

Grade 5

You Don't Know Everything, Jilly P!

by Alex Gino

Novel Guide

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Dear Teachers,

Welcome to the Amplify CKLA novel guide for *You Don't Know Everything, Jilly P!* We know that you do a nearly impossible job, and we hope this guide helps make that job a little easier.

This guide contains nearly everything needed to facilitate a novel study—the only thing you will supply is the book. This novel study will help your students grow in their reading abilities and their enjoyment of authentic texts, but—crucially—it will also help them grow as individuals. *You Don't Know Everything, Jilly P!* will help students grapple with the challenges faced by members of marginalized populations, consider their own abilities to enact change, and develop their social and emotional well-being.

They will also, of course, develop their skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language. Each set of activities offers opportunities for students to practice each skill, and activities are designed for flexible implementation and differentiation. The following pages contain more detail about how to use this guide.

Thanks for all you do to enhance and enrich the lives of students.

The **Amplify**CKLA Team

About the Book

You Don't Know Everything, Jilly P!, published by Scholastic in 2018, is a novel by Alex Gino. It has earned the following recognition:

- Starred reviews from *Kirkus*, *School Library Journal*, and *Publisher's Weekly*
- Named a *Kirkus* “Best Book of 2018”

Why We Selected It

Alex Gino's second novel, *You Don't Know Everything, Jilly P!* introduces Jillian Pirillo, a twelve-year-old girl from Piedmont, California. When Jilly's baby sister is born Deaf, Jilly reaches out to a Deaf acquaintance she met in an online community for fans of a popular book series. Jilly navigates her first crush and learns what it's like to be a big sister, but she also starts to realize that the world doesn't view—or treat—everyone the same way. As Jilly confronts racism and ableism, she also starts to see the ways that even her own well-meaning questions can hurt others' feelings.

This novel offers a sensitive, powerful portrayal of a girl who wants to learn how to improve the world—and who discovers how to stand up for the things she believes and the people she loves. Jilly's struggles to understand big cultural issues—such as racism and ableism—foster opportunities for students to grapple with these issues in a safe space and offer insights students can apply to their own lives.

About the Author

Award-winning author Alex Gino has written two novels, *George* and *You Don't Know Everything, Jilly P!* They have lived all across the United States, from New York to California, and they have traveled to many states. They enjoy eating ice cream and making puns. Gino also advocates for LGBTQIA+ communities and is a member of literary organizations such as We Need Diverse Books and the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators.

Connections to CKLA Domains

A core foundation of Amplify CKLA is developing content connections throughout all units and domains, within and across grades. As students work through *You Don't Know Everything, Jilly P!* you may choose to relate the subject matter to the following domains Amplify CKLA students have encountered previously.

- Kindergarten, Domain 2: *The Five Senses*
- Grade 2, Domain 12: *Fighting for a Cause*
- Grade 3, Unit 3: *The Human Body*
- Grade 3, Unit 5: *Light and Sound*

Things to Know

- The following themes or content throughout *You Don't Know Everything, Jilly P!* may provoke strong emotional responses. These instances provide opportunities to answer questions, offer students information, and promote strategies for developing social-emotional learning capacities. For additional detail, please review the following topics.
- Jilly grapples with the racism experienced by her friends and members of her extended family. (Though Jilly is white, her aunt's wife is African American, as are her children, Jilly's cousins.) The novel mentions three shootings of African Americans: two appear in passing in news reports; in another, a high school student Jilly has encountered only briefly is fatally shot. Jilly and her family attend a vigil after this student's death, and the book explores how the community copes with this tragedy and strives to instill change because of it. In a culminating moment, Jilly and her family place a Black Lives Matter sign outside their house to demonstrate support for that cause.
- Jilly's aunts are a biracial lesbian couple raising two children in a loving, happy home. While they share a healthy marriage, some parents may have strong feelings about presenting this content to their children.

- Throughout this text, Jilly grapples with racism and ableism. She also starts to see how people are treated differently because of their skin color, physical abilities, and other traits. The novel treats this appropriately and offers many opportunities and models for growth.
- This text includes a few examples of strong language. One character uses the term *hella*, while another mentions kicking butt. The word *sucks* also appears.
- The main character's father drinks a beer in one scene, but he does not drive or perform any other dangerous behaviors in conjunction with this drink.
- Throughout the novel, Jilly engages in several conversations in an online forum for children her own age. Although Jilly encounters no problems in this situation, it is advisable to talk to your students about Internet safety.

Additional Resources

As students read this book, you may wish to facilitate discussions of hearing loss and deafness, racism, and gun violence. The following resources may aid in your preparation and help further your own understanding of the subjects.

- **AI Media** works with hearing-impaired people to caption live and prerecorded videos. One particular page—Sign Language Alphabets from Around the World— includes a video recording of someone signing American Sign Language, as well as charts that show the differences between various sign languages around the world.
- **National Deaf Children's Society** is based in the United Kingdom, but its online resources are universally helpful.
- **EmbraceRace** is an organization dedicated to teaching children about race and racial inequality. It includes resources for reading aloud to students and talking to children about racial issues.
- **Teaching Tolerance** contains a variety of tools to facilitate classroom and school activities to instill tolerance and empathy among students.
- **The National Association of School Psychologists** has excellent resources for discussing hard topics with students. Its website includes materials for talking with children about violence and grief.

If students finish the book early, or if they enjoy it and want to read further, they may enjoy the following recommendations, which are also located in the “Student Resources” Blackline Master. We recommend that you review texts and use your discretion to choose those that will be most effective and appropriate for your classroom.

- *Blended* by Sharon M. Draper
- *Song for a Whale* by Lynne Kelly
- *The Way to Bea* by Kat Yeh
- *Fish in a Tree* by Lynda Mullaleay Hunt
- *Stef Soto, Taco Queen* by Jennifer Torres
- *Counting by 7s* by Holly Goldberg Sloan

Implementing Novel Study

Amplify CKLA novel studies are designed for flexible implementation. They may be used for an entire class, or they may be assigned to individuals or groups of students. The following list contains some possible scenarios for implementing a novel study:



- **Dedicated classroom reading time**—Many schools have dedicated reading time set aside throughout the school day or week.
- **Enrichment or extension**—Students in need of an additional challenge may benefit from the novel study materials, which they may pursue independently if desired.
- **Gifted and Talented Instruction**—Novel studies may be used in pull-out time for students.
- **After-school or summer programs**—Students in these programs may benefit from novel study, as it offers engaging and flexible materials designed around authentic texts.
- **Flex unit**—Teachers who already designate some classroom time to novel study may enjoy having more text options without having to create their own scaffolding.
- **Post-Assessment unit**—Novel studies offer a way to capitalize on classroom time after high-stakes assessments without leaving students burned out on learning.

In the Classroom

For each reading selection, this guide contains a Blackline Master of activities, divided into five categories.

- **Ask** contains questions for discussion, reflection, or brief written responses. These questions cover information all students should understand as they read the text.
- **Explore** offers students brief research opportunities centered around items mentioned in the text. These opportunities help students build background knowledge and deepen their understanding of what they have read. If you would like to assign students activities from this category, assemble resource materials for them to consult as they research.
- **Imagine** activities allow students to use creativity to develop themes and ideas from the text through further reflection. They may write new scenes, explore character motivation, visualize a setting from the text, or consider how they would respond to characters' ideas.
- **Observe** prompts students to take notes or make other kinds of observations about what they have read. Students analyze characters' conclusions, explore the use of text features, make Venn diagrams and T-charts, and use other forms to gather and interpret information.
- **Understand** questions push students to explore Social-Emotional Learning connections to the text. Sometimes they consider a character's emotional or behavioral response, weighing possible alternative actions a character could have taken. At other times, students reflect on their own understanding of and response to challenging situations or experiences. These questions, which we recommend a teacher facilitate, offer a springboard to help students develop social-emotional learning competencies.

These activities are designed for customization and flexible implementation to best fit your students' needs. They may be conducted as whole- or small-group activities, or students can pursue them individually or with a partner. Teachers may wish to have students respond to the activities in writing, orally, or in other formats (such as multimedia).

Although teachers may use discretion to have students write about or discuss any of the prompts, those marked with  are particularly well-suited for writing, while those marked with  are especially useful for discussion.

Students who are ready for a challenge may complete each type of activity for every set of assignments; however, this is not a requirement. We suggest that students always start with the “Ask” activities to ensure that they understand a sufficient portion of the text. Then teachers may allow students to customize their experience with the book. If a student needs to build confidence, you may wish to assign them the activity type with which they are most comfortable. Conversely, you may wish to help students build particular skills by focusing on an activity type that targets those skills. We do suggest that students attempt each activity type at least once throughout the novel study experience.

Many of these questions are designed to be open-ended; however, questions for which specific answers exist have those answers provided in the Answer Keys located in the Teacher Resource section of this guide.

Fluency Practice

Students who need additional practice in fluency may benefit from any of the following options.

- **Read-Alouds**—Ask students to read the text aloud. This may be employed as a routine part of reading and works well in a whole- or small-group setting. Students may read chorally or individually.
- **At-Home practice**—If classroom policies allow, students may take the novel home to read aloud to a family member, pet, or any other listener.
- **Performance**—Students should pick (or you may assign) a passage from the text that they will practice reading, then read aloud to the class or other audience. We recommend a short passage of approximately 150 words. In this performance, students should read the text rather than memorizing it; reading, rather than reciting, is an important criteria of fluency practice.
- **Five-Day Fluency Routine**—Have students practice the Amplify CKLA Five-Day Fluency Routine with a passage from the text. We recommend a short passage of approximately 150 words for this routine. A detailed description of this routine appears near the end of this guide.

Vocabulary Acquisition

Students may use any of the following strategies to develop their vocabulary during the novel study.

- **Vocabulary notebooks**—Students may list unfamiliar words they encounter in the text, then research and record definitions for those words.
- **Amplify Vocabulary App**—Students may gain additional practice of Tier 2 words through the Amplify Vocabulary App.

Additional Prompts for Longer Assignments

The following suggestions pertain to longer assignments you may wish to assign in conjunction with this text.

Writing

- **Narrative Writing:** Throughout *You Don't Know Everything, Jilly P!* students read about Jilly's favorite book series, the Magically Mysterious Vidalia trilogy. Have them review these passages, pick one scene in which Jilly or her friends describe the books, then write a scene from the Vidalia trilogy based on their descriptions. Make sure students use the information from Jilly and her friends to help shape the scene.
- **Informative Writing:** Many notable people have been Deaf or experienced other kinds of hearing loss. Have students pick one such figure to research, then write a biography of this person. Possible subjects include Heather Whitestone McCallum, Curtis Pride, Marlee Matlin, Tamika Catchings, Ludwig van Beethoven, or others.
- **Opinion Writing:** The title of *You Don't Know Everything, Jilly P!* tells readers something about the book: Jilly, its main character, has a lot to learn. Ask students to think about what they have read, then write an essay that explains whether or not they believe that by the end of the book, Jilly has learned all the things she needed to know. Make sure students use evidence from the text to support their opinions.
- **Writing about Literature:** Many opportunities exist for applying literature standards to writing. For example, you may wish to have students pick a scene in which Jilly disagrees with another character—such as Derek, her parents, or Alicia—and describe how Jilly's unique perspective as a hearing white person or a daughter and sister affects

her understanding and description of the events. You may also have students compare and contrast two characters from the text (Derek and Alicia, Jilly's mom and Jilly's dad, Alicia and Joanne).

Research

Ask students to research in depth a question they have derived from a topic in the text, using resources found in the classroom, school library, or (with proper supervision) the Internet. Students may share their research in different ways—writing reports, recommending changes they would like to see in their community based on what they have learned, poster presentations, short presentations to peers or community members, a blog post or school newspaper article, and so on. It is important to help students determine an appropriate application and venue for their research.

Potential research questions include:

- Derek tells Jilly some of the ways Deaf people have been treated throughout history. Research these ideas and create a timeline showing different approaches or treatments over time. How have these ideas changed? What has stayed the same?
- If you or your classmates want to get involved like Jilly, how might you do that? Research the organizations or groups in your school, town, or state that work to end racism and prejudice.

Performance Task

You may wish to have students prepare and deliver book talks about this novel. They may give these talks to peers, parents (such as during a Parent Night), or another audience.

For additional metacognition, ask students to reflect on their work, including explaining how knowing something about their audience helped them decide to craft their talk in particular ways. For example, would they use the same wording or make the same points when presenting to their parents and when presenting to their friends?

Reading: Chapters 1-2

Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.



Ask students to consider the tone or connotation of different descriptions for childbirth (*be born, enter the world, come meet us*) or synonyms for *vacate* (*leave, depart, move*).

- 1) Jilly waits to see when the baby “will . . . vacate Mom’s body.” Think about the word *vacate* and why Jilly might use it instead of other descriptions. Based on Jilly’s use of *vacate*, how might she feel about her sister or her mom’s pregnancy?
 - » Answers may vary, but students should recognize that *vacate* often has a negative connotation. This may suggest that Jilly has negative feelings about her sister or her mom’s pregnancy.
- 2) Macy and Jilly’s dad use initialisms, or abbreviations, to communicate with each other. Based on this, how do you think they get along?
 - » They get along well with each other. Usually when people speak in special codes or a unique way, they have a good relationship.
- 3) What is Jilly’s favorite book series, and why does she love it?
 - » The series is the Magically Mysterious Vidalia trilogy by B. A. Delacourt. Answers for why Jilly loves this series may vary, but they may include that Jilly likes reading about a world in which, thanks to auras, you can tell what kind of person everyone is.
- 4) Jilly says that if someone claimed that “your mom being pregnant is no big deal,” they would not be truthful. What details from the book show that Jilly’s mom’s pregnancy is a “big deal”?
 - » Answers may vary but should include details from the text, such as how Jilly’s mom does not join the family for dinner.
- 5) How does Jilly feel about her parents’ affection for each other?
 - » She says strangers seem to approve when her parents kiss each other, but Jilly finds it annoying.

Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Jilly is named after a family member, while Emma's name seems to come from a book of names. Learn about your own name, either by asking family members about how you got it or by using resources to discover your name's history, its meaning, or other people who have shared your name.
- 2) Jilly and Macy create "the Baby Sister Slide," a special dance to celebrate Emma's arrival. Research other times when people have created or performed dances for a special occasion.

Have students brainstorm people they have learned about or encountered who share classmates' names.



Imagine

- 1) Jilly says she can tell when someone too young is on the Young Vidilians chat room because of the way they type. What clues would you look for to know that someone ten years old or younger was at the keyboard?
- 2) If you were to join Young Vidilians, what handle or username would you create for yourself, and what would you want it to say about you?
- 3) Jilly has an interesting way of describing people around her. For example, she says that "Macy has black hair in a pixie cut, green eyes, sand-colored white skin, and has been my best friend since first grade." Consider this description and the others Jilly provides, then describe yourself the way she might describe you.

Observe

- 1) List the members of Jilly's family introduced so far in the book, including 1–2 important things about each one.
 - » Students may list different important things, but possible answers for each character include Jilly—twelve years old, a big sister; Jilly's mom—just had a baby; Jilly's dad—cooks, uses initialisms with Macy; Emma—Jilly's baby sister, has never said anything before; Aunt Joanne—Jilly's mom's sister, she and Alicia have two kids; Aunt Alicia—Aunt Joanne's wife, Jilly likes her and Joanne.

Assign students specific pages to reread. Have them identify family members that appear on those pages and important details about them.



- 2) When Jilly logs into the chat room, four other people are there already. List the five usernames or handles, then write down how at least two of those names reflect the people who use them.
 - » Answers may vary, but they should reflect evidence from the text. For example, JillyinP is based on Jilly's name; profoundinoaktown includes a reference to the place where its creator lives.

Understand

- 1) After hearing a disturbing news account about a shooting, Jilly's dad turns off the television, and Jilly says, "As if it doesn't happen if we don't mention it." When would you rather talk about difficult topics? In what circumstances would you prefer not to talk about them?
- 2) After hearing about the shooting, Jilly's dad says that things are "scarier and scarier." What are some ways to deal with scary things?
- 3) Jilly describes how the characters in Vidalia have an aura, or a particular color that shows their character traits or qualities. Based on your actions today, what color would your aura be?



Provide students with a range of color options, such as a box of crayons or paint color sample cards from a local store, and have them discuss which color would best represent particular actions.

Reading: Chapters 3-4

Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) What do profoundinoaktown and Aunt Alicia have in common?
 - » They are both Black. Profound lives in Oakland, which you can see from Alicia and Joanne's house.
- 2) Why do Joanne and Alicia laugh when Jilly asks about life returning to "normal" after a baby's birth?
 - » They say that it never goes back to the way it was.
- 3) What problem will PureGreenElvenGrl have with her username next year?
 - » She will be older, so it will no longer match her age.
- 4) How do Jilly's parents act when they bring Emma home?
 - » Her dad is different from the previous day; he moves more slowly and with less excitement. Her mom looks like she has been crying.
- 5) Jilly thinks Emma is perfect at first. What changes her mind?
 - » Answers may vary, but it is important that Jilly does not say Emma's hearing problem makes her imperfect. She does say that Emma is not perfect because she is "a little beast" who makes noise at all hours.



Ask students to think about what Profound told Jilly about younger siblings.

Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Research different techniques for making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, then decide which technique you would choose, giving reasons for your choice.
- 2) Jilly estimates her climb home from school has "a hundred-degree incline." Using the tools your teacher provides, draw an angle that is one hundred degrees. Based on your drawing, do you think Jilly's estimate is right? Why or why not?
- 3) Jilly's family thinks about how best to conserve water during a drought. What are some methods they could use to save water?



Have students explore ways to conserve water inside and outside a house as well as in other locations they frequent, such as school.

Imagine

- 1) In Chapter 3, Jilly uses a simile to describe the dessert her aunt makes to celebrate Emma's birth. She says it "is like diving into a chocolate sea with a graham cracker beach and fluffy meringue waves." Think about one of your favorite foods and write an original simile that describes it.
- 2) Jilly and Profound give "shout-ins" during their conversation. List a few things you would like to give a shout-in, making sure to include reasons for your choice.

Observe

- 1) Reread Jilly's description of how to make her favorite sandwich. What transition words does she use in this description, and how do those help the reader?

» She uses *first*, *then*, and *now*.

- 2) When Jilly describes her dad's voice mail, she reports what he says. She also uses italics and brackets to describe the way he said it. What do these bracketed words and phrases reveal about Jilly's dad and the message he leaves?

» Answers may vary but should be based on textual evidence. For example, students may believe that his laugh is "awkward" because he is nervous or that he takes a deep breath because he is trying to calm down.

Understand

- 1) Profound and Jilly complain that they must make their beds each day, even though they will just get undone later. What are some things worth doing even when you know they will be undone?
- 2) Jilly imagines teaching Emma to make the "perfect JP PB&J." What important things do you wish a family member had taught you when you were younger?



Have students read Jilly's description, then act out the voicemail to show how Jilly's dad feels.



Have students brainstorm the most important lessons they have learned or what they would want to teach a younger sibling.

Reading: Chapters 5-6

Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) What does Jilly think Profound will feel when he learns her sister has hearing problems? What is Profound's actual reaction?
 - » She believes he will feel excitement. He actually seems upset; he responds with noncommittal statements.
- 2) How does Profound explain the difference between *deaf* and *Deaf*?
 - » He says that one is a physical condition, while the other "is about community and ASL."
- 3) Why does Emma visit an audiologist?
 - » An audiologist works with patients who experience hearing loss. This person will help the family learn how best to help Emma.
- 4) What words does Jilly learn to sign?
 - » She learns *eat, sleep, diaper, baby, sister, mother, father, purple, blue, and green.*

Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Jilly searches online for many signs, but she does not find the sign for *turquoise*. Use an ASL dictionary to research this sign.
- 2) Research Lyon, France, and decide if you believe, like Jilly's Aunt Joanne, that it is "like no other city in the world."

Imagine

- 1) Imagine that, like Jilly, you want to learn new things about someone. Brainstorm questions you might ask to discover more about them.

Have students generate questions about different topics, such as hobbies, pets, habits, favorites, etc.





Ask students to think about the prefix *mer-* and use it as a clue to the word's meaning. Remind them of the word *mermaid*, which uses the prefix in a similar way.



Have students list unusual nouns and verbs in advance, then use those to generate different possibilities.

- 2) When Jilly joins the chat, it mentions a “mercreature.” Imagine what this kind of creature might be and create a description or drawing of it.
- 3) When Jilly asks Profound to guess her news, he suggests some wild possibilities. Brainstorm other crazy ideas for how you might respond when someone tells you to “guess what.”

Observe

- 1) The word *appendix* (plural: *appendices*) has a few different meanings, but one of them refers to special kinds of information collected at the back of a book. *You Don't Know Everything, Jilly P!* has two appendices. What information do they contain?
 - » One lists the first one hundred words Jilly learns to sign, and the other lists the meaning of the initialisms Macy and Jilly's dad use to communicate.
- 2) Compare and contrast the way Jilly's parents enter the house after Emma's appointment and the way they enter upon bringing Emma home from the hospital for the first time.

Understand



Ask students if they think all people with hearing loss are exactly the same.

- 1) Reread the description of “Mount Coffee Table” at the start of Chapter 5. How does the table reflect how Jilly's family is feeling?
- 2) Why might Profound feel upset about the way Jilly shares the news about her sister? How could she approach this topic better?
- 3) Jilly promises to learn one more thing about Profound that weekend. Why might this be important?
- 4) Jilly sets a goal of learning a new sign every day. Name something you would like to be able to do in one year, and establish a plan for how you might accomplish this.

Reading: Chapters 7-8

Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) How does Macy describe Profound?
 - » She calls him “that Deaf boy” and Jilly’s crush.
- 2) How do Jilly’s parents react when she mentions James Dupree?
 - » They do not initially recognize his name. They discuss it briefly but eventually change the subject.
- 3) What does Alicia tell Jilly about how Black and white parents have different situations?
 - » She says that Black parents must have hard conversations about safety and police interactions. White parents do not often discuss what happens to Black children, but if they did, it might help cause change.
- 4) What does the “Mount Coffee Table Barometer” show Macy about how Jilly’s family is doing?
 - » It shows that the family is very stressed out.
- 5) Macy observes that Jilly’s parents have lost something. What does she mean?
 - » She says Jilly’s parents have lost something because Emma is different from how they thought she would be. They have to adjust to a new and unexpected situation.

Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Aunt Alicia’s rearview mirror holds a birdcage, and in it is a bird named Maya. How does the name *Maya* connect to a caged bird, and why might this remind Aunt Alicia that “we all have a song to sing”?
- 2) Research how a barometer works and in what situations someone would use a barometer.

Imagine

- 1) Jilly describes her school day in three words: “*teachers, texts, and textbooks.*” What three words describe your day at school?
- 2) Jilly says her dad and Macy exchange initialisms as if their meaning were “obvious,” but those meanings are not so clear to her. What are some things others seem to understand differently from how you see them?



Ask students to think of a time they have misunderstood someone or when they have been misunderstood. What caused the misunderstanding?

Observe

- 1) Does Jilly seem to have a crush on Profound? Use a T-chart to list evidence that suggests she does versus evidence that she does not.
- 2) Compare and contrast the way Jilly feels about Vidalia with the way Macy feels about the movie *One Last Summer*.



Assign students different sections when Jilly interacts with or thinks about Profound, then have them organize evidence from their section to show which answer it supports.

Understand

- 1) What is your “song to sing”? What does it say about you that is unique?
- 2) Alicia shares the news of the shooting with Jilly, though she seems unsure at first about whether to share it or not. When is it important for adults to share hard news with you, and when would you rather not know?
- 3) If you were to pick an object in your home or school to use as a barometer—something that could show the amount of stress your family or class was feeling—what would it be and why?
- 4) Jilly says that Profound prefers stories that are “a little more complicated,” while Macy’s favorite movie ends predictably. Which kind of stories do you prefer, and why is this your choice?



Ask students to think about where they learn bad news and how it would be different if an adult were involved.



Ask students to consider the ways the classroom looks different before a holiday or during an important test or assessment.

Reading: Chapters 9-10

Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) What “two terrible things” does Jilly realize during the chat?
 - » She realizes that her friend’s suspicions are correct, because she does like Profound.
- 2) Jilly says her parents take her to Emma’s next audiologist appointment because she “wore them down.” What does this phrase mean?
 - » It means she convinced them by asking repeatedly; they may have said yes because they grew tired of her asking over and over.
- 3) What does Ms. Slapp mean when she refers to “manual communication”?
 - » She is referring to sign language.
- 4) How do Emma’s family members react when they leave Ms. Slapp’s office?
 - » Jilly says the visit was “awful.” Her dad reminds her that the audiologist has a lot of experience, but her mom agrees with Jilly.
- 5) Why does the family pause when Jilly’s mom tells her dad to be quiet?
 - » They realize that he will not wake Emma, no matter how loud he is, because she cannot hear him.



Ask students to reread the scene in the car, assigning groups of students a different character to report on.

Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) When someone new joins the Vidalia chatroom, things get a little tense. Luckily, it is just a disagreement. Research Internet safety and how to tell if you should alert an adult to what is happening online.
- 2) One of the toys in the audiologist’s waiting room reminds Jilly of an abacus. What is an abacus, and who would have used it? Explain what it would help them do.

Imagine



Remind students of memorable language from texts they have read in class, then have them build a compliment around those words.

- 1) Fans of Vidalia use “newt eye,” which comes from Shakespeare, as an insult. Consider a text you have read and use it to create an original saying, but use this twist: rather than creating an insult, come up with a compliment.
- 2) Jilly distracts herself by playing an online game called *Cactus Smash*. Invent your own online game, describing its name, its characters, how the game works, and how someone wins it.

Observe

- 1) Does Ms. Slapp seem like a fitting name for the audiologist? Use evidence from the text to explain whether or not the name matches her character or her behaviors.
- 2) Ms. Slapp presents two different ideas about how to treat infants with hearing loss: manual communication and spoken language. Use a T-chart to list information about each approach.

Understand



Remind students that Ms. Slapp discusses Emma “like she’s an animal that needs to be trained.” How does this relate to the way Ms. Slapp uses the word *normal*?



Ask students to think about traditions or rituals their families have, perhaps around special holidays, seasons, or days of the week.

- 1) Consider the question the chatroom’s members discuss: would you preview a favorite book or movie before it was released if you were not allowed to discuss it with others?
- 2) Jilly says that when Ms. Slapp uses the term *normal*, she experiences itchiness. Why is it a problem to call people normal or imply that others are not normal?
- 3) Jilly’s family enjoys watching a special television show together. Describe an activity your family likes doing together. Make sure to explain why it is special and what you enjoy about it.

Reading: Chapters 11-12

Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) What kind of cake does Profound want to be, and what does this choice say about him?
 - » He wants to be a fruitcake, because not many people like that cake. This means he will not be eaten. This answer shows that he is clever.
- 2) How are Jilly's feeling about Profound changing?
 - » She is starting to like him more and more. She mentions how she finds even his ear cute.
- 3) Jilly says her cousins "spill" inside. What does this suggest about how they enter the house?
 - » Answers may vary, but they are likely a bit wild or disorganized, because a spill is usually not planned.
- 4) During Thanksgiving, Jilly notices some problems with the way her relatives communicate. Describe some of them, and explain why they are problems.
 - » Answers may vary, but students should understand that Lou, Mike, and Gram say things that are offensive or hurtful, and that Jilly starts to realize these statements are racist.
- 5) What do the relatives say about Emma using sign language, and what do these reactions reveal about them?
 - » Answers may vary, but students should recognize that there are different reactions. One of Emma's cousins says that it can be "beautiful," but others talk about how they do not want to learn it or how surgery can "fix" Emma's problem. That shows that they care more about not learning something new than about communicating with Emma.

Have students reread each relative's comment, then consider whose feelings or experience it is about: the speaker or Emma's.



Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) One of the chatroom members, Botswanahavefuntoo, is originally from Botswana. Explore this country to learn about its geography, climate, people, and their cultures.

- 2) Jilly tells her aunt that she does not want to be racist. Use the resources your teacher shares to learn how you can prevent racist behaviors in your community.

Imagine

- 1) Consider the chatroom's question about fighting "100 duck-sized horses or 1 horse-sized duck." Which would you prefer, and why would you make this choice?
- 2) Jilly grows bored on the drive to her relatives' house. What are some ways you pass the time on a long trip or in other situations when you feel bored?

Observe

- 1) Compare and contrast the way Uncle Mike greets Jilly and her family with the way Gram welcomes them. Which greeting is more kind?
 - » Answers may vary, but students should recognize that Mike cares more about the food than his family; therefore, his greeting is less kind.
- 2) Alicia gets upset when Gram asks her to make a sweet potato pie, and Profound got upset when Jilly told him that her sister is Deaf. What connects these two conversations, and why might they upset Alicia and Profound?
 - » Answers may vary, but students should understand that both conversations used stereotypes or assumed that people with a certain characteristic, such as skin color or hearing loss, were all alike.



Assign students to each scene, have them reread it and determine why it was upsetting, then compare and contrast their findings.



Have student pairs try to send a message to each other without making any noise, then consider how those techniques can be a kind of communication.



Ask students how they might respond through their actions, words, thoughts, or emotions.

Understand

- 1) Jilly is starting to understand that some kinds of communication do not require sound. What are some ways you communicate with people without speaking?
- 2) Why is it misguided for Aunt Lou to prefer Jamila's hair a certain way? What is a better compliment Aunt Lou could have given Jamila or Aunt Alicia?
- 3) Jilly says she wants to forget about her family for a while and think about other things. When you feel disappointed or upset with your loved ones, how do you respond?

Reading: Chapters 13-14

Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) How is the new audiologist's recommendation different from Ms. Slapp's?

» The new one tells Jilly's family to use signs to communicate with Emma.

- 2) Jilly's parents have different reactions when Emma does not hear with her hearing aid. What are they?

» Their mom seems very sad, while their dad reminds her that there are other kinds of treatment, and it may take a while for the hearing aids to work.

- 3) How does Alicia describe the difference between Mike's comment and Gram's question? You may use a T-chart to record details about each one, putting information about Mike's comment on one side and information about Gram's question on the other.

» Mike acted deliberately, while Gram was not trying to be hurtful or racist. However, they both still hurt.

- 4) According to Jilly, what is the difference between feeling uncomfortable and being unsafe?

» Feeling uncomfortable is when something is unpleasant or hard but not dangerous. Feeling unsafe is when you believe you are in danger.

Have students refer to both scenes, listing details from them and using those to compare each audiologist's recommendations.



Remind students that Jilly believes a conversation can be uncomfortable, while her grandfather probably made young men feel unsafe when he pretended to have a gun in his jacket.



Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Jilly's family starts considering whether or not Emma should have cochlear implant surgery. Research this surgery to learn more about how it helps people with hearing loss.
- 2) Joanne and Alicia help their family have some uncomfortable but important conversations. What are some ways to have a calm, safe conversation about something uncomfortable?



Allow students to draw their responses, using color and imagery to illustrate the sensations their word carries.

Imagine

- 1) Jilly describes *surgery* as “a sharp word.” Pick a word that has a strong feeling or connotation for you, then describe what that word looks, feels, sounds, or tastes like.
- 2) Jilly watches a television show about a teenager who is also the mayor. If you became mayor of your town, what changes would you make? What would be important to keep the same as it is today?



Have students consult a dictionary to explore different meanings of the word *candidate*, then decide how those definitions fit the scene.

Observe

- 1) Jilly makes a joke using the word *candidate*. Explain the two different ways that *candidate* is used in this scene: first the way her parents use it, then the way Jilly uses it.
 - » Emma’s parents say that the baby is “a strong candidate” for cochlear implant surgery, which means that the surgery is likely to be successful. Jilly jokes about Emma as a candidate who wants to be elected to a political position. A person who runs for this kind of position is also called a *candidate*, which means a kind of contestant.
- 2) Profound tells Jilly about different kinds of treatment Deaf people have experienced through history. How do these treatments show different attitudes people have had toward deafness?
 - » He describes how at various points, people have believed in “oralism,” the idea that speaking matters more than communicating in non-verbal ways. He also mentions that Deaf people were once sent to asylums. These suggest that Deaf people have not always been valued or have been expected to be like everyone else.

Understand

- 1) Jilly cares about Emma and wants her to receive the best treatment. But what happens to Emma is not up to Jilly. What are some ways to deal with a situation that is very important to you but that you cannot control?
- 2) Alicia says that “nothing changes if we don’t talk.” What is one thing you would like to change? How might talking about it create the kind of change you hope to see?
- 3) Think about how Alicia says some people hurt on purpose, while others do it without meaning to be hurtful. How could you change the way you speak to or act around others to avoid hurting them without meaning to do so?

Reading: Chapters 15-16

Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) How does Profound feel similar to the characters in Vidalia? How does he feel different?
 - » He feels that he is judged by his color the way they are judged by their auras. However, he says that the auras in Vidalia show truth, while Profound and other people judged by their skin color in America are often misjudged.
- 2) What does Profound mean when he says he is always Black? How does this shape the way he experiences things?
 - » He says that being Black shapes his perspective and prevents him from pretending race does not matter.
- 3) What does Profound invite Jilly to do?
 - » He asks her to attend a family event for new parents with Deaf children.
- 4) What is Profound's real name, and why is it important for Jilly to learn it?
 - » His name is Derek Knight, and learning his name means Jilly is getting to know him in real life, not just online.
- 5) Describe the three Deaf students whose families attend the family event. What do they have in common, and how do they differ from each other?
 - » Answers may vary, but students should recognize that Derek and Jessica go to a school for Deaf students but are the only Deaf people in their families, while Lia's mom is Deaf, but Lia attends school with students who do not have hearing loss. Derek's hearing aids help him hear some sounds, but they do not mean that he can understand everything he hears. Jessica finds her hearing aids "annoying."



Ask students to think about the difference between knowing someone's username and their legal name, or the one they use in everyday life.



Have students list the three characters (Jessica, Derek, and Lia), then compare their schools, families, and assistive devices.

Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Jilly's mom is a professor at the University of California, Berkeley. Research this school to learn more about it, such as its mascot or important people who attended it.
- 2) Emma's hat makes Jilly think about Amelia Earhart. Who was Earhart, and why is she important?



Have students generate a list of things they have read and the settings of those texts.

Imagine

- 1) If you could live in a fictional place from a book, where would it be and why?
- 2) Jilly's dad watches a lot of online reality shows. Make up your own reality show, and explain why people would watch it and what it would be about.

Observe

- 1) Several members of the chatroom explain why it might be wrong to say that you do not see someone as Black. What are the reasons for this?
 - » They include not seeing people for who they really are, not wanting people to be Black, believing that being Black is bad, or expecting that all people are white.
- 2) Jilly learns some ways of interacting with a group of people who have different hearing abilities. What are some of the ways Karina and others adapt to include everyone in the meeting?
 - » Answers may vary, but they could include flipping the lights to get everyone's attention, having someone sign the things that are spoken aloud, or the audience shaking their fingers rather than clapping.
- 3) Jilly says that after meeting Derek, she feels like her "inner organs" are "trying to play musical chairs." What does she mean by this?
 - » Answers may vary, but students should recognize that she feels a bit nervous or awkward, probably because she has a crush on him.



Tell students this is an original way to say that she has butterflies in her stomach. Help students connect this phrase to it and other idioms they have heard.

Understand

- 1) Jilly's mom worries about her meeting people online. This is a good thing for a mom to do, but it may feel annoying to her children! How do you know if it is okay to talk to someone you meet online, and what signs should you watch out for?
- 2) Jilly and Macy make a new dance to celebrate Jilly's chance to meet Profound. What is an event so special that you would create a dance to celebrate it?
- 3) Karina explains that the students gave her permission to ask about their "assistive devices" at the meeting. Why would it be inappropriate to ask this in a different situation?

Reading: Chapters 17-18

Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) How does Jilly's friendship with Derek change after they meet?
 - » They begin to talk every day and often talk for a long time. When Jilly says or does insensitive things, she apologizes, and they talk about them.
- 2) How does Karina treat Jilly differently from Ms. Slapp?
 - » Karina says that Jilly's viewpoint matters, while Jilly felt Ms. Slapp was condescending.
- 3) Why does Jilly's family feel less happy after arriving at her aunt and uncle's house?
 - » They are not celebrating with their entire family. Alicia, Joanne, and their kids are staying home.
- 4) Why is Vidalia stationery not the best gift for Jilly?
 - » She connects with her fellow book lovers online rather than writing letters on paper.
- 5) How does Jilly make her parents proud at Christmas dinner?
 - » She speaks up to name the racist things her family members are saying.

Ask students where Jilly met the friends who love the same trilogy she loves.



Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Derek tells Jilly to look up Deaf dancers online. Look this up yourself to learn more about it.
- 2) Gram mentions two people—Rodney King and Martin Luther King, Jr.—when the family argues about racism at Christmas. Who are these men, and why are they important?



Provide lyrics of well-known holiday songs that students can consult as a model.

Imagine

- 1) Jilly's family enjoys listening to holiday songs, including some that are very silly. Write your own holiday song that you would enjoy sharing with family and friends.
- 2) Imagine you were Adriana and had a parent who said racist things. How would you react?



Guide students to the rest of the paragraph, which describes an "aroma of fresh brew." Ask students to consider which of the beverages Jilly's mom offers they may have smelled before.

Observe

- 1) Karina says she would enjoy "some joe" when visiting Jilly's house. Think about the context clues that surround the word. What does she mean?
 - » She means she would like some coffee.
- 2) Think about the gifts each family member receives for Christmas. What do they say about the character who receives them?
 - » Answers may vary, but students should connect the gift to the character's personality or traits.



Offer students inspiration by naming some common situations, such as when a relative visits, when company comes over, or when the landlord stops by.

Understand

- 1) Jilly's family is behaving a bit differently for Karina's visit. How has your family changed its appearance or behavior for a visitor?
- 2) Why might it be important that a Deaf person receives his or her name sign from another person in the Deaf community?
- 3) Jilly stands up at her family's Christmas dinner. Describe an issue so important that you would speak up about it. Why is this issue so important to you?

Reading: Chapters 19-20

Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) Derek and Jilly have different perspectives of what happens to him at breakfast. Describe both their points of view.
 - » Derek felt annoyed that a stranger stared at him, but Jilly wonders if she wants to practice signing.
- 2) What does Derek ask Jilly to do?
 - » He wants her to listen and to take his side.
- 3) What are Alicia and Joanne signing up for?
 - » They are going to take a sign language class.
- 4) How do Jilly's parents change after they take a sign language class?
 - » They start signing at meals and other everyday things.

Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Jilly thinks about the career she might like to have as an adult. Pick a job or career that interests you, then research it to learn more about what kind of skills or training it requires.

Encourage students to research the kind of subjects they should study to have this career, if they will need to go to school to learn this profession, or whether people with this job can live anywhere.

Imagine

- 1) Throughout her conversation with Derek, Jilly reminds herself of things she is doing wrong or things she should change. But she seems not to be able to take her own advice. Imagine how the conversation could go if Jilly changed her behaviors.

Have students construct a scene that shows Jilly taking one of her own pieces of advice.

Observe



Have students return to the Thanksgiving scene to review Gram's actions.

- 1) Jilly does not mean to hurt Derek, though she keeps doing it. Compare the things she says to Derek with the things Gram says to Alicia. Are Gram and Jilly more different or more alike?
 - » Answers will vary, but students should use textual evidence to support their conclusions.
- 2) How have Jilly's feelings about Derek changed since she met him? How do her behaviors reflect this change?
 - » She no longer feels as giddy or distracted as she used to. She does not think he is as "fine" as she did before.
- 3) Jilly's parents have ideas about what career she might have someday, but Jilly has her own ideas. List the different professions the family discusses and name the person who suggests each job.
 - » Dad suggests advertising and a mechanic; Mom suggests a professor; Jilly wants to be an interpreter for the Deaf.
- 4) Compare and contrast how Jilly's parents act after Emma's appointment in this section with how they acted after Emma's appointments earlier in the book.
 - » Answers may vary, but they should be supported by textual evidence. Students may notice that Jilly's mom is not crying anymore. Her dad cleans after dinner rather than leaving all the dirty dishes on Mount Coffee Table like before.

Understand



Ask students to think about how Derek has learned about being Deaf versus how Jilly is learning about it.

- 1) Jilly knows when talking to Derek that she is not helping things by continuing to talk about her perspective. How do you know when to keep talking about something and when to listen quietly?
- 2) Why might Derek feel frustrated when Jilly tells him what she has read about being Deaf? What might be a better way to connect with him?
- 3) Derek says he is not going to stop being friends with Jilly yet, even though she will mess up again. Is it always the right choice to keep being friends with people who make mistakes?

Reading: Chapters 21-22

Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) What happens to Jessica Johnson?
 - » She was shot and killed while running.
- 2) What are some of the things people say Jessica should have done differently? Does Jilly believe these things matter?
 - » They say she should have used her hearing aids, not been “out late at night,” and not been running when the police asked her to stop. Jilly says these things are not important.
- 3) During the seven-minute silence, Jilly starts to think about who she means when she uses the word *us*. Why is this suddenly a confusing question?
 - » She realizes that her perspective as a white person is different from the perspective of her Black friends and family members.
- 4) Jilly did not really know Jessica, but she believes that going to the vigil is important. Why?
 - » She wants to show Jessica’s family and friends that she cares and that she remembers those who have died.

Ask students to think about different groups they are part of at home, at school, or in other places in their lives. How do those groups connect, and how are they different?



Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) At the vigil, the minister reminds people of resources that can help in hard times. Research things you can do to help a friend who is grieving.
- 2) The vigil for Jessica takes place at Lake Merritt, a real lake in California. Investigate this lake, including looking at images of it, to learn more about it.

Imagine

- 1) Jilly says that no one at her school discusses what has happened to Jessica. How could she explain what happened or talk about this at school?

Have students think about how Jilly’s parents have shared hard news. Are these good ways to bring up a hard topic?





Inform students that *desolation* means loneliness or sadness.

Observe

- 1) Each time Derek and Jilly enter the private chat, the program picks a setting from Vidalia for them. This time, they are in “the Desert of Desolation.” Why might this be an appropriate setting for their conversation about Jessica?
 - » Answers may vary, but students should understand that the setting reflects or matches some of the feelings Jilly and Derek feel about Jessica’s death.
- 2) Jilly describes the vigil as a “constellation of grief.” Think about the meaning of the word *constellation*, then explain why she might use this word to describe the people at the vigil.
 - » Answers may vary, but she might use the word because they are a connected group, but they are spread across the park. That is similar to the way stars that are spread across the sky can connect to make a constellation.



Ask students to think about things that help them share their emotions when they feel sad or upset.

Understand

- 1) Upon hearing about Jessica, Jilly decides to wear black clothes to school, and Derek begins posting on his profile page. What are some other ways that people can express their grief?
- 2) Jilly does not know what to say or do to help Derek, so she asks if she can share “a virtual hug” with him. Why is it important to ask people who are hurting for permission to help?

Reading: Chapter 23 & “Nine Months Later”

Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) How does Alicia respond when Jilly’s mom tells her to “Stay safe,” and why might she respond this way?
 - » She says “I’ll do what I can,” because she understands that her safety is not always her choice.
- 2) Jilly notes that she has learned one hundred signs, but she does not seem very excited about this accomplishment. Why might she feel different about this goal now than she did when she set it?
 - » Answers may vary, but students may note all the other things Jilly has been learning; these may have made her original goal seem less important.
- 3) Emma’s cousin Adriana attends her birthday party. What do she and Gram reveal about Adriana’s dad?
 - » He seems not to have changed since Thanksgiving and Christmas, but the family seems to understand how poorly he has behaved.
- 4) How has Gram changed since the holidays?
 - » She asks how to sign to Emma, showing she has grown willing to learn something new in order to communicate with her granddaughter. At the holidays, she did not want to do this.





Have students reread the holiday chapters to see how Gram acted, then use that information to see how she has changed.

Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Jilly and her family post a Black Lives Matter sign in their yard. Research this movement to learn more about it.


Imagine

- 
- Have students think about the ways Jilly has changed and grown during the book.
- 
- Ask students if they will be a year older, be in a different grade, or experience other common changes in that time.
- 1) Jilly wonders what mistakes are in her future. Do you think her mistakes will be different from now on, or do you think she will keep making the same mistakes?
 - 2) Jilly's story jumps ahead nine months. Imagine what your life will be like nine months from now. What would you like to change? What will stay the same?

Observe

- 1) Jilly notes that her life has been very different since Emma was born. List the ways she says things have changed.
 - » Answers may vary, but students should draw on evidence from the text, and they may include things such as how Jilly has learned many new things, including how to help her parents have difficult conversations.

Understand

- 
- Suggest some common issues—such as the environment, bullying, homelessness, racism, and so forth—to help students generate ideas.
- 1) Jilly's parents say they do not talk about difficult things because they do not want her to feel worried. What would you say to parents who felt this way? Would you encourage them to talk with their children about uncomfortable things, like Jilly does, or would you do something else?
 - 2) Jilly and her family decide to take an action in addition to talking. What is something you would like to act on, and how can you demonstrate that?

Reading: “Three Months After That” & “Three Years After That”

Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) At the end of the book, over four years have passed. How old is Jilly now?
 - » She was twelve when it began, so she is now at least sixteen.
- 2) Why might Alicia approve of Jilly’s conversation in the car with Derek?
 - » Answers may vary, but it is likely that she is proud that Jilly does not avoid hard conversations.
- 3) Throughout the book, Jilly has been very concerned about Gwenella’s fate, convinced she will have a green aura by the end. How does the book compare to what Jilly expected?
 - » Gwenella is not green; she is orange. However, Jilly believes her choices have been “right,” and she seems satisfied with the ending.
- 4) How does Emma change Jilly’s process for making a sandwich?
 - » She has a different way of doing it, but more importantly, Jilly realizes that Emma’s way is better.



Remind students that Jilly was twelve at the book’s start, then guide them in adding up the time that has passed in the final chapters.

Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) The bookstore clerk teases Jilly and Derek by asking them if they want a philosophy book instead of *Roses & Thorns*. What is philosophy, and what kinds of things might appear in a philosophy book?
- 2) What do Jilly and Gwenella have in common? How are they different?



Have students reread references to Gwenella, and use a Venn diagram to document how she resembles Jilly and the ways in which they differ.

Imagine

- 1) Jilly describes the cover of *Roses & Thorns*. Create your own image based on her description.

Observe



Have students describe the characteristics of roses and thorns, then ask if those descriptions can apply to Jilly's experiences.

- 1) The title of the final Vidalia book is *Roses & Thorns*. What do roses and thorns have in common, and how might they relate to what Jilly has experienced in the last year?
 - » Answers may vary, but students should recognize that roses are beautiful and fragrant, while thorns are dangerous. However, the thorns and roses appear on the same stem. This could connect to Jilly's experiences, because over the course of the book she has experienced many positive things but also had hard times.
- 2) Compare Jilly's brunch with Derek and Alicia to the questions Jilly asked Derek earlier in the book about how he eats out. How is the experience different from what she imagined?
 - » Answers will vary, but students should recognize that many of the things Jilly worried about are not actually problems at brunch.

Understand



Ask students to think about the different roles they play in a family, in a classroom, on a team, and so forth.

- 1) Alicia says that "Everybody has a role to play." How might remembering this change the way you treat people in your everyday life? Is there anyone whose role you sometimes overlook?
- 2) At the beginning of the book, Jilly seems like she will never change the way she makes a sandwich. By the end, she decides that sharing the process with Emma has improved it. When is it best to change the way you do something, and when is it best to stick with an old way?
- 3) In the author's note at the end of the book, Alex Gino describes themselves and why they wrote this book. Why might it be important for the author, who is hearing and white, to explain how they were introduced to the Deaf community and why they decided to write about racism in this way?

Overview of the Five-Day Fluency Routine

Research demonstrates that fluency practice produces gains in reading comprehension. Amplify CKLA's fluency instruction includes modeled reading, assisted reading (such as choral or paired reading), and independent reading, along with breadth of text encounters and extended deep reading of selected texts. This multi-faceted approach ensures that students receive low-stakes practice along with engaging, authentic fluency tasks, such as performances. Daily instruction regularly provides students with fluency practice. Additionally, each unit includes at least one extended fluency performance, which requires students to spend five days with a single short text, culminating in a performance. The program also includes supports for students to practice fluency at home.

It is important to remember that the primary goal of the five-day fluency routine is to equip students to read the passage accurately and with expression. As they gain accuracy and confidence, they will naturally begin to read more quickly. However, because students who are pushed to read more quickly often sacrifice accuracy, it is important not to pressure students to race through the text or to read with undue speed. Because this is not a memorization drill, students should read the text as they perform; even if students say they have memorized the passage, encourage them to read the words rather than recite them from memory.

The five-day fluency performance routine includes the following components.

- **Day 1:** Teacher introduces text and reads it aloud several times, modeling different tones or inflections and encouraging students to reflect on each one. For example, if the teacher reads in a monotone, students should realize that this is not a stellar reading; they may suggest better approaches, such as reading in a happy tone, an excited tone, a nervous tone, or other tone appropriate to the selected text.

During this week, students are encouraged to start reading the target text aloud at home using reading logs to record each session with a student's "Happy Hearer." Alternatively, students may create their own log page in their reading journals.

- **Day 2:** Students practice reading the text chorally, with varying inflection, tone, or other elements.

- **Day 3:** Students practice both choral and paired readings, continuing to develop tone, inflection, and expression.
- **Day 4:** Students continue practicing paired readings in preparation for the following day's performance.
- **Day 5:** Student pairs perform their reading.

If you choose to evaluate students' performance at this stage, you may use the Fluency Passage Performance Rubric to evaluate each performance. Students who still struggle with fluency at this stage in the year may benefit from additional practice with the materials in the Fluency Supplement, available on the Amplify CKLA website.

Fluency Passage Performance Rubric

	Advanced	Proficient	Basic
Accuracy	Reading contains no errors in pronunciation.	Reading contains minimal errors in pronunciation.	Reading contains numerous errors in pronunciation.
Rate	Reading is conversationally paced or paced to show appropriate emphasis and inflection.	Reading is uneven, with interspersed periods of speed and sluggishness.	Reading is labored and slow.
Expression	Expression is strong throughout the reading. While the tone and volume may vary, they do so in keeping with the student's understanding of the piece.	Reading generally sounds like everyday speech, with possible lapses into expressionless speech.	Words are pronounced, but they are not spoken in a manner that indicates an understanding of their meaning.

Dear Family Member,

Your child has been assigned a Fluency Performance Passage in conjunction with the texts we are studying in class. This passage will be introduced in class, and students will spend several lessons practicing reading this passage aloud. On the fifth day, students will perform a reading of this passage. We follow this routine because repeated readings of text help build reading fluency, which includes automatic word recognition, expression, accuracy, and speed. Additionally, over one hundred studies have shown that deep reading, in which students spend time reading and rereading a single text, has a dramatic impact on reading comprehension. In fact, it is such an important impact that it helps students better comprehend the passage they have practiced as well as passages they will read in the future.

As part of our in-class practice, students study and discuss this passage. I will demonstrate different ways of reading it aloud, and students will analyze what makes a good reading. They will also practice reading this passage aloud in various ways.

You can assist your child by asking him or her to read the passage aloud at home. Even if your child remembers some or all of the words, remind him or her to read the passage rather than recite it from memory. Children may practice by reading to family members, caregivers, or even the family pet. Please log each reading your child completes in the Happy Hearers Log, which accompanies this letter.

Thank you for your help!

Happy Hearers Log

An important way to prepare for your Fluency Passage Performance is to practice reading the passage to others. They may be your parents, your siblings, another family member or friend, or even the family pet. Whoever they are, they're sure to be a Happy Hearer when they get to listen to you read your passage!

Each time you practice reading your Fluency Passage to a listener at home, record it in the Happy Hearers Log.

Day of the reading	Name of the Happy Hearer	Notes

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Molly Hensley

David Herubin

Ian Horst

Sara Hunt

James Mendez-Hodes

Christopher Miller

Tory Novikova

Sheri Pineault

Diana Projansky

Todd Rawson

Julia Sverchuk

Elizabeth Thiers

Jeanne Thornton

Amanda Tolentino