Dear Educators and Counselors,

When entering the spring term of the school year, you may notice that, much like the weather, group dynamics continue to shift and transform even though your teens have settled into a predictable groove. When I was a teacher, I observed that students’ old friendships wilted while new ones blossomed. And even though I wasn’t always aware of it, students’ relationships outside the classroom were significantly impacted by life’s big changes such as divorce, death of a loved one, incarceration of a family member, or a close friend moving away.

The writers in this issue deal with relationship upheaval with friends and family in different ways, but all learn more about themselves from their experiences. Each lesson highlights the writer’s ability to navigate change and will help your group make personal connections.

I warmly welcome new school counselors to the YC community! It takes all of us working together to help our young people grow and learn. In this lesson guide, we’ve crafted a special lesson just for you that targets social-emotional learning while addressing the difficult experience of losing a loved one. Feel free to use the other two FLA and Social-Emotional Learning lessons in this guide, as well. All lessons use YC’s story-based approach that allows teens to develop empathy for, and make personal connections to, the writers’ experiences.

As always, we’d love to hear from you about your experiences using our lesson guide. Any feedback helps us better support you and your hard, meaningful work in both classrooms and counseling groups.

Sincerely,

Jillian Luft
Curriculum Developer

Don’t let this issue be your last!
Have you renewed your YCteen subscription yet? If you haven’t filled out the renewal form for this school year, please take 5 minutes to do it now:
bit.ly/RenewYCteen
ELA Literacy & Social and Emotional Learning
When to End It with a Friend

Story to Use: “What’s a Real Friend?,” by I.L., p.5

Story Summary: The writer’s new friend, Margot, starts a false rumor that she wasn’t there for a mutual friend in need. The writer stands up to Margot, puts a stop to the rumors, and learns that some friendships aren’t worth keeping.

Lesson Objectives and Common Core Connections:
- Students make personal connections to a text and successfully participate in story-based activities and discussions.
- Students will read and comprehend literary nonfiction proficiently (CCLS R.10).
- Students will write routinely over extended and shorter time frames for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences (CCLS W.10).

Before Reading the Story (10 min)
This opening activity will activate background knowledge to boost reading comprehension and set the emotional tone for the story.

1. Welcome students to the group. Introduce the lesson by telling them you will be reading a true story by a teen who learns when to end a friendship.

2. Introduce the freewrite activity by explaining that students will have about four minutes to respond to a prompt in writing. The goal is to express their thoughts freely without worrying about writing conventions. The expectation is that everyone writes, without stopping, for the full time. (Note: writing lists and/or drawing with labels are modifications that support diverse learners.)

3. Share the following quote, lifted from L.I.’s story: “A true friend is someone who helps you out when you need it, accepts you the way you are, and loves you for you.”

4. Then share the freewrite prompt: “Consider the writer’s definition of a ‘friend’ and think about what you would include in your own definition. Write or draw your response to the following statement: A friend is also someone who…”

5. After students have completed the freewrite, transition to a pair share. Students should select a partner or turn to the person next to them.

6. Facing each other and practicing active listening, partners each take a turn sharing parts of their responses that they feel comfortable sharing. The listener should not respond,
but should actively listen to the speaker. You can use a timer or wait until the hum of conversation dies down before closing the activity.

7. Thank students for sharing their connections.

**During Reading** (20 min.)
*By practicing active reading strategies while reading aloud and discussing as a group, students build comprehension and support fluency.*

1. Introduce the story (see the story summary above).

2. Share the expectations for a group read-aloud: volunteers take turns reading aloud as much or as little as they would like. As the group leader, you may stop periodically to discuss or check in on active reading by asking students to share their responses to the story.

3. Tell students they will practice an active reading strategy called **reading for a purpose**. This will help them read for a purpose and be prepared to use the text in later activities.

4. **Reading for a purpose** directions: Ask students to read for moments in the text when someone in the story talks or behaves in a way that shows they’re a “real” friend. When this occurs in the text, students should place a **check mark (✓)** in the margins of the story. Then ask them to read for moments in the text when someone in the story talks or behaves in a way that shows they aren’t a “real” friend. When this occurs, students should place an **X** in the margins of the story.

5. While sitting in a circle, read the story aloud together. Stop to discuss periodically, supporting peer-to-peer talk and non-judgmental listening. To do this, ask for volunteers to share what they wrote a **check mark (✓)** next to and what they put an **X** next to and why. Alternately, you can pose an open question such as “What stands out to you in this section and why?”

6. Next, ask the group to further consider these questions:
   - In what ways do you think the writer showed she was a good friend?
   - Why do you think friends sometimes spread rumors, or gossip, like Margot did in the story?
   - Do you personally connect with the writer’s story? How?

**After Reading the Story** (15 min)
*During this post-reading activity students will make connections, build understanding, and rehearse positive behaviors.*

1. Introduce the **internet meme/viral post** activity by explaining to the group that they will be doing an activity where they share messages about what it means to be a real friend and when to end a friendship.

2. Read the following **quote**, lifted from I.L.’s story, to the group: “Being around someone who just wants to gossip and make up lies to hurt people is a big no with me.”
3. After reading this quote, explain to the group that they're going to think more about their "big nos" and "big yeses" when it comes to friendship. Have them think back to their freewrites and what they included in their definition of a friend.

4. Then explain that they are going to write/draw an internet meme, or an inspirational quote post that goes viral on the internet. The point of the post is to let others know how to tell when someone is being a real friend and when it might be time to end a friendship.

5. Have students write and/or draw using these guidelines:
   - On a piece of blank paper, draw a line down the middle.
   - On one half of your paper, draw or write about the ways that someone shows they're a real friend. Write or show what a real friend does, says, thinks or feels using words, pictures, or symbols.
   - On the other half, draw or write about the ways that someone shows they're not a real friend. Write or show examples of when one should end a friendship using words, pictures, or symbols.
   - Create a catchy title for your internet meme/inspirational quote post.

6. Give students about 10 minutes to write and/or draw.

7. Invite students to share their internet memes/viral posts, as time allows.

8. Thank students for being thoughtful members of the group and working to make connections to I.L.'s story, reflect on their own lives, and share with one another.
ELA Literacy & Social and Emotional Learning
Addressing Anger, Meeting Needs


Story Summary: A young woman’s father becomes distant and irritable after an accident at work leaves him unemployed. Although she wants to forgive him for his moody behavior, they fight constantly and she continues to feel angry. When her father learns she’s in therapy to work out this anger, he slowly begins to change.

Lesson Objectives and Common Core Connections:
- Students make personal connections to a text and successfully participate in story-based activities and discussions.
- Students will respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives (CCLS SL.1).
- Students will read and comprehend literary nonfiction proficiently (CCLS R.10).
- Students will write routinely over extended and shorter time frames for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences (CCLS W.10).

Before Reading the Story (10 min)
This opening activity will activate background knowledge to boost reading comprehension and set the emotional tone for the story.

1. Welcome students to the group. Introduce the lesson by telling them you will be reading a true story by a teen who finds it difficult to get past her anger at her father.

2. Introduce the freewrite activity by explaining that students will have about four minutes to respond to a prompt in writing. The goal is to express their thoughts freely without worrying about writing conventions. The expectation is that everyone writes, without stopping, for the full time. (Note: writing lists and/or drawing with labels are modifications that support diverse learners.)

3. Freewrite prompt: “Think about a time when you felt angry or another strong emotion because of something a family member said or did.
   - How did you feel inside your body? How did you look? What were the thoughts in your head?
   - What did you, if anything, to get past your anger and work it out with your family member? What happened?”

4. After the students have completed the freewrite, transition to a pair share. Students should select a partner or turn to the person next to them.
5. Facing each other and practicing active listening, partners each take a turn sharing parts of their responses that they feel comfortable sharing. The listener should not respond, but should actively listen to the speaker. You can use a timer or wait until the hum of conversation dies down before closing the activity.

6. Thank students for sharing.

**During Reading (20 min.)**
*By practicing active reading strategies while reading aloud and discussing as a group, students build comprehension and support fluency.*

1. Introduce the story (see the story summary above).

2. Share the expectations for a group read-aloud: volunteers take turns reading aloud as much or as little as they would like. As the group leader, you may stop periodically to discuss or check in on active reading by asking students to share their responses to the story.

3. Tell students they will practice an active reading strategy called **reading for a purpose**. This will help them read for a purpose and be prepared to use the text in later activities.

4. **Reading for a purpose** directions: Ask students to read for moments in the text when the writer expresses anger. When this occurs, they should write a **W** in the margins of the story. Then ask students to read for moments in the text when the writer’s **father** expresses anger. When this occurs, they should write an **F** in the margins of the story.

5. While sitting in a circle, read the story aloud together. Stop to discuss periodically, supporting peer-to-peer talk and non-judgmental listening. To do this, ask for volunteers from each section of the room to share what they wrote a **W** or **F** next to and ideas of what the writer or her father could have done differently to help their relationship.

**After Reading the Story (15 min)**
*During this post-reading activity students will make connections, build understanding, and rehearse positive behaviors.*

1. Introduce the **drawing** activity by explaining to the group that they will be drawing a scene from the writer’s story where they placed either a **W** or **F** while reading.

2. Explain to the group that the writer of the story expresses a lot of anger toward her father, and that he expresses a lot of anger, too. Then explain that usually when someone is angry, it’s because they have certain needs that are not being met. For example, the writer of the story is trying to forgive her father, but she resents that he is no longer fun, says “no” to everything, and doesn’t spend time with her anymore. Since these needs aren’t being met, she holds onto her anger.

3. **Drawing directions:**
Choose a part from the writer’s story that you marked with a **W** or an **F**. Take your piece of drawing paper and fold it, so you have four panels. Then follow these **guidelines**:
• 1st panel – Draw the writer if you picked a W part of the story or the writer’s father if you picked an F part of the story. Use dialogue bubbles to show what he or she is saying. Use thought bubbles to show what he or she is thinking and feeling. Identify his or her unmet needs by using words, pictures, or symbols.
• 2nd panel – Draw the person you didn’t draw in the first panel. Use dialogue bubbles to show what he or she is saying. Use thought bubbles to show what he or she is thinking and feeling. Identify his or her unmet needs by using words, pictures, or symbols.
• 3rd panel – Show the writer and her father communicating their feelings and needs to each other. Use dialogue bubbles.
• 4th panel – Show the writer and her father resolving their issues and working toward forgiveness. Use dialogue and thought bubbles.

4. Give them about 10 minutes to create their drawings.

5. Invite students to share their drawings, as time allows.

6. Thank students for being thoughtful members of the group and working to make connections to Anonymous’s story, reflect on their own lives, and share with one another.
ELA Literacy & Social and Emotional Learning
What Lives On When Someone Dies

Story to Use: “Missing My Mom,” by Jovani Hernandez, p.3

Story Summary: Jovani’s mother is his positive source of protection, support, and encouragement. When she experiences health complications and unexpectedly dies, he deals with her painful absence by reflecting on the values and ideas she instilled in him.

Goals for SEL Growth:
- Students make personal connections to a text and successfully participate in story-based activities and discussions.
- Students recognize and describe their emotions and thoughts.
- Students have empathy for other youths’ experiences.
- Students recognize family sources of support.

Before Reading the Story (10 min)
This opening activity will activate background knowledge to boost reading comprehension and set the emotional tone for the story.

1. Welcome students to the group. Briefly check-in with your group by playing a quick round of “Rose, Thorn, Bud.” Have each student share a “rose” (something positive that has recently happened), a “thorn” (something challenging that has recently happened), and a “bud” (something they are looking forward to).

2. Introduce today’s group by telling them you will be reading a true story by a teen who experiences the unexpected death of his mother.

3. Introduce the freewrite or quick draw activity by reminding students that it is an opportunity to freely express their thoughts on paper. The expectation is that everyone writes or draws, without stopping, for the full time.

4. Freewrite prompt: “Think of someone that was once in your life that you still miss. It can be a childhood friend, a deceased family member, a former teacher, etc.
   - What did this person teach you? What words or actions of theirs stay with you?
   - What are the memories you have with them that you think about the most?”

5. After students have completed the free write or quick draw activity, transition to a pair share. Students should select a partner or turn to the person next to them.
6. Facing each other and practicing active listening, partners each take a turn sharing parts of their responses that they feel comfortable sharing. Wait until the hum of conversation dies down before closing the activity.

7. Thank students for sharing.

**During Reading (20 min.)**  
*By practicing active reading strategies while reading aloud and discussing as a group, students build comprehension and support fluency.*

1. Introduce the story (see the story summary above).

2. Share the expectations for a group read-aloud: volunteers take turns reading aloud as much or as little as they would like. As the group leader, you may stop periodically to ask students to share their responses to the story.

3. While sitting in a circle, read the story aloud together. Consider asking these open-ended questions during or after the read aloud:
   - What strengths, skills, or resources did Jovani use to address the challenge of his mother dying?
   - What did Jovani learn about himself through this experience?
   - If you were in Jovani’s shoes, what would you have done or how would you have felt?
   - Do you have any questions about Jovani’s story, his experiences, or his choices?

4. Thank the group for reading and sharing.

**Closing Circle (15 min)**  
*During this post-reading activity, students will make personal connections to the story.*

1. In a go-round share, have your students answer this question:

   **What connections from your own life, the world, or other texts you have read, can you make to this story?**

2. Thank students for being thoughtful members of the group and working to make connections to Jovani’s story, reflect on their own lives, and share with one another.

For more information on how to support grieving teens, visit: dougy.org/grief-resources.
Open-ended questions you can use with any story in YCteen:

1. What main problem or challenge did the writer face?
2. What choices did the teen have in trying to deal with the problem?
3. Which way of dealing with the problem was most effective for the teen? Why?
4. What strengths, skills, or resources did the teen use to address the challenge?
5. If you were in the writer’s shoes what would you have done?
6. What could adults have done better to help this teen?
7. What have you learned from reading this story that you didn’t know before?
8. What connections from your own life, the world, or other text you have read, can you make to this story? This reminds me of…. (text-to-self, text-to-world, text-to-text)
9. What surprised you in this story?
10. Do you have a different view of this issue, or see a different way of dealing with it, after reading this story? Why or why not?

$150 First Prize | $75 Second Prize | $50 Third Prize
Enter online at bit.ly/ycteencontest

CONTEST QUESTION #233
What changes do you want the incoming president to make?
Many of this year’s presidential candidates have captured the popular feeling that our political, economic and social systems are broken. Do you agree? What seems broken that affects you, your family, your community? What changes do you wish those in office would make?

Deadline: July 22, 2016
SUMMER WRITING WORKSHOP

July 5 - August 11, 2016
11 a.m. – 4 p.m. Mon. – Thurs.
FOR NEW YORK CITY YOUTH AGES 15-20

Explore your own story and how it fits into the larger world.

Teens experience:
Sexual Harassment • Racism & Discrimination • Relationship Conflicts
Immigration Struggles • Police Mistreatment • Foster Care

So why do we only read adults’ opinions on these issues?

WRITE ABOUT IT!

Be part of Youth Communication’s 37th annual intensive summer writing workshop. Get one-on-one mentoring from a professional editor, write and revise personal stories about your life, go on field trips, and make friends with other writers. Participate in writing lessons and group activities exploring your own story and how it fits into the larger world, particularly in this epic election year. No prior experience is required, but you must be able to attend for all six weeks. Our stories are read by thousands of people and have been republished on the New York Times Learning Network and Huffington Post. Workshop alumni have gone on to attend colleges from Hunter to Harvard.

The workshop is free because our funders cover the $3,000 cost for each participant. All participants get a MetroCard and $5 for lunch each day. (Additionally, youth in foster care will receive a $600 stipend upon successful completion of the workshop.)

APPLY ONLINE BY MAY 20, 2016
bit.ly/ycteenwrite
Top candidates will be contacted by June 3

Application on the back ➔
Youth Communication publishes personal narratives by teens in two award-winning magazines: YCteen, by and for New York City high school students, and Represent, by and for young people in foster care. This is a competitive program—there will be a maximum of 15 students—so start working on your application essays now!

**Dates and Times:** The workshop runs Monday through Thursday from July 5 to August 11. The hours are from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. You must be able to attend every day.

**Cost:** The workshop is free because our funders cover the $3,000 cost for each participant.

**Stipend:** We provide MetroCards and $5 for lunch each day. (Youth in foster care will also receive a $600 stipend upon successful completion of the workshop.)

**Facilities:** The workshop will be taught at the Youth Communication office in mid-town Manhattan. The office is easily accessible by many subway lines.

**Staff:** Writers will be taught by Youth Communication editors who have substantial experience working in journalism and youth development.

**Eligibility:** Anyone ages 15 to 20 who lives within commuting distance is eligible to apply. We're interested in your writing skills, but when we judge your essays we will also look for your ideas and willingness to write deeply personal stories. Youth Communication's most essential job is to convey important information to teens in an interesting way.

**History:** This is the 37th year we have run the summer program. Workshop alumni have gone on to attend colleges from Hunter to Harvard, and they include reporters, lawyers, teachers, and authors.

**DEADLINE**

Applications must be received by May 20, 2016. Top candidates will be contacted by June 3 for interviews.

Apply online at: bit.ly/ycdeenwrite

Or mail to:
Youth Communication
Summer Writing Workshop
242 West 38th St., 6th floor
New York, NY 10018

Or fax to: 212-279-8856

Today’s date____________ Your age_______

Name___________________________

Address____________________ Apt._______

City________________________ Zip_________

School________________________ Grade____

Phone (____)____________ Date of birth__________

E-mail __________________________@_______

Male _____ Female _____ Other ________

Race/ethnicity (check all that apply)

____ Black _____ Latino _____ White _____ Asian

____ Other_______

Where did you hear about the workshop? (e.g., teacher, ad in YCteen or Represent, website, foster care agency, social worker, etc.)

______________________________________________________________________________

If you’re in foster care, what is your agency?

______________________________________________________________________________

On separate pieces of paper, answer each of the three following questions, and attach it to this application. **Please be thorough. Print neatly or type.**

1) Millions of people have had to leave their homeland in the last few years to seek safety from religious and/or cultural persecution. If you had to leave your country and could only take one thing with you, what would it be and why? How would you go about starting your new life? What would make it easier? Write three well-developed paragraphs.

2) Good personal stories include many details, sometimes painful, sometimes embarrassing, and your thoughts and feelings. Describe one personal story you’d like to work on and how it changed you. What would readers get out of the story? Write at least six paragraphs as a first draft.

3) Is there something happening in your school, neighborhood, or city that you think is wrong? Has anyone done anything to try to change that situation that impressed you? Tell us about the problem and what you liked about the advocate’s approach. How has the advocate’s action influenced you? Write three well-developed paragraphs.

**Questions?** Call Virginia Vitzthum at 212-279-0708, extension 112.