinda reveals her secret to Rachel? Why does Rachel react that way?

29. What turning point in the story makes Melinda feel like she can fly?

30. Use Melinda’s dad’s speech about saving the tree, and describe how it parallels with Melinda

   “Dad: He’s not chopping it down. He’s saving it. Those branches were long dead from disease. All plants are like that. By cutting off the damage, you make it possible for the tree to grow again. You watch—by the end of summer, this tree will be the strongest on the block.” (Pg. 187)

31. Where does Melinda go on her bike ride? Is it a positive or a negative experience?

32. What literary term describes Melinda’s sudden decision to not hide anymore in the “Prey” section? (Pgs. 191 – 195)
33. Who traps Melinda in her closet? Make a list of what happens to Melinda physically during this scene. Make another list of the emotions Melinda goes through, with a brief explanation of why you think it is an emotional response.

34. During her altercation with Andy Evans in the janitor’s closet, Melinda’s “fingers wave overhead, looking for a branch, a limb, something to hang on to.” (Pg. 195) What does this tree metaphor signify?

35. In “Final Cut” (Pgs. 196 – 198), what does Mr. Freeman want to paint over the grade wall? What does it represent?

36. What specific characteristics does Melinda’s tree have?

37. Melinda decides that her tree needs something else. What is the final touch for her tree project? Why is this addition a perfect final touch?