

# Ycteen

May / June 2018

## LESSON GUIDE

Dear Educators and Counselors,

We hope that these final months of the school year pass smoothly and productively for you. As a break from test prep or final projects, consider using this issue of *Ycteen* as a way to check in and connect with students before summer break.

This issue tackles pressing and relevant topics like sexual harassment, dysfunctional relationships, and loneliness. A thread you'll find connecting many of the stories is girls' empowerment: young women write about their experiences with discovering activism, battling sexism, and navigating abusive relationships.

In this issue you'll also hear from boys who participated in a panel we held in our office; young men had an opportunity to speak out about making the world a more equitable place and share ideas on how they can be a part of the solution to gender-based discrimination.

The three lessons in this guide touch on a range of issues and are designed to spark powerful discussion and reflection. Pre-reading activities will get your students up and moving to discuss questions that will be brought up in the story. Post-reading activities will enable your students to rehearse positive behaviors and cement connections between the story and their own experiences.



Sincerely,

David Heller  
Education Director  
dheller@youthcomm.org

### WRITING CONTEST FOR STUDENTS

We ask readers to write a letter to one of the writers. This will encourage close reading and writing. (See last page)



## COMMON CORE

### ELA Literacy & Social and Emotional Learning

### *You'll Find Me in the Library*

**Story to Use:** “*No High School Musical For Me*” by Anaiss Quiles, p. 17

**Story Summary:** Anaiss prefers being alone to being with a big group of people. Although she struggles to make friends in a new school, she doesn't compromise who she is by joining a clique just to make friends. With patience, she eventually finds a few classmates who she connects with.

**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** (15 min)

*This opening activity will activate background knowledge to boost reading comprehension and set the emotional tone for the story.*

1. Before the group starts, post two signs on opposite ends of your space. One should read “agree” and the other “disagree.”
2. After welcoming the group, tell them that they will be doing an activity that allows them to move around while learning more about what they and their peers think about a topic.
3. While the group is still seated, review the directions for the **Opinion Continuum**. Tell them:
  - “On either end of the room, there are signs that read ‘agree’ and ‘disagree.’”
  - “I will read a statement and you will decide whether it’s true for you (agree) or not (disagree). Then you will move somewhere in between the two signs that reflects your opinion. If you’re unsure, you should stand somewhere in the middle.”
  - “Once everyone has moved, I will invite volunteers to share why they chose to stand where they are.”
4. Clear a space and ask group members to stand somewhere between the two signs.
5. Read the first statement and ask group members to move to a spot between the two signs that reflects their opinion:
  - “It’s weird to get anxious when you’re in a big, noisy crowd.”
6. Once all group members have moved in response to the statement, ask them to notice where other group members are standing. (You can support minority positions by moving closer to someone who is alone at one end of the continuum.)

7. Ask at least one group member standing on either end of the continuum to share why they are standing where they are. Tell group members they may change their position if they are influenced by another group member's opinion.
8. After each question, have everyone return to the middle.
9. Repeat for each statement:
  - "It's better to talk to someone one-on-one than in a big group."
  - "It's hard to make friends with people you've just met."
  - "It's OK to change who you are to become friends with people you admire."
10. Have everyone return to their seats and thank group members for sharing their opinions.

### **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 identify times when the story raises a question for them. When this occurs, students should write a "?" in the margin.
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 an "?" next to and why. Alternately, you can pose an open question such as "What stands out to you in this section and why?"
6. When you finish the story, ask the group to discuss their reactions to the story, including the questions it raised for them. They can turn and talk to a neighbor before you discuss as a whole group.

### **After Reading the Story** (15 min)

*During this post-reading activity, students will make connections, build understanding, and rehearse positive behaviors.*

1. Introduce this activity by saying to the group:
  - "Now that we've read the story, we're going to write a letter to Anaiss giving her advice based on our personal experiences."
  - "Your goal is to communicate your ideas and responses to the story, so don't worry about spelling and grammar."
  - "There are no right or wrong answers, just your ideas and how the story spoke to you."

2. Read the Dear Teen Writer guidelines aloud from the chart paper you've prepared:
  - **Greeting: Dear Anaiss, I just read your story, "No 'High School Musical' For Me."**
  - **What were some details of her experiences that resonated or stuck out to you?**
  - **What were some connections you made with her experiences?**
  - **What sort of advice would you give her on how she can make new friends easier?**
  - **Closing: "Sincerely, (Your Name)"**
3. Pass out journals or notebook paper and pencils.
4. Give group members about eight minutes to write their letters. Move around the room offering encouragement and support.
5. When about eight minutes are up, tell group members to finish their last thought and put their pencils down.
6. Explain to the group that they are now going to do a Pair Share. Tell them to turn to the person next to them and take turns sharing the parts of their letters that they feel comfortable sharing.
7. Each member of the pair should take about a minute to share. Cue partners to switch roles after the first minute. Use a timer or wait until the hum of conversation dies down before closing the activity.
8. Time permitting, lead a discussion by asking group members to comment on what they heard, such as similarities, differences, or personal connections to their peers' responses. They can also discuss points they agree or disagree with, new ideas they've been given, and questions they still have.
9. Thank group members for sharing.



## COMMON CORE

### ELA Literacy & Social and Emotional Learning

### *This Isn't Working Out*

**Story to Use:** “[This Angel's No Angel](#)” by Anonymous, p. 10

**Story Summary:** During the first week of high school, the writer begins a relationship with a boy whose confidence she finds attractive. Soon though he starts pressuring her to do things she doesn't want to do, like have sex, and begins to treat her poorly when he's around his friends. After struggling to communicate their differences, they call off the relationship.

**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. After welcoming the group, explain that they will be doing an activity where they will move around, interact with one another, and hear multiple perspectives on a topic.
2. While the group is still seated, review the activity procedure for **Concentric Circles**. Tell the group:
  - “We will form two standing circles, one inside the other.”
  - “Each person will face a partner.”
  - “I will read questions aloud and everyone will have a chance to respond while their partner listens.”
3. Divide the group into two. One way to do this is to have group members count off 1-2. (If you don't have two equal groups, you can join one.)
4. Clear a space in the middle of the room and have the 1s stand and form a circle facing outward.
5. Have the 2s stand and form a second circle around the first one, facing inward.
6. Explain to the group that the person they're facing will be their first partner.

7. Tell them:
  - “Partners will take turns responding to a question that I ask.”
  - “When one person speaks, the other listens.”
  - “Each person should speak for about one minute. Make sure both of you get a chance to talk.”
  - “When time is up, I will ask one circle to rotate and everyone will have a new partner.”
8. Pose this question to the group:  
“Should nice guys finish last? Why or why not?”
9. After two or three minutes are up (you might want to use a timer to keep track), ask the inside circle to move two people to the right while the outside circle stands still. There should be new pairs formed.
10. Repeat the process using these other questions:  
“How do you know it’s time to end a relationship with a boyfriend or girlfriend?”  
“What do you think it means to be in a healthy relationship with someone you’re dating?”
11. Have everyone return to their seats.
12. Time permitting, lead a discussion by asking group members to describe some of the good points that were made during their conversations. They can also share times they agreed or disagreed with their partner, new ideas that their partner gave them, or questions they still have about the topic.
13. Thank group members 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 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 notice when the writer brings up qualities about her boyfriend that should be a warning sign or a red flag for her. When that happens, write a “!” in the margin.
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 “!” next to and why. Alternately, you can pose an open question such as “What stands out to you in this section and why?”
6. When you finish the story, ask the group to discuss their reactions to the story. They can turn and talk to a neighbor before you discuss as a whole group.

## After Reading the Story (15 min)

*During this post-reading activity, students will make connections, build understanding, and rehearse positive behaviors.*

1. Introduce this discussion activity by saying to the group:
  - “Now that we’ve read the story, we’re going to do a small group activity where we discuss how young people should treat one another in a relationship.”
2. While they are still seated, preview the directions with everyone:
  - The whole group will break up into small groups of three or four.
  - Each group will need a piece of paper that they can write on, and a pen or pencil.
  - Groups will find a comfortable place to sit together and form a small circle, so everyone can easily listen to one another.
  - Once groups are ready, they will brainstorm some ideas in response to a prompt written on the whiteboard or a piece of chart paper (**in bold below**).
  - One member of each group will volunteer to facilitate the discussion. He or she will read make sure everyone has an opportunity to respond.
  - Someone else in the group should serve as recorder to write down ideas that the group comes up with.
3. After checking for understanding, have group members form small groups and find spaces in the room to talk.
4. When all groups are settled, read the prompts visible for all to see:
  - **Dating partners have the RIGHT to certain things (like the right to speak their mind) and a RESPONSIBILITY to their partner (like a responsibility to not cheat).**
  - **With your group, come up with a list of 10 RIGHTS and RESPONSIBILITIES that you feel teen dating partners should live by to keep their relationship healthy.**
5. Each group should choose a facilitator and get started.
6. During discussions, move around the room as a silent observer. Do not join the discussions. If you notice that a group needs support, guide them back to the prompts.
7. After about 8 minutes, gain everyone’s attention and ask groups, one at a time, to share out some of the key points they came up with.
8. While groups share, record ideas on another piece of chart paper or on the white board. Allow other groups to comment or ask questions of one another after one has shared.
9. Once groups have had an opportunity to share some of their key points, lead a discussion where you try to identify the top three RIGHTS and RESPONSIBILITIES out of all that have been described. Consider holding a vote and circling the three from each category that received the most votes.
10. Conclude the discussion by asking, “What can you do to make sure that your rights and responsibilities, and those of your partner, are respected in relationships?”
11. Thank group members for sharing when you’re out of time.



## COMMON CORE

### ELA Literacy & Social and Emotional Learning

### *It's Not Me, It's You*

**Story to Use:** “[Please Stop Saying I’m Trouble](#)”, by Grace Miner, p. 3

**Story Summary:** Grace has been labeled as “trouble” by men since she was 12. She writes about how this label implies that girls are to blame for actions taken by impulsive men who lack self-control. She also writes about the #MeToo movement and how many people in her neighborhood are not aware of these recent high-profile efforts to combat sex-based discrimination.

**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. After welcoming the group, tell them that they are going to do an activity that gathers everyone’s ideas and allows them to hear multiple perspectives.
2. Pass out pieces of scrap paper and pencils. Tell group members *not* to write their name on their paper. This is an anonymous activity.
3. Ask group members to write a response on their paper to the prompt (**in bold**) posted on chart paper or a whiteboard:
  - **What does it mean if someone says a girl is “trouble” because of her looks? Do you feel like it’s disrespectful to say this or make similar comments about a person’s appearance? Explain.**
4. Give group members three-four minutes to think and then write their responses. If some group members are struggling, ask them to write about why they find it difficult to answer the prompts.
5. Write your own responses to the prompts to model the activity.
6. After group members have written their responses, tell them to crumple them into balls and toss them into a large empty container or in the middle of the circle.
7. Model for the group how you expect them to crumple and toss their responses.

8. After everyone has tossed, each group member should retrieve an anonymous response from the container and return to their seats. As an alternative, walk around the circle with a container and have each group member blindly pick a paper ball. (If a group member happens to choose their own response, it's OK because no one will know.)
9. Go around in a circle or ask for volunteers to read aloud the response from the paper.
10. Invite group members to comment on what they heard, such as similarities, differences, or personal connections to their peers' responses.
11. Thank group members 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 identify points they agree or disagree with in the story. When they read something they agree with, they can write a "+" in the margin. When they come across something they disagree with, they can write a "-".
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 "+" or "-" next to and why. Alternately, you can pose an open question such as "What stands out to you in this section and why?"
6. When you finish the story, ask the group to discuss their reactions to the story. They can turn and talk to a neighbor before you discuss as a whole group.

### **After Reading the Story** (15 min)

*During this post-reading activity, students will make connections, build understanding, and rehearse positive behaviors.*

1. Introduce this activity by saying to the group:
  - "Now that we've read the story, we're going to do a **Role Playing** activity connected to a situation that Grace wrote about."
2. Ask students to listen as you re-read the following quote: "*If we could allow everyone to be who they really are, then we wouldn't have to feel trapped in boxes, restricted by our own bodies.*"

3. Ask students, "What does it mean to be 'trapped in boxes' because of the fact that you're a boy or a girl?" [Possible answers: *it means to be stuck with living a certain kind of way or having certain expectations put upon you for who you are. Some of these expectations might be that boys shouldn't cry, or that girls should be submissive and passive.*]
4. Say that students will role play a scene where these boxes are challenged.
5. Break students up into groups of 3. (Join a group if there's an even number of students.)
6. Explain that each group member will have a specific role in the role play (consider writing roles on chart paper or white board for all to see):
  - Little Brother: wants to buy something considered "girly," like a coloring book with glittery pink and purple crayons, while he's out shopping with his family.
  - Mom: traditional mom who doesn't want her son to have anything girly.
  - Older Sister: wants to free her mother from using traditional gender boxes (where some things are considered girly and others are masculine and we need to stick to what's in our own box).
7. Give groups 3 minutes to select roles and plan how they'd role play this scenario in front of the group.
8. Ask small groups to perform their role play for the whole group. Remind the audience to support actors by listening. If the actors get stuck, ask audience members for suggestions the actors can try.
9. After each group has performed, debrief by asking the whole group the following questions:
  - "What are some things we saw the Older Sister do that worked to help the Little Brother be who he wants to be and not feel stuck inside a box?"
10. After all groups have performed, de-brief by asking the following questions:
  - "Why can it be hard to make choices or act in ways that fall outside traditional gender boxes?"
  - "How do you make choices and act in ways that are outside the box?"
11. Thank group members for performing, supporting, and sharing.

## 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?

# WRITING CONTEST

Make Your Voice Heard!

#244

**\$150 First Prize**

\$75 SECOND PRIZE | \$50 THIRD PRIZE

**Deadline: August 29, 2018**

Enter online:

**[bit.ly/yctcontest](http://bit.ly/yctcontest)**

Do you have a strong feeling about an article you read in the current issue of *YCteen*? We'd like to hear about it.

*YCteen* is written by a staff of teen writers who work in our New York City newsroom. But writing is a form of conversation, and we want you to join in.

We invite you to submit an letter in the form of a letter to the writer, responding to their story. This is an opportunity to express your opinion or present your own point of view on a story you've read.

Start your letter with "Dear [writer's name]" and reference the article by the title. End it with "Sincerely" and your name, address, high school, and age.

## CONTEST RULES:

- You must be between the ages of 14 and 19.
- Letters should be no more than 300 words.
- If you win, your letter will be published on our website and in our print issue. Tell us if you want it to be printed anonymously—but you should still type in your full name and complete address so we know where to mail your check if you win.
- Current *YCteen* or *Represent* writers may not enter the letter contest.
- Letters may be edited by Youth Communication editors for brevity and clarity. All entries become property of Youth Communication.

## Here are some prompts to inspire you:

- What stood out to you about the story you chose?
- Can you relate to what the writer experienced? How is your own experience similar, or different?
- If you disagree with the writer, explain why you think differently or how you might have handled the situation.
- Did the story change your opinion or influence your actions?
- Are there aspects that the writer has not considered?