



**“I am Outcast.”**

**Name: Block:**

**Study Questions**

**First Marking Period**

*Welcome to Merryweather High*

1. What is Melinda’s mood as the book begins? As you read the first section of Speak list reasons why you believe she might be feeling this way.
2. Melinda categorizes the Merryweather students into several groups: jocks, cheerleaders, human waste, suffering artists, Goths, etc. How would you categorize the students of Wando?
3. Melinda repeatedly alludes to an event that occurred in her recent past. What do you think may have happened to her?

*Spotlight*

1. Why do you think Melinda has such difficult speaking to Mr. Neck when he confronts her during lunch?

*Sanctuary*

1. What does the word *sanctuary* mean?
2. Describe Melinda’s art class. What is the room like? What is her teacher, Mr. Freeman like?
3. How might Mr. Freeman’s last name work on a symbolic level in Speak?

*Home. Work.*

1. Describe Melina’s room. Why do you think it looks like this? What does Melinda’s room suggest about her character?
2. What does Melinda do with the mirror in her bedroom? Why do you think she does this? What might this action symbolize?

*Burrow*

1. How does Melinda use the neglected janitor’s closet? Why does she need this room?

*Devil’s Destroy*

1. What new information is revealed about Melinda’s past?
2. Based on this revelation, what do you think may have happened to Melinda?

*The Marthas*

1. Who are the Marthas? What are they know for?

*Nightmare*

1. With the introduction of IT, more is revealed about Melinda’s past. What do you think really happened over the summer?

**Second Marking Period**

*Closet Space*

1. How does Melinda fix up her closet? Why do you think she does this?
2. What does Melinda do to the mirror in the closet? What do you think is the symbolic meaning behind her actions?
3. Why do you think Melinda is having difficulty talking?

*All Together Now*

1. What might be significant about the words Melinda decided to conjugate for her Spanish homework? Why do you think she chose these particular words?

*Giving Thanks*

1. What is Melinda’s home life like? What is her mother like? Her father?

*Wishbone*

1. Describe Melinda’s turkey bone art project.
2. What mood does Melinda’s art project evoke in Mr. Freeman? In Ivy?
3. How do you think Melinda’s art project symbolically reflects her inner feelings? Explain your answer.

*Peeled and Cored*

1. What memory does the apple evoke for Melinda?
2. How does this memory contrast with her present situation?

*Dead Frogs*

1. Why do you think Melinda passes out while dissecting the frog?

**Third Marking Period**

*Cold Weather and Buses*

1. Why do you think Melinda compares herself to a bunny rabbit when she encounters Andy Evans on the street?
2. In what ways is her behavior rabbit like?
3. Why do you think Melinda responds in this fashion to Andy’s appearance?

*Lunch Doom*

1. What does Heather tell Melinda at lunch? Why?
2. Do you think Heather did the right thing? Defend your answer.

*Our Lady of the Waiting Room*

1. Why do you think Melinda was drawn to the hospital?
2. How is Melinda’s behavior a cry for help? List at least four examples of things Melinda does that are signs she needs someone to help her.

*Picasso*

1. How does Melinda’s tree art reflect her inner emotions?
2. How does Melinda’s tree art progress throughout the novel?
3. What artistic techniques does Melinda employ to capture the essence of a tree?

*Hall of Mirrors*

1. What is Melinda’s emotional state like when she is trying on clothes?
2. What does Melinda see when she looks into the mirror?

*A Night to Remember*

1. What do we learn really happened to Melinda at the night of the summer party?

**Fourth Marking Period**

*My Life As A Spy*

1. Why is Melinda spying on Rachel?

*Thin Atmosphere*

1. How does Melinda warn Rachel about Andy?

*Advice From A Smart Mouth*

1. What advice does David Petrakis give Melinda about speaking up? Why?

*Real Spring*

1. What does Melinda’s yard work symbolize metaphorically about her inner life?
2. How does Melinda’s raking help the tree?
3. How might a tree work symbolically to represent life?
4. How might a tree work symbolically to represent Melinda’s life specifically?

*Little Writing on the Wall*

1. What does Melinda write on the bathroom stall? Why?

*Communication 101*

1. Why does Melinda finally reveal the truth to Rachel?
2. How does Rachel react to Melinda’s revelation?

*Chat Room*

1. What does Ivy show Melinda in the bathroom?
2. How does this make Melinda feel?

*Pruning / Prowling*

1. How is Melinda’s mood changing?
2. How is her behavior changing?
3. Why are these changes taking place?

*Postprom*

1. What happened at the prom?

*Prey*

1. Why doesn’t Melinda need her secret closet anymore?
2. What happens when Melinda gets attacked?
3. How does Melinda react differently this time?

*Final Cut*

1. How does Melinda’s final tree art reflect her own life?
2. What symbol of hope does Melinda add to her final piece of tree art?
3. How does Melinda’s reputation change once the truth is revealed?

**Discussion Questions**

1**.** How did you feel (emotionally and physically) on your first day at Wando High?

2. Have you ever felt like an Outcast? Why or why not?

3. At Wando, are freshmen treated differently than the other grades? What are the differences?

4. Who is your best/closest friend? How long have you been friends? What is special about your friendship?

5. If you were Melinda’s friend, tell her three reasons why she deserves to live (write the reasons below).

6. Write down three words to describe what you see when you look in the mirror.

7. Write down three lies they tell you in high school.

8. What do you believe is worth standing up for? Would you sacrifice your own rights for this cause? Why?

9. Have you ever told a friend something that he/she did not believe? How did that make you feel when your friend did not believe you?

10. How have you changed as a person/student since your first day of high school?

**FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE**

Authors use figurative language to create a picture in the readers’ minds. Most of the time, the author is comparing what is really happening with something people are familiar with, allowing the reader to make a connection with what is happening in the novel. Figurative language also allows the author to express in more a powerful way what is occurring in the novel. Some literary elements that are used to create figurative language are:

**Simile:** a comparison between two unlike things using the words like or as.

**Metaphor:** a comparison between two unlike things without using the words like or as.

**Personification:** giving human qualities to non-living objects.

Use your book to find additional examples of figurative language you have identified while reading Speak. Indicate the page number where you found each quotation.

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| Simile | Metaphor | Personification |
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**Speak Themes**

Write down examples from the novel of the themes as you read.

Sadness:

Transformation:

Violence:

Isolation:

Friendship:

Communication:

**Speak Vocabulary Words**

**Speak Vocabulary Group #1**

1. Burrow: a hole or hideout animals use to take shelter; a hideout
2. Demerit: a mark against someone for misconduct
3. Errant: straying fro the right course
4. Floundering: at act clumsily or in confusion
5. Inciting: to sir, encourage, or egg on
6. Inconspicuous: not noticeable; invisible
7. Indoctrination: teaching someone to accept an idea or principle without criticism
8. Pseudo: pretend; fake; false
9. Sanctuary: a sacred place offering refuge or safety
10. Wan: dark; gloomy; pale in color; sickly; unhappy

**Speak Vocabulary Group #2**

1. Degrading: humiliating; disgrace; dishonor
2. Demure: shy, modest, coy
3. Dormant: inactive; lying asleep; not erupting
4. Drone: a remote control mechanism
5. Refurbished: to make clean, bright, or fresh again; renovate
6. Retreat: to withdraw or go back
7. Revolutionary: support for radical change or innovation
8. Sensibilities: emotions or feelings
9. Subjectivity: decisions based on personal feelings rather than facts
10. Xenophobic: unreasonable fear or hatred of foreigners

**Speak Vocabulary Group #3**

1. Asphyxiated: chocked; suffocated; smothered
2. Bigoted: intolerant of any other beliefs or opinions
3. Conundrum: a difficult problem; a dilemma
4. Dense: acting dull or slow-witted; thinking in a stupid manner
5. Dynamics: the social, intellectual, or physical forces that characterize a system or group
6. Imbeciles: a group of stupid or silly people
7. Reluctance: unwillingness; resisting
8. Submission: surrendering power to another; acting in a way of meekness
9. Vespiary: a nest of social wasps
10. Wistful: pensive; thoughtful in a sad way; longing, yearning

**Speak Vocabulary Group #4**

1. Conscience: the inner sense of what is right or wrong
2. Consistency: keeping the same behavior, form, pattern, or principles
3. Delinquency: wrongful; illegal; failure to fulfill a duty or obligation
4. Foster: something that nourishes or cares for; encouraging
5. Genetics: science of heredity and genes
6. Incriminate: to make someone appear guilty in a crime
7. Momentum: force or speed of movement; motion
8. Muse: something or someone that is inspiring to an artist
9. Recessive: going back; receding; a gene that does not produce
10. Tenacious: persistent; stubborn; vicious; not easily pulled apart

Speak Double Entry Journal

Directions: 3 Quotes/Responses/Marking Period: **As you read, choose an important quote. Copy that quote and provide a citation (page/s). Write the quote on the left-hand side of your journal. On the right-hand side, write your response to that quote. Responses can be many things:**

* **Visual commentary (drawings, artwork, doodles, etc.).**
* **Reactions to the text ( "This bugs, annoys, confuses, moves....me because..."; "I wonder if..."; musings, higher level-thinking questions and possible answers, etc.**
* **Connections to other texts/works, self or the world**
* **Social questions/observations (race, gender, class, etc. issues)**
* **Significance in relation to the piece as a whole**

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| **Marking Period 1: Quote (with page number)** | **Response:** |
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| **Marking Period 2: Quote (with page number)** | **Response:** |
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| **Marking Period 3: Quote (with page number)** | **Response:** |
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| **Marking Period 4: Quote (with page number)** | **Response:** |
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