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***Speak***

BY LAURIE HALSE ANDERSON



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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Pre-Reading

### Memoir

Objective: Writing your memoir

#### Activity

*Speak* begins on Melinda's first day of high school. The novel covers her freshman year at Merryweather High School in a suburb near Syracuse, New York. In middle school, Melinda had plenty of friends, but things have changed.

Rachel, Ivy, and Nicole were all friends with Melinda, but that was before the night of the party. Rachel and Melinda found themselves at a high school party. Melinda thought this party would be a way to fit in at the start of school; instead it becomes the reason for her isolation.

No one will speak to Melinda, including her friends because she dialed 911 for help at the party. When the police arrived to break up the party, some kids wound up in trouble. Melinda is shocked when her friends turn on her, they don't seem to care why she called the cops and it seems as if she'll never get the help she was looking for that night.

Think back to your first days of high school, middle school, or at a new school. Begin by brainstorming the emotions and memories of the day. Write a detailed account of that experience. Be sure to use descriptive language, and dialogue when needed. Feel free to change names in your memoir if necessary. Attach in the upper left hand corner, a photograph of yourself from that time.

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**First Marking Period: Espanol****Charades**

**Objective:** Communicating non-verbally

**Activity**

In this section, Melinda describes the exhaustive efforts of her Spanish teacher to get the class to understand. It is difficult because she is speaking a language the students are unfamiliar with, so she tries to assist by pantomiming, or acting out the words.

As a class, brainstorm all the different ways there are to communicate. Think about the different kinds of communication that have already occurred in the novel so far. Discuss what you think is the best way for Melinda to express herself without speaking.

Try your own hand at non-verbal communication. Get together with a partner. Act out the title of a book or film for your partner. See how long it takes before they guess. After your partner guesses correctly you should then trade roles in the game.

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**First Marking Period: Burrow****Analysis**

**Objective:** Analyzing the title of the section

**Activity**

First, think for three minutes in absolute silence why this section is titled 'Burrow.' Ask yourself what images pop in your head when you hear the word burrow. Consider why this abandoned closet is Melinda's 'perfect place,' and what it might represent to her.

Next, pair up with another student close by. Then share your ideas. One of you will explain what you think the significance is of the title 'Burrow' for a full minute or two, while one partner speaks the other listens without commenting. Switch places and have the listener become the speaker and the speaker the listener.

After you have both shared your ideas, work together to determine the best possible reason for the title 'Burrow.' Share your thinking with the class.

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**First Marking Period: Halloween/Name Name Name****Collage****Objective:** Creating a character collage**Activity**

At the start of the novel, the protagonist/narrator was nameless, and then she named herself Outcast. Eventually, Melinda shares her name with the reader. Think about these phases of Melinda. How has Laurie Halse Anderson slowly been developing this protagonist? In what ways has Melinda changed from the beginning of the novel? In what ways has she not?

With a small group of students, you are going to chart the progression of Melinda throughout the four parts of the novel. Select the shortest student in your group to be the model. Your teacher will give each group a large piece of banner paper. The shortest group member should lay face up on the paper while the group loosely traces his or her outline. This will become your Melinda.

Divide your life sized Melinda into four equal sections. Using images and words from magazines, newspapers, and your own original drawings, create a collage that represents Melinda's state of mind in this section of the novel.

Hang the Melinda's up around the classroom and add to them after each part of the book. Take note of any changes that occur in colors that are used, or words, and images selected.



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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Second Marking Period: First Amendment/Giving Thanks****Debate****Objective:** Debating immigration**Activity**

Immigration is often debated. Mr. Neck and David Petrakis stand on opposite sides of the issue. Unfortunately, in class, Mr. Neck does not do a great job at structuring the debate. Anger and a desire to be in control through intimidation and sarcasm seem to be what motivate him. Many authority figures use these techniques to win arguments, but bullying is not the best way to get a point across.

With your classmates, conduct a debate about immigration. Divide the class into two groups, Pro immigration and Con, or against immigration. In your teams collect your evidence and organize your ideas.

Each side will have a chance to present. After group shares their argument, each side will be allowed to rebut, or disagree with, the opinions of the other team. The rest of the class will vote to determine a winner.

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Second Marking Period: Foul/Coloring Outside the Lines****Newspaper**

Objective: Writing a news article

**Activity**

As a narrator, Melinda can't be completely trusted. She will not share with anyone, including the reader, what is really going on with her. We still can't be sure why she is so withdrawn, silent, and afraid of IT. All the reader is sure of is that her insecurity has something to do with what happened the night of the party.

You are an investigative reporter for a local paper, and your latest assignment is to find out what happened at that party. You are to write the headline for your story, and then write the story itself. Since not much is known yet, you will need to make up some facts based on the small amount of information you do know. Retain the first draft of your article and amend it as new facts are discovered. To get readers interested in the article quickly, reporters try to accomplish many things:

- The first paragraph of the article answers the 5 W's, 1 H: who, what, when, where, why, and how. Feelings and emotions are omitted.
- Only the facts are provided.
- Information is presented simply and without excess words.
- As in essays, paragraphs are organized into clear paragraphs with topic sentences and supporting details.
- Don't forget the shocking headline.