

We were Beautiful

SHE
CAN'T
REMEMBER.

SHE
CAN'T
FORGET.

**EDUCATOR'S
GUIDE**

**HEATHER
HEPLER**

We were Beautiful

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HEATHER HELPER is the author of *Frosted Kisses* (Scholastic, 2015), *Love? Maybe* (Dial, 2012), *The Cupcake Queen* (Dutton, 2009), *Jars of Glass* (Dutton, 2008), *Dream Factory* (Dutton, 2007), and *Scrambled Eggs at Midnight* (Dutton, 2006). Heather fills her novels with whatever captures her attention, which currently includes aliens and fruitcake. Her writing has received many awards and accolades, and she has been told more than once by her son that when she writes, she makes weird faces.

More about Heather can be found by visiting her website:

WWW.HEATHERHEPLER.COM.

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Guide created by Kathryn Elise Barnett, a high school English teacher with a BA of English from the University of Georgia and a MA of Secondary English Education from Piedmont College.

PRE-READING QUESTIONS

Before reading the novel, discuss these questions with your students. It may be helpful to have your students record their thoughts in order to allow them to reflect when they finish reading the novel.

1. Define elements of tension.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.2; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.4]

2. Distinguish first person perspective, second person perspective, third person perspective, and third person omniscient perspective.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.2; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.4]

3. Describe where you would like to go if something catastrophic occurred in your life and explain why you would want to go to this place.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.3; W.9-10.4; W.9-10.10]

4. Consider whether you feel there are certain people who receive more attention than others when they go out in public and explain why you think they receive that attention.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.2; W.9-10.4; W.9-10.10]

5. Image how you would feel if you had a disfiguring scar. Explain how it would change your everyday life and why.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.3; W.9-10.4; W.9-10.10]

POST-READING QUESTIONS

After reading the novel, discuss these questions with your students. If you had your students record their responses to the pre-reading questions, then have them review their

responses and respond to the following post-reading questions on the same sheet of paper.

1. Discuss moments from the novel that you felt had elements of tension and explain.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1; RL.9-10.5; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1]

2. Describe how the stories of Mia's friends in New York parallel her own. Consider Fig's background with her father, Cooper and Sarah's background with their mother.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1; RL.9-10.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1]

3. List three major themes from the novel and justify each theme with text evidence.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1; RL.9-10.2; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.5; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1]

4. Explain the symbolism of Mia wearing her hair up to her birthday party at the end of the novel.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1; RL.9-10.3; RL.9-10.4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.5]

5. Consider Mia's mother. Is there any way you can justify her actions? Why? Why not?

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1; RL.9-10.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1]

6. Describe which character you felt like had the most impact on Mia's life and explain.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1; RL.9-10.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1]

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7. Debate whose life changes the most over the course of the novel: Mia's life, Veronica's life, or Mia's dad's life. Explain your answer.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1; RL.9-10.3; RL.9-10.5; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1]

8. Describe how the point of view of the narrator impacts your reading of the novel.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1; RL.9-10.6; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.5]

9. Discuss what point in the story you feel was the climax and explain.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1; RL.9-10.5; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1]

10. Describe the way Veronica changes around Cooper. Explain why you think that change occurred.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1; RL.9-10.3; RL.9-10.5; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1]

11. Describe how the novel would be different if it were told from a different point of view.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1; RL.9-10.6; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1]

12. Explain what happens for Mia when she finally remembers what happened.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1; RL.9-10.3; RL.9-10.5; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1]

ACTIVITIES

Students may complete the following activities while reading or after reading the novel.

1. Create a Body Biography including the following components: Create an outline of either the protagonist's

or the antagonist's body; Write the character's name at the bottom of the outline; Around the outline of the body, write words to describe the character. (Yes, your chain of words should link all the way around the body.); Within the body, write three quotes from the character (cite the page number); Explain how each quote represents the character in 4-6 sentences. Be sure to explain the context of the quote to show its importance; On the back of the paper, in 6-8 sentences, compare yourself to the character. Discuss how the two of you are similar, discuss your differences, and give examples from your life and the character to support your answers.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1; RL.9-10.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.2; W.9-10.4; W.9-10.9]

2. Write a chapter of the novel from Cooper's perspective.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1; RL.9-10.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.1]

3. Create a one pager for the novel including the following information: Create an image representative of your novel on your paper; Write the title and the author's name somewhere visible; Decide one theme of the novel; Include two quotes from the text that represent the theme to write somewhere on your paper. Include the page number; Write a personal statement about what the theme of the novel means to you in 4-6 sentences referencing the text as needed; Ask a question pertaining to the theme of the novel and answer that question.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1; RL.9-10.2; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.2; W.9-10.4; W.9-10.9]