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In so doing, he created a way to preserve his people's language and culture ...more Rez Ball by 4.12 avg rating 1,919 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for High School (2025) Parachute Kids: A Graphic Novel (Parachute Kids #1) by 4.24 avg rating 3,551 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for Intermediate (2025) The Lost Year by 4.47 avg rating 4,591 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for Intermediate (2025) Dogtown (Dogtown, #1) by 4.18 avg rating 2,491 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for Children's (2025) Message Not Found by 3.95 avg rating 1,878 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for High School (2024) Hummingbird by 4.33 avg rating 4,013 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for Intermediate (2024) Cookies & Milk by really liked it 4.00 avg rating 484 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for Children (2024) Six Crimson Cranes (Six Crimson Cranes, #1) by 4.19 avg rating 96,092 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for High School (2023) Ground Zero by 4.33 avg rating 23,879 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for Intermediate (2023) Stella (Best Friends Dog Tales #1) by 4.34 avg rating 2,077 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for Children's (2023) Legendborn (The Legendborn Cycle, #1) by 4.32 avg rating 169,970 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for High School (2022) When Stars Are Scattered by 4.60 avg rating 30,732 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for Intermediate (2022) Zeus, Dog of Chaos by 4.27 avg rating 216 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for Children's (2022) Patron Saints of Nothing by 4.22 avg rating 19,108 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for High School (2021) Allies by 4.27 avg rating 11,756 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for Intermediate (2021) Stargazing by 4.16 avg rating 17,691 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for Children's (2021) Dry by 4.01 avg rating 52,123 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for High School (2020) Front Desk (Front Desk #1) by 4.37 avg rating 43,011 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for Intermediate (2020) Lifeboat 12 by 4.18 avg rating 5,006 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for Children's (2020) The Hate U Give by 4.46 avg rating 977,091 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for High School (2019) Refugee by 4.37 avg rating 77,343 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for Intermediate (2019) A Dog Like Daisy by 4.25 avg rating 593 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for Children (2019) The Female of the Species by 4.15 avg rating 38,252 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for High School (2018) The War That Saved My Life (The War That Saved My Life, #1) by 4.49 avg rating 110,349 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for Intermediate (2018) Roller Girl by 4.28 avg rating 68,350 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for Children's (2018) Wolf by Wolf (Wolf by Wolf, #1) by 4.19 avg rating 23,050 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for High School (2017) The Crossover by 4.23 avg rating 67,387 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for Intermediate (2017) The Doll Graveyard by 3.74 avg rating 914 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for Children's (2017) Chews Your Destiny (Gumazing Gum Girl, #1) by 3.69 avg rating 655 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for Children (2016) Goodbye, Rebel Blue by 3.89 avg rating 1,664 ratings Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award for Intermediate (2016) previous 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 next Illinois Teen Readers' Choice Award Lincoln Award is awarded annually to the author of the book voted as most out Illinois Teen Readers' Choice Award Lincoln Award is awarded annually to the author of the book voted as most outstanding by participating students in grades nine through twelve in Illinois. The award is named for Abraham Lincoln, one of Illinois' most famous residents and himself an avid reader and noted author. The award is sponsored by the Association of Illinois School Library Educators (AISLE). The Lincoln Award is designed to encourage high school students to read for personal satisfaction and become familiar with authors of young adult and adult books. ...more Im Glad My Mom Died by 4.44 avg rating 1,314,500 ratings Lincoln Award (2025) You'd Be Home Now by 4.14 avg rating 71,782 ratings Lincoln Award (2024) The Loop (The Loop Trilogy, #1) by 3.89 avg rating 7,979 ratings Lincoln Award (2023) The Inheritance Games (The Inheritance Games, #1) by 4.13 avg rating 967,083 ratings Lincoln Award (2022) The Nickel Boys by 4.26 avg rating 284,740 ratings Lincoln Award (2021) They Both Die at the End (Death-Cast, #1) by 3.75 avg rating 829,103 ratings Lincoln Award (2020) The Hate U Give by 4.46 avg rating 977,091 ratings Lincoln Award (2019) Six of Crows (Six of Crows, #1) by 4.47 avg rating 1,085,670 ratings Lincoln Award (2018) Red Queen (Red Queen, #1) by 3.99 avg rating 1,120,451 ratings Lincoln Award (2017) We Were Liars by 3.66 avg rating 1,251,790 ratings Lincoln Award (2016) Eleanor & Park by 3.93 avg rating 1,232,451 ratings Lincoln Award (2015) The Fault in Our Stars by 4.13 avg rating 5,530,722 ratings Lincoln Award (2014) Thirteen Reasons Why by 3.84 avg rating 1,009,512 ratings Lincoln Award (2013) The Maze Runner (The Maze Runner, #1) by 4.05 avg rating 1,625,572 ratings Lincoln Award (2012) The Hunger Games (The Hunger Games, #1) by 4.34 avg rating 9,473,733 ratings Lincoln Award (2011) City of Bones (The Mortal Instruments, #1) by 4.07 avg rating 2,114,540 ratings Lincoln Award (2010) Crank (Crank, #1) by 4.16 avg rating 152,565 ratings Lincoln Award (2009) Twilight (The Twilight Saga, #1) by 3.67 avg rating 7,066,100 ratings Lincoln Award (2008) Uglies (Uglies, #1) by 3.84 avg rating 698,574 ratings Lincoln Award (2007) My Sisters Keeper by 4.11 avg rating 1,259,431 ratings Lincoln Award (2006) A Child Called "It" (Dave Pelzer, #1) by 4.14 avg rating 453,108 ratings Lincoln Award (2005) Lunar New Year Love Story by 4.38 avg rating 6,603 ratings Lincoln Award Nominee (2026) Hell Followed With Us by 4.11 avg rating 29,231 ratings Lincoln Award Nominee (2026) Remarkably Bright Creatures by 4.37 avg rating 976,328 ratings Lincoln Award Nominee (2026) Accountable: The True Story of a Racist Social Media Account and the Teenagers Whose Lives It Changed by 4.25 avg rating 5,195 ratings Lincoln Award Nominee (2026) Starter Villain by 4.13 avg rating 80,214 ratings Lincoln Award Nominee (2026) Divine Rivals (Letters of Enchantment, #1) by 4.16 avg rating 649,307 ratings Lincoln Award Nominee (2026) The Girl Who Fell Beneath the Sea by 4.09 avg rating 85,227 ratings Lincoln Award Nominee (2026) Monstrous: A Transracial Adoption Story by 4.38 avg rating 1,488 ratings Lincoln Award Nominee (2026) Lula Dean's Little Library of Banned Books by 4.08 avg rating 51,538 ratings Lincoln Award Nominee (2026) previous 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 14 15 next The Evergreen Teen Book Award is sponsored by the Washington Young Adult Review Group (WashYARG), a group comprised of school and public librarians fr The Evergreen Teen Book Award is sponsored by the Washington Young Adult Review Group (WashYARG), a group comprised of school and public librarians from the state of Washington. The award (formerly known as the WashYARG Young Adult Readers Choice Award) was created to give teens in the state a voice in deciding the best literature aimed at their age group. ...more When the World Was Ours by 4.52 avg rating 5,629 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award for Middle School (2024) Iron Widow (Iron Widow, #1) by 4.04 avg rating 101,725 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award for High School (2024) Flawed (Flawed, #1) by 4.11 avg rating 37,218 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (2019) Everything, Everything by 3.97 avg rating 662,899 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (2018) The Crossover by 4.23 avg rating 67,387 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (2017) The 5th Wave (The 5th Wave, #1) by really liked it 4.00 avg rating 472,799 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (2016) The Fault in Our Stars by 4.13 avg rating 5,530,722 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (2015) Divergent (Divergent, #1) by 4.14 avg rating 4,253,395 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (2014) The Lost Hero (The Heroes of Olympus, #1) by 4.29 avg rating 912,041 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (2013) The Maze Runner (The Maze Runner, #1) by 4.05 avg rating 1,625,572 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (2012) The Hunger Games (The Hunger Games, #1) by 4.34 avg rating 9,473,733 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (2011) Unwind (Unwind, #1) by 4.17 avg rating 242,972 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (2010) Life As We Knew It (Last Survivors, #1) by 3.89 avg rating 131,982 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (2009) Twilight (The Twilight Saga, #1) by 3.67 avg rating 7,066,100 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (2008) The Supernaturalist by 3.86 avg rating 29,155 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (2007) Eragon (The Inheritance Cycle #1) by 3.96 avg rating 1,888,567 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (2006) All-American Girl (All-American Girl, #1) by 3.75 avg rating 70,079 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (2005) The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants (Sisterhood, #1) by 3.85 avg rating 725,288 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (2004) The Princess Diaries (The Princess Diaries, #1) by 3.81 avg rating 259,957 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (2003) Speak by 4.05 avg rating 619,498 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (2002) Holes (Holes, #1) by 4.01 avg rating 1,318,498 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (2001) Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul: 101 Stories of Life, Love and Learning by 3.94 avg rating 19,422 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (2000) The Voice on the Radio (Janie Johnson, #3) by 3.62 avg rating 10,794 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (1999) The Hot Zone: The Terrifying True Story of the Origins of the Ebola Virus by 4.16 avg rating 118,846 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (1998) Driver's Ed by 3.35 avg rating 1,703 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (1997) The Client by 4.06 avg rating 457,116 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (1996) The Pelican Brief by 4.06 avg rating 441,032 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (1995) Say Goodnight, Gracie by 4.40 avg rating 2,185 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (1994) The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle by 3.86 avg rating 87,425 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (1993) Creature by 3.86 avg rating 11,516 ratings Evergreen Teen Book Award (1992) Jump to ratings and reviewsThe first ten lies they tell you in high school."Speak up for yourselfwe want to know what you have to say." From the first moment of her freshman year at Merryweather High, Melinda knows this is a big fat lie, part of the nonsense of high school. She is friendless, outcast, because she busted an end-of-summer party by calling the cops, so now nobody will talk to her, let alone listen to her. As time passes, she becomes increasingly isolated and practically stops talking altogether. Only her art class offers any solace, and it is through her work on an art project that she is finally able to face what really happened at that terrible party: she was raped by an upperclassman, a guy who still attends Merryweather and is still a threat to her. Her healing process has just begun when she has another violent encounter with him. But this time Melinda fights back, refuses to be silent, and thereby achieves a measure of vindication. In Laurie Halse Anderson's powerful novel, an utterly believable heroine with a bitterly ironic voice delivers a blow to the hypocritical world of high school. She speaks for many a disenfranchised teenager while demonstrating the importance of speaking up for oneself.Speak was a 1999 National Book Award Finalist for Young People's Literature. 10595 people are currently reading429365 people want to readUPDATE! Rebellion 1776 - an adventure novel set in Boston in the middle of the Revolution and a smallpox epidemic - will be publishing on April 1st!For bio stuff: Laurie Halse Anderson is a New York Times bestselling author whose writing spans young readers, teens, and adults. Combined, her books have sold more than 8 million copies. Laurie has been nominated for the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award four times. Two of her books, Speak and Chains, were National Book Award finalists, and Chains was short-listed for the prestigious Carnegie medal. Two more books, Shout and The Impossible Knife of Memory, were long-listed for the National Book Award. Laurie was selected by the American Library Association for the 2009 Margaret A. Edwards Award and has been honored for her battles for intellectual freedom by the National Coalition Against Censorship and the National Council of Teachers of English. Laurie lives in Philadelphia, where she enjoys cheesesteaks while she writes. Find out more about Laurie by following her on Bluesky at @halseanderson.bsky.social, Instagram at halseanderson, and Facebook at lauriehalseanderson, or by visiting her website, madwomanintheforest.com.Displaying 1 - 30 of 33,215 reviewsApril 16, 2010"THE FIRST TEN LIES THEY TELL YOU IN HIGH SCHOOL1. We are here to help you.2. You will have enough time to get to your class before the bell rings.3. The dress code will be enforced.4. No smoking is allowed on school grounds.5. Our football team will win the championship this year.6. We expect more of you here.7. Guidance counselors are always available to listen.8. Your schedule was created with your needs in mind.9. Your locker combination is private.10. These will be the years you will look back on fondly."I'm trying to think of ways to go about describing this book, and I'm not really sure how to start. It's dark, depressing, terrifying, and amazing. Everyone should read it. You might hate it (and I'll get to you), but you must read it. The story starts with Melinda, the narrator, starting 9th grade. Everyone, even her old friends, won't talk to her. It's revealed that during the summer Melinda called the cops on a party and it got busted - a few people got arrested, and now everyone hates her. Something happened to Melinda at that party, something she hasn't told anyone about. She retreats into herself, withdrawing from school, her family, and any possibility of friendship. It isn't until the middle of the story that we learn what really happened at the party, but Anderson gives us a big fat hint in this scene where Melinda and her lab partner dissect a frog in biology class:"Our frog lies on her back. Waiting for a prince to come and princessify her with a smooch? I stand over her with my knife. Ms. Keen's voice fades to a mosquito whine. My throat closes off. It's hard to breathe. I put out my hand to steady myself against the table. David pins her froggy hands to the dissection tray. He spreads her froggy legs and pins her froggy feet. I have to slice open her belly. She doesn't say a word. She is already dead. A scream starts in my gut - I can feel the cut, smell the dirt, leaves in my hair."Holy god. Remember what I said about the terrifying stuff? The main reason I loved this book is because I was very, very similar to Melinda in high school. Her attitude about school, her cynicism towards the whole "high school is the best time of your life" crap, her opinions about classes and teachers and the uselessness of guidance counselors...that was me. I kind of wished I could transport myself into the story, so Melinda and I could sneer at pep rallies together. And then I felt bad, because nothing bad happened to me in high school. Nothing like the stuff Melinda went through. She had a reason for being so withdrawn and unhappy and angry about everything. I didn't. It's sort of an unpleasant realization - wow, I was a total snot for absolutely no reason. I was okay with this eventually, but some people might not be. I can imagine someone criticizing this story for being too emo, or saying that Melinda was too much of a downer. (Okay, I didn't want to give away spoilers, but I can't talk about my next point without revealing some stuff. So, just to be clear...HERE BE SPOILERS, YOU'VE BEEN WARNED:)Then again, they could be like a certain reviewer YOU KNOW WHO YOU ARE who wrote, and I quote, "I'm so sick of this [sic:] stories about girls who got raped and spend the entire book pitying themselves."*takes breath, counts to ten.*Apparently Laurie Halse Anderson gets this a lot. My edition of the book has an interview with her, and she said, "I have gotten one question repeatedly from young men. These are guys who liked the book, but they are honestly confused. They ask me why Melinda was so upset about being raped." I'm...they...why...what the fuck. I think I need to go sit in a corner and do some yoga breaths, be back later. Read for: Social Justice in Young Adult Literatureassigned-reading kids-and-young-adultJuly 12, 20174.5 stars! I think this is a really powerful novel that should be read by so many, especially teens. Speak is a fascinating tale of learning to use your voice when you previously believed it did not matter. The message is one I think all can benefit from and Im so glad I finally read it.Trigger warning: rapeLaurie Halse Anderson is a fabulous writer. She has a very distinctive writing style; Its an unfiltered stream of consciousness that feels so real. I previously read Wintergirls and found them to be written very similarly. Melindas narration is authentic and raw shes not here to make you love her or hate here, shes here to tell her story as is. Her humor is dry and loveable which creates an interesting dynamic with the rest of her character.I will say, there really isnt a plot, which is usually a letdown for me. The entire book is essentially Melissa navigating her freshman year with a heavy weight on her shoulders and few people in her company. There is definitely a large amount of character development which was executed well and I understand that is the intention of the story, so Im not going to complain that it didnt feed into my reading preferences. The novel didnt need a large plot because the story is of personal growth and strength, not high school drama or romance.I will say, the ending felt a little abrupt. I would have loved even just an epilogue to have a more concrete ending (and justice), though many people in Melindas situation do not get closure, so maybe that was the authors intent.Whats interesting is that this book was always described to me as a revolutionary story about sexual assault, but I only found out in the middle of reading that this aspect of the story is not commonly known before reading? Apparently, the point of the story is to find out WHY Melinda cannot speak, though I went into this story already knowing the reason. I definitely dont think my knowledge of the events of this story affected my reading experience at all. If anything, I think I got more out of the story because I was able to read into details as they were being revealed instead of having to decode them later. I really wish the content of this story was more widespread (though I do seem to be a little late in reading this one) because I think its so important people know the sensitive topics they are reading about. Sexual assault is not a plot twist (and I am not suggesting Speak feeds into this because I think the topic was handled with accuracy and respect in this case, Im making a general statement) and I would love for us to not have to silence discussion on its inclusion in the book in fear of ~*s p o i l e r s*~. I think people should know the content of this book before reading, if only to help protect those who may be deeply affected by the events of this novel, where reading unprepared could cause a lot of harm.I really loved this book and would definitely recommend it! October 16, 20172017 Reread: I read this for my young adult literature class along with scholastic articles about the book, which added a great new layer to my interpretation of the novel. Original Review: I've owned this book for years and never got around to reading it until yesterday. I'm happy I did because this was one of the best books that I have read lately. Speak was very well paced and I never found the story to be dragging or boring. I loved the character development and Melinda's voice throughout the story. (Original rating: 5/5 stars)March 15, 2019I didn't think I'd be so gripped by this book but the author captures the pains and troubles of everyday high school life with such honesty and raw emotion that I couldn't help recognising half the characters from my own high school days. There's Rachel, the ex best friend who's had a personality transplant over the summer... Heather, the temporary friend who's just waiting to be snapped up by a cooler clique... and, of course, the protagonist who doesn't quite fit in anywhere.The beauty of this novel is that it works well alone without the much darker and more important story behind it. But, that being said, it also serves as a very sad and moving voice for rape victims, particularly for those who feel at fault, or scared and embarrassed by what happened. It was a quick, accessible read, but it's also the kind that plays on your mind long after finishing it.April 16, 2022Update: Definitely stands up to the test of time (in my humble opinion). Once I finished reading the last word I knew I was going to reread it. Yes that profound.Honest. Authentic. Real. Use all those words and their synonyms and you have this book. I literally wanted to hop into the sea of words and tell Melinda Sordino " I'll be your friend! Don't despair !" Alas I couldn't do that though. I had to see her struggle. It's painful but since I watched the movie (which was done well by the way) first before reading the book I knew where she was coming from. Melinda's voice was so...normal. She wasn't there to make you like her or hate her. She just who she really was. I liked her immensely though and in real life think would have been friends with her. Her whole take on high school was hilarious and kind of scarily accurate. I totally love the character of David Petrakis. He would have been my hero in ninth grade. No joke. The cover fits the story like a glove. Not all book jackets can boast that, so let's give the jacket cover artist a round of applause!!! Ok I need stop raving about the cover so much but I couldn't help it. The visual person inside of me had to let it out.Melinda is never really described in detail of how she look likes, so you get the sense the author wanted to make her as relatable as possible, and that she is. We all might not have had to go through the same demons she has, but I know we all have felt alone and without help and that is what makes her the perfect narrator. The ending was done so utterly well I'm not sure I can say anything about it. I'd probably give it away if I try. Let's just say getting back at people is very rewarding.It is getting added to my all time favorites. If you like this book read You Don't Know Me. Not quite the same style but definitely the same feel.2022 awesome-covers book-club March 8, 2008Just okay. I was particularly disappointed with the ending and felt that there was an element of glorification in this novel that I didn't appreciate. Let me explain:Although I loved the fact that Melinda finally finds her voice and a way to express herself, I felt as if the story was wrapped up a little too quickly and too neatly. Let's be honest, that ending was more than a little unrealistic. You can't simply put a pretty bow on the end of this novel, otherwise the entire tale becomes trite. Having been through this myself and sadly listened to countless stories similar (and worse) than mine, I can say that 9 times out of 10 you don't get closure, let alone retribution. And having someone swoop in to save you is pretty much unheard of, otherwise we wouldn't have such a thing as "rape culture" which tragically pervades our country. I think this particular ending potentially puts across the wrong message to girls who might find themselves in a similar situation or who are in this situation. Nevertheless, it's an important story to be told and there were scenes and emotions that were absolutely right on and very relatable.April 3, 2021 It is easier not to say anything. Shut your trap, button your lip, can it. All that crap you hear on TV about communication and expressing feelings is a lie. Nobody really wants to hear what you have to say. Speak, to me, is taken more as a lesson than just a book. A lesson worth reading and worth analyzing every little detail, no matter how the writing is and no matter how repetitive it can get. It's a short novel where the life of an individual is so much more, and worth so much more, but people don't show that side because they don't believe it to be worth so much. Speak spoke to me. It's a story where you reflect on your past actions of judgment, shamefulness, misguidedness, and even power, especially power. We've all been in those times, judging people, looking at them like we're better than them when in reality, we are nothing close to them. We end up misjudging them but don't realize it after, and I think that's what this book spoke to me the most about. I think it's about giving you a short lesson on finding out the true colors of your friends, the people around you, and seeing how one thing can make a difference for everyone, even when that "everyone" doesn't know the reasons behind the actions that changed every perspective. On the paper you will find one word, the name of an object. I hope you like it. You will spend the rest of the year learning how to turn that object into a piece of art. You will sculpt it. You will sketch it, papier-mch it, carve it. If the computer teacher is talking to me this year, you can use the lab for computer-aided designs. But there's a catchby the end of the year, you must figure out how to make your object say something, express an emotion, speak to every person who looks into it. Melinda Sordino called the cops on a night at a party, resulting in teens getting busted, arrested, and running for their lives. With that action, everyone ended up hating her, her "best friends" no longer talked to her but instead, they gave her glares and smirks, while other people Melinda doesn't even know hate her from a long distance, resulting in insults and words spoken behind her back. Melinda knows why she called the cops, but there isn't anyone else who does know. Unable to speak after that night, Melinda describes herself as An Outcast, no longer having any friends and anyone willing to listen to her. Speak is about reflecting on the past actions and understanding that the victim isn't always at fault. It's about speaking up for our belief after not being able to handle the pain of loneliness, sadness, and silence. It's about finding your voice after confronting your biggest fear.Trigger/content warnings for rape and sexual assault. Homework is not an option. My bed is sending out serious nap rays. I can't help myself. The fluffy pillows and warm comforter are more powerful than I am. I have no choice but to snuggle under the covers. I'm not a survivor of rape or any cause of sexual assault, but I'm a survivor of depression, of loneliness, of being an introvert, or shyness, of quietness, and of many sad moments where I can do everything my body allows me to do (sit, lie down, move, walk, run, etc.) except talk. Unlike Melinda, I chose not to talk not because I was too scared to let people know the truth, but because there wasn't any truth I felt worth telling. I was trapped inside my head with my own thoughts as they made their way from my left-brain to my right-brain, shutting everything and everyone down, telling me that no one really cares and is bothering to listen. Melinda did too, but there were times where she wanted to let someone know. I, on the other hand, decide not to chat many times primarily because I hate the way I sound but also because I am afraid of being wrong, of being rejected, and of being laughed at for any comment I made.In Speak, we follow Melinda through her first year in high school as a new freshman who is already disliked by everyone. After she called the cops on a summer-break party, people started whispering about her, bullying her, insulting her, and never daring to talk to someone like her because she was a nobody to them. Melinda was used to it, but she wishes she had a friend who would listen first, reflect after, decide later. I can't say I relate to Melinda in every way, but I understand some of her thoughts. From the self-harm to the suicide thoughts, it all felt realit's as if I saw myself in her eyes sometimes, wanting to talk to someone but instantly taking back that thought and keeping my lips shut, canned, sealed.Melinda is a realistic character. She doesn't hide her reality from us, and as readers, it's our job to figure it out, analyze the descriptions and figure out what she is trying to tell us. And Speak, to me, is the book Melinda wants us to have. She's the narrator, the character telling us her story, and it's up to us to listen or not, to care or do not care, to bother trying or to not waste our energy. I think Melinda would have had a much easier life if she had at least one friend, whether it was a long-distance friendship or a friendship where they couldn't see each other much, but the connection and the communication were still there. I wish she had someone who believed her and would try to do anything she could in her will to be there and listen to Melinda tell her about her awful and exhausting days at school. But it truly made sense for the author to not include it, because sometimes, in books, no sympathy, pity, compassion, grief, empathy, or any caring action should be there in order for the reader to really grasp the reality the character is living and having to go through every single day. And what makes it worse is that the world of this book is so real. We end up seeing the true colors of people after things explode. Our true best friends will end up showing their identities when something bad happens, our one and only friend will leave us for another group only to later regret that choice, and people will end up talking to you like nothing ever happened after your most traumatic experience has been revealed.I mean, Heather from Ohio, for example, was the true definition of a self-centered bitch who didn't care about anything or anyone besides herself, as if she was the only person in the world. Truly, Melinda deserved better, and Heather got what she deserved. She was never a friend, she was only someone using a lonely girl who didn't talk to anyone because she knew she could brainwash her into believing that she had someone close to her. So she decides to manipulate her and having her "help out" when in reality, she was always doing everything. All in all, Melinda never deserved to suffer more with Heather, and I was really glad Laurie decided to open up her brain and show her the reality of Heather. I also appreciate the fact that she then didn't take any of Heather's bullshit when she went over and "apologized", after telling her she would help her for her stupid Marthas Group project. I mean, you don't tell a friend what she's gonna do for you Heather, you ask them. Nicely. Politely. Why is it so hard to make friends here? Is there something in the water? In my old school I could have gone out for the musical and worked on the newspaper and chaired the car wash. Here people don't even know I exist. I get squished in the hall and I don't belong anywhere and nobody cares. And you're no help. You are so negative and you never try anything, you just mope around like you don't care that people talk about you behind your back. Well, Heather, I guess your only option is to go back, isn't it? This closet is abandonedit has no purpose, no name. It is the perfect place for me. This is a short story, one worth reading in one sitting. 197 pages in and all you can do is either like the book or not, love it or hate it. There's so much to take from it if you find what the author wants you to take from it. It isn't a story for everyone, but it is a story worth knowing about. I personally think it's better to be read from a perspective of someone who understands what it is like to shut yourself down and think to yourself if anyone will notice if you just didn't speak at all. The thing is, people have already noticed. They don't see the "why" and they don't see what is killing you inside, but they notice the outside of you and recognize you as the girl who called the cops at the party. It's just that one night can change you forever, either negatively or positively impact you, and there will always come the time where people will not care until they know about it, and that's what bothers me the most. I think it's such a stupid instinct for us to care about people once we see them hurting, but I also think that's what the beauty of books are. Books can teach us that, the messages that are in front of us but are not close enough for us to see it. Personally, I get lost in the words of the book, not in its world. Many people read in order to escape to another reality or to a fantasy they never could dream of, but I get lost in the words. They also read to lose track of time or find themselves doing something different. I read books because of the enjoyment and comfort they bring me, which leads me to say that I rate books off enjoyment. I read books because I want to learn something from it, whether it's a non-fiction book, fantasy, sci-fi, classic, I read for the moment I'm in. I read because I want to understand the message or the lesson the narrator is trying to tell me, whether it's one perspective or multiple. Speak is one of those rare books I find myself most comfortable in. The book isn't beautiful nor is any character. There is truly no moral support in this--no friendships, no family dynamics, no useful resources. Yet the author managed to make me love this book and partly regret the fact that I didn't read it before. Even with an obvious plot, childish dialogue, boring characters (except David and Mr. Freeman), I still enjoyed everything in this and managed to mark it as one of my favorite books that I will probably buy the 20th-anniversary edition which comes out January 15 of this year, 2019.This book can be life-changing. It makes you think about the world we are living and realize that the world in Merryweather High School is similar to many high schools in the world, ranging from country to country. The reason I say life-changing is because, if you pay attention to Melinda and her story, you can see she isn't just "the most depressed person Heather has ever met" but instead, as someone who is struggling with her nightmares that keep haunting her because she got raped and didn't really know. She isn't just "Sordino, sitting in the front row, always wandering the halls" because she wants to, it's because she doesn't have other options. She's alone and has no one to rely on, yet she still manages to survive, and I think she's a strong realistic character who had character growth in the end. The story is short, and the truth is set free in the end as well, so it is reasonable and valid for the author to let it all out in the beginning, resulting in Melinda showing her strength towards Andy and no longer being an outcast but instead the girl who was hiding her truth because she was scared.Described as both problematic but also empowered, it can be balanced on a scale of both. Personally, I find it empowering. Although I wasn't the biggest fan of the writing, Laurie Halse Anderson wrote this book from a nightmare she had of a girl who was sobbing. What she heard from the girl, she wrote it, and she wrote this. I'm guessing the girl crying was Melinda, since she said in the interview (a bonus from the platinum edition) that it happened to be that way, and I dont think Anderson even thought her book would be a book so many teens find comfort in. I didn't go into this book knowing everything. I had seen this book before, on many lists here on Goodreads and overall, I had seen it pop up in my feed as friends and reviewers added it to their tbr. I had seen it in my library, both in the YA section and sometimes displayed as "featured books" for specific events and read-a-thons my local libraries host. I never got the urge to pick it up, and I'm glad I did at this time. I appreciated the way she wrote this as if it was multiple diary entries towards the reader. Told in the first-person perspective, Melissa takes us on her journey through the present and the past, with the present being the person she is at the moment and the past being flashbacks.I won't lie. Initially, I checked this out from my library because it's been on "life-changing books" lists on Goodreads and mentioned in other blogs as "life-changing" and I needed a life-changing book, specifically because there's a college application asking for it. It's asking for a book that changed my life and how it's changed the way I view everything (life, the world, people, myself, etc.) and I didn't know where to start beside with books that have been labeled as problematic, empowered, and realistic. Speak is one of them, and there's more to come soon. "What are your goals, Mel?"I used to be like Heather. Have I changed that much in two months? She is happy, driven, aerobically fit. She has a nice mom and an awesome television. But she's like a dog that keeps jumping into your lap. She always walks with me down the halls chattering a million miles a minute.My goal is to go home and take a nap. Every character in the story is bizarre, choosing to listen to rumors and not choose the facts. Theyre truly misguided and havent been taught well. They also judge Melinda on the way she's seen, not letting her sit with them, throwing mashed potato at her, kneeing her, childishly taping insults written on a piece of paper to her back, glaring and smirking at her as if she was prey and they are predators. It truly is sad how judgemental the world is and continues to be. I don't think it's getting better, but instead, it's getting worse. There are racist comments in this, but it's fine. It's made by a character you can show nothing but hate towards because of his attitude and the power he believes he holds. Then I met David and the whole view changes because I then saw that there is still hope in the world and there always will be, as there will always be that one person sticking up for everyone because he or she isn't afraid of it. You don't understand, my headvoice answers. Too bad she can't hear it. My throat squeezes shut, as if two hands of black fingernails are clamped on my windpipe. I have worked so hard to forget every second of that stupid party, and here I am in the middle of a hostile crowd that hates me for what I had to do. I can't tell them what really happened. I can't even look at that part of myself. An animal noise rustles in my stomach. Melinda should be a sympathetic character, but I can't show it. It's rare for me to read contemporary and realistic fiction without feeling some sort of care or sympathy towards the character. There isn't anything wrong with Melinda, but I knew I was gonna get an answer from her. The hope I held on to while reading this was the only thing I had left, but it was only for her, as there was no hope from anyone else for anyone because everyone in this seems to be selfish and think they have conquered the world in so many ways. When I went to that party, I was abducted by aliens. They have created a fake Earth and fake high school to study me and my reactions. This certainly explains cafeteria food. Not the other stuff, though. The aliens have a sick sense of humor. I didn't know Speak was adapted to a movie. While the window for this review was open on my laptop, I decided to watch it. Since the movies adapted from books always have at least some similarity, I knew most of it. I knew what conversation was about to happen, I knew who was who, I knew the ending, I knew the plot. But here's the thing: the ending of the book and the movie are different, many scenes are cut, and many dialogues are completely different. It all makes sense since books are always better and the movies are never the same as the book, but I guess I expected more. The book is short, but so is the movie. I think the best I got from the movie was the friendship between Melinda and David that grew. Not in a romantic way but in a platonic way, and it felt to me like he really cared for her, even in the book. He wasn't just using her, he didn't stay away from her, he tried helping her, he invited her to do Biology homework, and it looked like he wanted to be her friend. In the end, I think they end up as friends, but both endings, in the movie and the book, we are left with wanting more. In the book, Melinda ends it with "Let me tell you about it" while in the movie, the ending is completely different, as it ends with Melinda and her mother. At that point, I didn't care much. I literally skipped it because I couldn't take any bullshit from her parents. There was no support and no relationship between Melinda and both of her parents. They didn't even try, they just noticed, as everyone else does. It was sad to see it that way, the reality, that even her parents don't try but only notice. It's as if they hear the rumors and notice the way it plays into Melinda's life but don't ever ask about it. In the end, Melinda showed growth. With the help of Mr. Freeman (by the way, we all need a teacher like him, no matter what subject!), she was able to find her truth and let it out. She was able to see herself as someone much more than who she was, letting out the birds that were trapped in the cage as she paints not her past life but her current life. After reading Melindas last sentence to Mr. Freeman, I realized Ive been that bird trapped in my cage, not allowing to set myself free because Im still scared. We all have a voice, but we also have a choice. I think we all make the choice of using our voice when the right time comes, but for now, I dont think its that time. I cant see myself speaking up for someone or for something. Although Im really passionate about immigration law, I cant become the activist I see myself as at times. I cant see myself yelling at Republicans but instead, I see myself as the small girl who is being towered over by the Republicans themselves as they smirk at me knowing they have won. But hopefully, Ill find my soft voice soon and use it for the best. You have to know what you stand for, not just what you stand against. August 14, 2019oh goodness me. i dont even want to begin this review because, even though im sticking to my rating, i feel super guilty for rating this so low. but its been awhile since ive read this and i finally feel like i can articulate why this book just isnt for me. firstly, i want to say that the topic of this story is extremely important and deserves the representation it gets in this. melindas high school experience is vastly different than my own, but i can empathise that sexual assault is something that happens, even when its something i was never aware of at that age. so i appreciate the visibility of this serious issue and i know this story will help those that are/have gone though something similar.that being said, THIS BOOK IS SOOOO BORING. which makes me feel guilty because should i expect to find entertainment in a story so heavy? probably not. but i do need my attention to be held, and this just didnt capture it. its slow and melinda is a very difficult person to connect with. not a good combination. maybe if i had read this as a teen, my reaction might be a bit different. but other than the overall message of the story, i just couldnt find anything redeeming about the novel itself. such a shame. 2.5 starsDecember 30, 2017 The following review will touch upon serious topics and under the spoiler section I might hide TMI (too much information) tags. If you don't want to know about my own personal journey don't read because it might be umconfortable and triggering. I'll use strong language.I also want to point out that I read this book long ago and that I won't re-read for this review. I just want to discuss the following question(s) which I found in the review of one of my favorite Goodreads reviewers ever: my dear Meredith. BTW I recommend following her reviews.Meredith wrote this:Should Laurie Halse Anderson's book "Speak" be placed in the adult section because it deals with rape? No. It is a teen book that touches upon a serious topic that teens are very much aware of. How many people were assigned "The Handmaid's Tale" in high school which basically is all about women being used for their bodies to reproduce since a majority of the population can not. Should that be added to the adult section only? No.I agree with Meredith 100%. I'll go even beyond that. I think this book along with any other book that deals with rape culture should be mandatory read in every high school of this messed-up planet. Even if parents might feel unconfortable with their kids reading this book, the sad reality is that rape is a crime that has no respect for the victims' age. Kids might be better prepared to deal with this crime if they get the right information.If you have been following my reviews you'll notice that lately I've been adding trigger warnings and explicit content warnings for YA books. That's because lately you can find almost the same amount of nudity, violence, sexuality, erotic content, and edgyness in YA books as you would find in New adult reads,even erotica books. I've been mentioning A court of mist and fury a lot because it's erotica book misllabed as Young adult by the greedy publishing company and their kirkus reviews minions. Paper princess by erotica authors Elle Kennedy and Jen Frederick along with

and that when you need help you should ask for it. That is, until you actually open your mouth. So, when something happens and you wish you could scream about it with your entire being, you end up silent. So while this book tells the story of this adolescent girl, it also tells the story of every person who has ever crushed something down to stop the pain but crushed yourself as well. Its about the silent struggles people go through daily, the blindness people have to other peoples pain, the ignorance we all obtain when we judge people without knowing who they are. And then the silence we obtain when we get judged. .Melinda The reason I gave this book five stars was because of Melinda, she was the type of character that makes you FEEL, and that is the key to a good book. It may be hard for people to feel for Melinda, but I had no trouble. She wasnt bland or boring she was a shell of a person because she lost herself and the point of the book was her to find herself once more. The book starts with her choosing not to speak, and the book ends right when she decides to open up and finally talk. It wasnt a big bang, no cinematic ending, it ended right when she decided to speak . .: LET ME TELL YOU. This book made me so so mad. I spent the whole book waiting for someone to be on Melindas side because she has literally nobody. Her parents are mean to her because shes changed, her friends hate her, and the entire school despises her. But DAVID PERTRAKIS IS MY NEW HERO. I loved the parallel between David and Melinda, she refused to speak up and he never considered sitting silently for even a second. He stood up for what he believed in and always used his voice to do so, and thats why Melinda was immediately intrigued. And he was exactly what she needed in a friend, because even though he believes in using your voice, he fought for her silence. Melinda was asked to do an oral assignment, which wouldnt be a big deal if the teacher who assigned it hadnt been picking on her the entire year. Plus, he didnt tell her prior to the assignment. He gave her the assignment, she wrote the essay, and when she went to turn it in, he insisted it must be read to the class. : . , . ' . ' . , ' . . .: ' . ' . ' .: ?: .: So what does Melinda do? She goes to the one person who would help her, David. Together they make copies of the assignment for every student to read. David stands up for Melindas right to not talk, even though he didnt agree with it. It was such a breath of fresh air, someone finally supporting Melinda and being in her corner after an entire book of having nobody. . , , . , , , .: Maybe this book doesnt have the best writing. Maybe its not the style everyone likes, or maybe you hate all the characters. But the point is, this story deserved to be told for all the people who have been sexually assaulted. There was a message, it needed to be heard. The world tells you to speak, but when you do, they yell at you. ' . .June 2, 2020A powerful story! I don't think a 5 star book has to be perfect. No story is perfect. This story tells an amazing story, but the end has problems for me and I still love this book. When a book makes me feel so much and I simply can't put it down, that's a 5 star review.There isn't any way to review this without spoilers:Spoiler Warning:Melinda was at a senior party and called the cops and everyone knows and so she is now the 9th grade pariah and outcast. The reason she really called the cops was she needed help. She was raped and didn't know what to do. She couldn't speak after that. The rest of the year her grades tank and she has one somewhat friend. Art is the only class she feels safe in. The whole year she barely speaks. She is alone, in pain and depressed and she can't deal with her wounds. She needs to speak and can't. It's only when her used to be best friend starts dating the same guy she had an encounter with that she does speak. The problem with the ending is we don't get to see the character arc. It stops at the climax and there is nothing after. The moment of change is when Melinda speaks out. We don't get to see the change in Melinda. The last few pages show the change in other people toward her. We don't get to see how her parents react as they didn't handle it well. How does finally speaking changer Melinda??? We don't get to see it. The character arc is not completed. We are left hanging. I wanted to see the change inside this inward character and I didn't get to see it. I didn't get to see how anyone around her helped her. I don't know that I've loved a book so much when the ending isn't that good, but I feel Laurie really blew the ending.The point of the story was the pain Laurie was in and how frozen she was. How is was all too much to deal with. It was brilliant how Laurie did that. I read 170 pages of this in 2 days once I got into this and couldn't put it down. It was fascinating being in Melinda's head and wanting to help her and reach out to her and not being able too. I never dealt with rape or something like that in school, but I did struggle with depression and I know what she was feeling inside. I understood her. The book is an amazing study on angst and depression in high school, but the ending is a real miss. It has to be one of the worst endings I've seen. Who helped her after she helped herself? What came out of her once the dam broke. I do recommend this book to people, anyone who has struggled in life with feelings and overwhelm. 1999 award-dorothy-canfield-fisher award-national-book September 18, 2021Speak, Laurie Halse AndersonSpeak, published in 1999, is a young adult novel by Laurie Halse Anderson that tells the story of high school freshman Melinda Sordino. The novel was based on Anderson's personal experience of having been raped as a teenager and the trauma she faced. Speak is a first-person, diary-like narrative. Written in the voice of Melinda Sordino, it features lists, subheadings, spaces between paragraphs and script-like dialogue. The fragmented style mimics Melinda's trauma. The choppy sentences and blank spaces on the pages relate to Melinda's fascination with Cubism.The summer before her freshman year of high school, Melinda Sordino meets senior Andy Evans at a high school party. During the party, Andy rapes Melinda. In shock, Melinda calls 9-1-1, but does not know what to say and runs home. The police come and break up the party, and some people are arrested. Melinda does not tell anyone what happened to her, and nobody asks. Melinda is befriended by Heather, a girl who is new to the community. However, once Heather realizes that Melinda is depressed and an outcast, she ditches Melinda to sit with the "Marthas," a group of girls who seem charitable and outgoing, but are actually selfish and cruel. As Melinda's depression deepens, she begins to skip school, withdrawing from her already distant parents and other authority figures, who see her silence as means of getting "attention". She slowly befriends her lab partner, David Petrakis, who encourages her to speak up for herself. ... : : () () 2017: : () () 1395 214 9786002296818 1395 : - 20: : () () 1398 256 9786002966131 - : () () : (: .) 26/06/1400 . December 11, 2017There are no doubts that it is a very important book for the subject it deals with. We need so many more books on this subject but I want them to actually speak.So something happened at a party to Melinda and she stops speaking. She is not popular in school; in fact her friends have started to cut her. They dont want to see her anymore as they find this not speaking behavior strange but they dont try hard to extract the reason for this. They just accept without questioning her. Same is the case with her parents. And thats where my issue with this book lies. No one just waste a single breath on thinking about this sudden change. Neither the parents nor the friends. Why did not they talked to her or made her to talk? Tell them whats wrong.Though the girl in the end starts expressing herself, and I am happy about it but it came a little too late for my liking. Girls who go through such incident need love and support; and not ignore her attitude that Mel got in this story. This book could have delivered a strong message but I didnt do so, at least for me. 1990-99 2017 3-star January 17, 2025Once I picked up this book, I couldnt put it down. I wanted to know what happened to Melinda to make her an outcast among her peers. SoI kept reading. At firstI found myself frustrated that I was in the midst of teenage angst. ButThere was a greater message here. AndI wonderedIs it too intense for teens?OrIs this exactly what needs to be read to help address these difficult, yet delicate issues?I felt thatThis National Book Award finalist will grip readers and provide a number of discussion opportunities. AsReaders find themselves inside Melindas pain. AlsoReaders can see a frightening, yet sobering look at the cruelty and viciousness of peer pressure that pervades much of contemporary high school life. ButThe author offers solutions to her pain by showing Melindas connection to a mentor, her artistic creations, and even her plans for a flower garden. It all helps to feed her inner strength. BecauseWhen Melinda is finally able to speak, readers rejoice in her triumph. ThusI can see why this book has become such a phenomenal teaching tool for delving into clique politics and surviving a traumatic event. AndMelindas pain and ultimate hope for healing feels realAs it is describedWith open honesty and compassion. AlthoughThis book has received praise for how it has dealt with these sensitive issues, it has also been a target of censors. YetIt is a powerful and painful story that needed to be told and read, and perhaps even discussed.Trigger warnings: Sexual assault. Underage Drinking drugs smoking. Depression. Cutting. Interest Level: Age 15+ - Eighth grade on up.beautiful book-discussion-perfect captivating June 8, 2009bleg. greg loooooved this book and said it made him wish he had written his own angst-books in high school, but i was a teenage girl and he wasnt, and this just didnt do it for me. its not poorly written at all, i just have never liked books that were about clique-y high schools because i couldnt relate to them at all. maybe i just went to a smaller, or a nicer, high school. but i can definitely see the value of this for a teen reader, and i really liked the authors note on censorship at the end. so a high three.bossy-book-titles mark-harmonFebruary 17, 2022Another book that has sat on my TBR list for entirely too long Trigger Warnings: rape, depression, bullying, self harm. This book read kinda like a diary to me, first person POV, but not complete in scenes. Its a hard read, for sure! But I can see how it can be helpful for YA readers. September 8, 2007Wow. I started reading this to entertain myself on a long subway ride home at 2 am, thinking I'd skim a bit and start reading it the next day. The next time I looked at the clock it was five in the morning and I was devouring the last lines of the novel. It is dangerously, fantastically gripping, not necessarily because the plot is so amazing, but because Anderson gets Melinda's voice so very, very right. Melinda is such a thoughtfully rendered portrait of a smart, funny, terribly depressed teenager that I was hooked from her very first lines. To me, the actual story was almost extraneousthe plot itself is a bit unwieldybut Melinda's anxiety, isolation, and desperate attempts to cope with the horrors of adolescence were so real it was spooky. November 7, 2018SympathyPaul Laurence DunbarI know what the caged bird feels, alas! When the sun is bright on the upland slopes; When the wind stirs soft through the springing grass, And the river flows like a stream of glass; When the first bird sings and the first bud opes, And the faint perfume from its chalice stealsI know what the caged bird feels!I know why the caged bird beats his wing Till its blood is red on the cruel bars; For he must fly back to his perch and cling When he fain would be on the bough a-swing; And a pain still throbs in the old, old scars And they pulse again with a keener stingI know why he beats his wing!I know why the caged bird sings, ah me, When his wing is bruised and his bosom sore,When he beats his bars and he would be free;It is not a carol of joy or glee, But a prayer that he sends from his hearts deep core, But a plea, that upward to Heaven he flingsI know why the caged bird sings!Reread most recently on the cusp of the twentieth anniversary of the book's publication, for my fall 2018 YA class, also with Anderson's graphic novel version of the book, illustrated impressively by Emily Carroll. If you haven't read this book and don;t know why it is Melinda doesn't speak (much, except in the journal of her ninth grade year, which is the novel Speak, you may not want to continue reading this review.Perennial fave in my YA course, and an important moment in the history of Young Adult Literature. Published in 1999, it features a girl, Melinda, who was raped at a party by an upperclassman in the month before her ninth grade year at Merryweather High School. She calls 911 but then, traumatized by what has happened to her, something she was too young to fully understand, she largely stops talking about what happened, which gets most people in school to hate her. Many books on (teen) rape now exist but few are also witty, filled with snarky teen humor, and so alive with a real vibrant central character, and so well written, with such great insights into teen experiences of adolescence. Should a book on this topic also be funny? Well, this one is, and you will laugh out loud at many observations the darkly acerbic Melinda makes about her school and the teachers and students in the school. And underneath that surface humor is the Act that can never be Un-Acted, the horror compounded by social isolation and misunderstanding.Melinda rarely actually speaks in this first year, because she is resented for calling that cops at that party. They don't know why she called the cops, though, and no one seems to really care to ask. She loses friends and is bullied. Another issue? "It" (the rapist) is a student at her school, and still a threat to her and others. Her parents's marriage is in trouble, so they have no time to ask her what is going on.One resource for her is Art class, and the cool art teacher, Mr. Freeman, who doesn't intrude but makes space for her to explore her obvious experiences. Her year project, the topic of which she pulls out of a hat,is a tree. It's a cliche, maybe, but Melinda is urged throughout the year to try and try again to express herself through that simple image. The power of art to redeem is important in this story, as is the power of telling one's story. This is not a perfect story (I have some small issues with the resolution of the story, which conveniently involves a field hockey team in the right place at the right time), but it is an important one for schools and those who work with young people, and teens---both boys and girls--who need to know what rape is and what speaking truth to power is all about. best-ya-ever ya-fall-2018 ya-sex-pregDecember 30, 201530 DECEMBER 2015: I really thought about writing a raging, seething, foaming-at-the-mouth, slam-the-author review.And then I thought: Nah.I could talk about the terrible prose, the lack of plot, the painfully stereotypical characters. I could storm about how Melinda sounded like an eleven year old child rather than a teenager. I could go in depth about the horrendously obvious symbolism, or even the fact that several side plots that are introduced are never mentioned again. But I'm not going to do that.You know why? Because I've got better things to do. Better books to read, better books to write, things to cook and eat and watch and places to go. All of which would bring me greater joy than writing a rage review for this puppy. I'd hate to end my year in a blind fury, and besides, I'd be lying if I said some of that fury hasn't blown over since I read this in May.But, I think it is still important to warn you guys. Not only is this book horribly written, but it completely bypasses all the realities of rape (and no, that isn't a spoiler). I was not only angry but disturbed and sickened by the way the subject was handled in this book. It breaks down to something like: Girl gets raped, girl cries over it, girl doesn't seek help, girl makes a tree sculpture and suddenly feels way better.NO. I won't stand for that.It is a cavalier, disgusting, dangerous, and downright reckless way to treat such a complex, nuanced, messy topic. It disgraces survivors of sexual assault everywhere, telling them that rape is just an incident, and when you get it out of your system within less than a fucking year, you're all better.NO.Rape is traumatic. Everybody deals with it differently- I understand that- but I loathe the fact that Anderson has portrayed the single most self-destructive way to do so as the right thing to do. Melinda didn't really deal with any of the things that happened to her- she swept them under the rug and pretended that everything ended fine. It's so... superficial. Offhanded. It doesn't dive deep, doesn't even try to scratch the surface. It reduces such an important issue to a minor road bump.And I'm sorry if I'm getting my knickers in a twist over a fictional young adult book, but that's just the thing- it's a young adult book. It's marketed to impressionable teenagers who may see themselves in an emotionally damaged, moody girl like Melinda, and I really worry about the message that this book is sending them.So instead of slamming this book in traditional snark-fest fashion, that's my warning to you. It's a terribly written book, but more importantly, the subject is handled with care and respect equivalent to throwing it out of an aeroplane and running it over with a car, then beating it with a stick.Damn. I feel a lot better. Now I'm off to go read a book I'll actually enjoy- happy reading everyone, and I hope that if you did read this and enjoy it, perhaps now you see a different perspective on how fundamentally poorly the main subject is handled. I don't claim to be right, I'm just putting my own viewpoint out there for you to disagree, agree, or feel conflicted about.read-for-class steaming-pile-o-shitDisplaying 1 - 30 of 33,215 reviewsGet help and learn more about the design.Science, Tech, Math All Science, Tech, MathHumanities All HumanitiesLanguages All LanguagesResources All Resources

Speak review. What age is the book speak appropriate for. Speak up book age rating. Speak the truth book age rating. Rating system for books. Speak book review. Speak book age rating.