

Hollywood High: Achieve The Honorable

Reading Guide and Curriculum: Literature and Writing

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CHAPTER 1

“The Wrong Galaxy”

Caroline Black begins tenth grade, her first year at Hollywood High School. She meets Kayla, another new girl. This chapter takes place in their English class, taught by Mr. Cohen.

CHARACTERS

Caroline Black: protagonist; white; scared in her new school.

Mr. Cohen: talented English teacher.

Kayla Davidson: will become Caroline’s closest friend at Hollywood High; Black.

Kurt Christianson: obnoxious, sexually harasses Kayla; at a time the novel takes place (1973-1974), sexual harassment was considered normal behavior.

Andrea “Elvia” Krause: changes her name every year; dresses in black.

Kevin “Dreads” Sherwood: likes Elvia.

Sharon Greenberg: uptight; hair in braids.

Mort Holloway: always forgets to bring a pencil.

Egbert “Presto” Petrovich: surfer.

VOCABULARY

Protagonist

Major characters

Minor characters

Setting

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

As the novel opens, Caroline is anxious in her new environment. She also shows hints of being much more than scared and intimidated. What are the first signs that Caroline has hidden strengths?

Most teenagers are painfully conscious of their appearance. The focus is often on clothes, weight, height, make-up, hairstyles. For Caroline, this takes a different form. She has a huge stake in appearing perfect, in absolute control. How is this both a strength and a weakness?

Have you ever felt strong inside in ways nobody could see?

CHAPTER 2

“The Library”

Caroline goes to the Hollywood High library and witnesses a knife fight. One boy is cut in the face. Another boy stands on a desk and chants “The Duke!”

CHARACTERS

Caroline

The Duke (Duke Hunter): new character, leader of a gang, Black.

Tom: new character, member of The Duke’s gang, Black.

Drake: new character; Black, The Duke shouts, “I’ll kill Drake!” (The reader knows nothing about Drake at this point. Drake, also referred to as Silver Lamé, will become the novel’s antagonist.)

VOCABULARY

Character Development – Caroline

Supporting character – Mrs. Richardson

Protagonist (Caroline)

Antagonist (Silver Lamé/Drake)

Juxtaposition of “Library” and a knife fight (irony)

Tone: danger, violence; everything takes Caroline by surprise; everything feels unexpected.

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

The word “library” conjures up images of quiet, reading, tranquility, studying. This chapter portrays a situation quite different from those connotations. What do you think of the author’s choice to give a chapter a name diametrically opposed to the subject matter?

Have you ever unknowingly walked into a dangerous situation? What happened? How did you handle it?

CHAPTER 3

“Silver Lamé”

During her next free period, avoiding the library, Caroline goes to the lawn in front of the school, and is approached by Silver Lamé (Drake), a pimp. She doesn’t understand what he wants, but he makes her feel extremely uncomfortable. She flees to her guidance counselor’s office, and begins to form a strong connection with Mrs. Richardson. Caroline agrees to tutor The Duke (the student stomping on the desk in Chapter 2).

CHARACTERS

Caroline

Mrs. Richardson: new character, Caroline's guidance counselor.

Silver Lamé: new character, actual name Drake, Black; first mentioned in Chapter 2.

VOCABULARY

Character Development – Caroline

Supporting character – Mrs. Richardson

Protagonist (Caroline)

Antagonist (Silver Lamé)

Juxtaposition (Mrs. Richardson and Silver Lamé)

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

Like all people, Caroline is a combination of ignorant and savvy, strength and weakness. What do you learn about Caroline in this chapter? What characteristics are revealed?

Mrs. Richardson is an important supporting character. What characteristics are revealed about her?

What qualities are important in a guidance counselor? Do you think Mrs. Richardson does a good job establishing her relationship with Caroline?

How would you describe Silver Lamé's character?

Why do you think the author chose to introduce Silver Lamé in the same chapter as Mrs. Richardson?

CHAPTER 4

"The Duke"

Caroline meets The Duke for their first tutoring session. Although they seem like opposites, they form a bond. Caroline realizes that The Duke needs glasses, and takes him to meet Mrs. Richardson.

CHARACTERS

Caroline

The Duke

Miss Orville: new character; Caroline's Latin teacher; Caroline tutors The Duke in Miss Orville's classroom.

Mrs. Richardson

VOCABULARY

Secondary Character: The Duke

Character Interaction: Caroline and The Duke

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

How are The Duke and Caroline alike? How are they different? How do they connect? What does their connection reveal about their characters?

Have you ever had a strong connection with someone quite different from you? If so, write about the person. If not, create a person you'd like to know, who would broaden your world.

CHAPTER 5

“Make The Change”

Caroline and her parents attend an entertainment industry event, an opening of a musical theater production. Caroline is upset by the values of the entertainment industry. At the end of the production, she commits to leaving Laurel Academy and staying at Hollywood High School.

CHARACTERS

Caroline

Leah Black: new character; Caroline's mother; a psychiatrist.

Geoff Black: new character; Caroline's father; an Oscar winning cinematographer.

Millie Charlemagne: new character, an actress.

VOCABULARY

Subplot: Growing up in the film industry.

Foreshadowing: Caroline's reason for leaving her previous school (Laurel Academy).

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

A subplot in *HHATH* is based on growing up in the film industry, where Caroline feels like a misfit. What do we learn about the film industry in this chapter? How do Caroline's feelings about the film industry influence her decision to “make the change”?

This chapter gives us the first hint that Caroline's leaving Laurel Academy has a backstory. Can you find the evidence?

Have you ever been in an environment that was a mismatch for your authentic self?

CHAPTER 6 “Girls’ Bathroom”

Caroline walks into the girls bathroom at school, and finds a group of girls beating up another girl. Elvia (from Caroline’s English class) breaks up the fight. Kayla realizes what’s going on and comes into the bathroom to make sure Caroline is safe. Caroline and Kayla’s friendship grows stronger.

CHARACTERS

Caroline

Kayla

Elvia

Della: new character, leader of the girls beating up Nellie.

Nellie: new character, beaten up.

VOCABULARY

Character development: Caroline, Kayla, Elvia

Tone: the fight demonstrates the violence always ready to erupt at Hollywood High.

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

Hollywood High is a new experience for Caroline. Nothing turns out to be what she expects, even the girls’ bathroom. What do you learn about Caroline and Kayla in this chapter? What does Caroline learn from Elvia?

Have you ever been in an environment where nothing felt familiar, where everything took you by surprise?

CHAPTER 7 “Varsity Basketball Sheiks”

Caroline joins the girls varsity basketball team. She meets the captain, Irene, who will become one of her closest friends. Their coach, Mrs. Cuthbertson, paints her face with bright colors and wears a tutu.

CHARACTERS

Caroline

Mrs. Cuthbertson: new character; Caroline’s basketball coach; always wears a tutu and paints her face in bright colors.

Irene: new character; captain of the basketball team; will become one of Caroline’s close friends; white.

Shawna and Lureen: new characters; two girls on the basketball team; they will play a more prominent role in Chapter 33.

VOCABULARY

Character Flaw (Caroline overthinks everything.)

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

Caroline is completely taken by surprise by finding herself on the basketball team. Why is this a surprise to her? Why is this an important step in her emotional development?

Is there something you've tried, or something you'd like to try, that is completely new for you?

What do you see as Caroline's character flaw in this chapter? (Her excessively cerebral approach to all aspects of her life pushes her to overthink everything. This makes it difficult for her to enjoy life, let go of being so self-conscious, *experience* her own life rather than just thinking about it.)

CHAPTER 8

"The Intellectual Icon"

Caroline completes a creative writing assignment for Mr. Cohen, about a girl growing up in the film industry. Caroline's "story" is actually autobiographical.

CHARACTERS

Caroline

Mr. Cohen

VOCABULARY

Character Development: Caroline, Leah, Geoff

Theme: the intellectual icon

Foreshadowing: Caroline's leaving Laurel Academy

Subplot: growing up in a film industry family

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

"The Intellectual Icon" is a belief system in Caroline's family. Can you explain the importance of the intellectual icon?

This chapter gives the next hint that something important caused Caroline to leave Laurel Academy. Can you find the evidence?

Do you have a belief system that's important to you? Do you and your family share the same belief system?

CHAPTER 9

“Kayla, Irene, Gary, Vincent”

Irene introduces her friends — Gary Mulligan and Vincent Takayama — to Caroline and Kayla. The five students form the foundation of their friendship in this chapter. They will become Caroline’s friendship group at Hollywood High.

CHARACTERS

Caroline

Kayla

Irene

Gary: new character; parents are Irish immigrants; a part of the friendship group Caroline will form.

Vincent: new character; Japanese American; a part of the friendship group Caroline will form.

VOCABULARY

Character Interaction: Caroline, Kayla, Irene, Gary, Vincent

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

This chapter is the first time Caroline’s high school friendship group forms. How would you describe each person as an individual? How would you describe the way they interact as a group?

What qualities do you think are important in a friend?

CHAPTER 10

“Dethroned Princess”

Flashback to Caroline in ninth grade at Laurel Academy For Girls, a wealthy college prep school. Caroline rebels against the values of her school’s beauty contest. The reader is introduced to Valerie Hartnet, the social queen of Laurel Academy.

CHARACTERS

Caroline

Valerie Hartnet: new character; popular social leader of Laurel Academy; will become one of Caroline’s closest friends.

Lelia Dane: new character; Laurel Academy’s renowned bad girl.

Mr. Hammer: new character, Laurel Academy Headmaster.

Tory, Maren, Vicki: new characters, Caroline’s group of friends at Laurel Academy.

VOCABULARY

Irony (chapter's name)

Humor

Character Development

Foreshadowing

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

This is the reader's first direct view of Caroline's experience at Laurel Academy. What do we learn about Caroline? Do you think Laurel Academy or Hollywood High is a better match for Caroline?

What do you think of the title of this chapter? How does it compare or contrast to the titles of other chapters?

CHAPTER 11

"Very Strange Girl"

Mrs. Richardson, Caroline's guidance counselor, helps The Duke obtain glasses. Caroline realizes that The Duke is intelligent. Miss Orville, Caroline's Latin teacher, offers her classroom to The Duke so he can study during his free periods.

CHARACTERS

Caroline

The Duke

Miss Orville

VOCABULARY

Irony

Humor

Character Development

Foreshadowing

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

Do you feel your high school is/was a good match for you? Why or why not?

The Duke and Caroline are both extremely perceptive. What does Caroline learn about The Duke in this chapter? What does The Duke learn about Caroline? Why does he call her "very strange"?

Can you think of a "very strange" quality in a friend or in yourself? What makes this quality "strange"? Is being "strange" necessarily a bad quality?

CHAPTER 12
“Leaving Laurel”

Flashback to the previous year, 9th grade. Caroline tells Leah and Geoff (her parents) that she wants to leave Laurel Academy and attend Hollywood High School.

CHARACTERS

Caroline

Leah Black: Caroline’s mother.

Geoff Black: Caroline’s father.

VOCABULARY

Character Development

Character Interaction

Foreshadowing

Flashback

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

What do we learn about Caroline, Leah (her mother) and Geoff (her father) as individuals? How do they relate to each other as a family?

Do you like Caroline’s parents? Why or why not?

CHAPTER 13
“Fall Music And Dance Recital”

Kayla sings at Hollywood High’s music and dance recital. The audience is amazed by her talent.

CHARACTERS

Caroline

Kayla

Gary

Irene

Vincent

VOCABULARY

Literary genre — autobiographical fiction vs. autobiography

This chapter is a fictionalized version of an actual event. Aprile Millo and I were classmates at Hollywood High. She grew up to sing with the Metropolitan Opera. Below is the link to a post I put up on my blog (with Aprile's permission), about hearing her sing for the first time – "Aprile Millo, Opera And Hollywood High School."
<https://amykaufmanburk.com/2014/10/24/aprile-millo-opera-and-hollywood-high-school/>?

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

What is Kayla's gift? How does her gift affect her friends? How does her gift affect her audience?

How would you describe the tone of the writing in this chapter?

Have you ever known someone with a gift? What kind of gift did that person have? (Math? Music? Kindness? Athletic? Poet? Emotional strength?)

What's the difference between autobiography and autobiographical fiction?

CHAPTER 14

"That One's Mine"

Caroline, Gary and Kayla meet at the International House Of Pancakes, where they run into Silver Lamé/Drake. Drake is having a meal with The Blond (whose name is J.D.).

CHARACTERS

Caroline

Kayla

Gary

Silver Lamé/Drake

The Blond/J.D. : new character, one of Drake's teen boy prostitutes.

VOCABULARY

Literary device (when the reader understands something that a character doesn't understand)

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

Caroline has no idea why Silver Lamé targets her, but she can sense that he's dangerous. How did you feel when you watched Caroline's interaction with Silver Lamé?

What's your opinion about the way the author combines danger and humor in this chapter?

Do you think the author's use of dialogue in this chapter works well? Why or why not?

CHAPTER 15

"Sweet Sixteen"

Caroline attends Valerie Hartnet's 16th birthday party, a lavish event at Valerie's Beverly Hills mansion. She feels isolated and upset by the other girls' attitudes toward her new friends at Hollywood High.

CHARACTERS

Caroline

Valerie

Mrs. Hartnet: new character, Valerie's mother.

Nicole, Angela, Katie, Trish, Bronwyn: new characters, Valerie's popular friendship group at Laurel Academy.

Celia Compston: new character, Valerie's best friend; a Manhattan socialite (who turns out to be Valerie's girlfriend, revealed in Chapter 22 when Valerie comes out).

VOCABULARY

Juxtaposition (Laurel Academy vs. Hollywood High School)

Character Development (Caroline's reaction to the girls from Laurel Academy)

Theme (racism)

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

Why is Caroline anxious about going to Valerie's birthday party?

Even though Valerie's friends include Caroline in their conversation, she feels extremely isolated. Can you explain why?

Can you find an example of racism in this chapter? How would you describe this type of racism?

Have you ever been in a group where you felt you didn't belong? How did you handle the situation?

This chapter shows the reader that Valerie may become a larger character than they thought. Can you find the evidence in the text?

CHAPTER 16 "Ray"

Kayla introduces her friends to Ray, her first boyfriend.

CHARACTERS

Caroline

Kayla

Gary

Irene

Vincent

Ray: new character, Kayla's first boyfriend.

VOCABULARY

Character Interaction

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

Kayla is the first in Caroline's friendship group to have a boyfriend or a girlfriend. Are your feelings toward Ray the same as Kayla's feelings? Why or why not?

Whether or not someone is sexually active, sex plays an important role in high school. The first boyfriend or girlfriend is an important step in psychosocial development. What makes sex so important during this time?

Do you like Ray as much as Kayla likes Ray? Why or why not?

CHAPTER 17 "Waterford Crystal And Edible Underwear"

Caroline, Kayla, Irene, Vincent and Gary gather at Irene's house. At school, Caroline and her friends meet The Duke and his gang.

CHARACTERS

Caroline

Kayla

Gary

Irene

Vincent

Ray: new character, Kayla's boyfriend

The Duke

Doraine: new character; The Duke's girlfriend.

Jay: member of The Duke's gang.

Tom: member of The Duke's gang; cut in the knife fight in the library (Chapter 2).

Lelia Dane: Laurel Academy's "Supreme Bad Girl" (introduced in Chapter 10).

VOCABULARY

Irony (chapter title and its relation to the content of the chapter)

Conflict (both internal within a character, and external between a character and another character or an external situation)

Use of humor

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

Caroline is trying to integrate many different parts of herself, and many different experiences, which feel like they can't fit together. Can you find evidence in the text to support this? How does this relate to the name of the chapter?

Describe a situation in your life that was humorous or ironic.

CHAPTER 18

"Jeremy"

Jeremy, a gay student at Hollywood High, is beaten by a group of football players. Caroline and her friends discuss the assault, and discover homophobia among them.

CHARACTERS

Caroline

Gary

Kayla

Irene

Vincent

Jeremy: new character; gay; assaulted in a homophobic hate crime.

VOCABULARY

Tone

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

Have you ever been bullied?

Have you ever acted as a bully?

Have you ever witnessed another being bullied?

How did you handle it? Would you handle it differently next time?
With Jeremy's assault and the homophobia among Caroline's friends, the tone of the novel changes. What do you think of this change?

CHAPTER 19

"Art Supplies And Jaguars"

Valerie calls Caroline to apologize for her friends' behavior at her birthday party. Caroline invites Valerie to join the next Saturday night gathering with her Hollywood High friends.

CHARACTERS

Caroline
Valerie

VOCABULARY

Character Development

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

What do we learn about Valerie in this chapter? Were you surprised by Valerie's phone call to Caroline?

Have you ever become friends with someone unexpected? How did the friendship form?

Have you ever surprised others with a part of your personality they hadn't seen before?

CHAPTER 20

"Get Out Of Your Head"

Caroline talks to The Duke about Silver Lamé, whose actual name is Drake. The Duke agrees to help Caroline deal with the situation.

CHARACTERS

Caroline
The Duke

VOCABULARY

Character development
Character flaw

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

Caroline spends a disproportionate amount of energy thinking, analyzing, living in her head rather than in the world. Would you call this quality a strength, a weakness, or both? Why?

Think about your own personality. Does any character in the novel remind you of your own style?

CHAPTER 21

“The Dream”

Caroline has a recurring nightmare.

CHARACTERS

Caroline
The Blond

VOCBULARY

Literary device
Symbolization (red lollipop)
Silent Character (The Blond/J.D.)

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

What is your opinion of using a dream as a literary device?

Do you remember your dreams? Do you think dreams can have meaning?

CHAPTER 22

“Valerie”

Valerie joins Caroline and her friends on Saturday night. Valerie tells them her secret (that she is gay).

CHARACTERS

Caroline
Valerie
Kayla
Gary
Irene
Vincent

Leah Black

Geoff Black

Gretchen and Janet: new characters; a lesbian couple; friends of Caroline's parents; this is their only appearance in the novel.

Celia Compston: Valerie's girlfriend (introduced in Chapter 15)

VOCABULARY

Subplot: coming out; personal/social/cultural attitudes toward LGBTQ+

Theme: power of friendship; having a secret.

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

Were you surprised to find out that Valerie is a lesbian? Did it change your view of her character?

CHAPTER 23

"Undercover"

There is a drug bust at Hollywood High, and Ray's secret is revealed. He's an undercover narcotics officer, and he disappears as soon as the drug bust takes place. Kayla, who had no idea of Ray's true identity, is devastated.

CHARACTERS

Caroline

Kayla

Mrs. Richardson

Geoff Black

VOCABULARY

Theme: undercover

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

Being "undercover" is a theme in this novel. Many teens feel they have to hide important parts of themselves. Think over the characters in the novel. Can you find evidence of different ways some characters are or have been "undercover"?

Have you ever felt "undercover", like you were hiding a piece of yourself from others? How does it feel to carry a secret?

CHAPTER 24

"To Trina"

Caroline and The Duke confront Drake at the International House Of Pancakes.

CHARACTERS

Caroline

Kayla

Gary

Irene

Vincent

The Duke

Doraine

Tom: member of The Duke's gang.

Jay: member of The Duke's gang.

Trina: new character; The Duke's cousin who died of an overdose. This is the only time Trina appears in the novel.

VOCABULARY

Internal Conflict

Silent Character (Trina)

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

This chapter is named after a character we never meet. What is Trina's significance in the story?

Have you ever been influenced by someone you never met?

What do you think of Caroline's outburst about the film industry? What does it reveal about her internal conflict?

CHAPTER 25

"Ignoring Manners"

Valerie tells her mother and her brother, Lincoln, that she is a lesbian. Her mother and brother are unsupportive — critical (Mrs. Hartnet) and silent (Lincoln). Valerie, deeply hurt and angry, drives to Caroline's house in the middle of the night. Leah (Caroline's mother, a psychiatrist) helps Valerie begin the process of conflict resolution with her family.

CHARACTERS

Caroline

Valerie

Lincoln: new character; Valerie's brother.

Mrs. Hartnet: Valerie's mother.

Leah Black: Caroline's mother

VOCABULARY

Subplot: identity; LGBTQ+ support and acceptance

Theme: power of family

Major and minor characters

Conflict

Conflict Resolution

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

This is the second chapter that tracks the journey of Valerie's family. How does Valerie's family split into pieces? How do they begin to reconnect? What do you learn about Mrs. Hartnet in this chapter, and how does this affect Valerie?

Have you ever seen a family have a problem? Have you seen them begin to solve it?

Do you think Leah does a good job helping Valerie and her mother? Why or why not?

CHAPTER 26

"A Slice Of Innocence"

Caroline is again in danger from Drake. She tells her parents she wants to learn self-defense.

CHARACTERS

Caroline

Leah Black

Geoff Black

VOCABULARY

Character development

Themes

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

A theme of *HHATH* is loss of innocence. What are different ways someone can lose innocence? What kind of innocence does Caroline lose in this chapter?

What do you learn about Leah and Geoff as parents?

How does Caroline's decision to take a self-defense class reflect a new kind of character development?

CHAPTER 27

“Laurel Holiday Party”

Caroline, Kayla and Irene attend the Laurel holiday party at Valerie’s house.

CHARACTERS

Caroline

Valerie

Kayla

Irene

Vicki, Maren, Tory: Caroline’s friends from Laurel Academy.

Mr. Finnemore: new character; Caroline’s social studies teacher at Laurel Academy.

Mr. Hammer: Laurel Academy Headmaster.

Lelia Dane: Laurel Academy’s rebel.

Nicole, Angela, Trisha, Bronwyn, Katie: Valerie’s popular friendship group at Laurel.

VOCABULARY

Character Development

Foreshadowing (Caroline’s conversation with Lelia Dane)

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

Caroline feels a strong internal pull to look perfect on the outside. Yet, inside, she is as imperfect and flawed as the next person. Most people wouldn’t give a thought to singing Christmas carols. Yet, for Caroline, this is a big step. How do you understand the importance of this moment for Caroline? Why is it so important to her to look perfect? Is this a strength, a weakness, or both?

Have you ever stepped outside your comfort zone and tried something that other people take for granted as easy?

CHAPTER 28

“Metaphors And Similes”

The Duke is arrested for shoplifting a soda. The Duke tells Caroline that Doraine is pregnant.

CHARACTERS

Caroline

The Duke

Miss Orville

VOCABULARY

Character development (Caroline, The Duke)
Character relationship – The Duke and Caroline
Theme — adolescence

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

How do you understand The Duke's behavior?

What's your opinion on the author's choice to name the chapter "Metaphors And Similes"?

The Duke and Caroline are quite angry at each other at different point in this chapter, and end up more strongly bonded than before. How does this happen?

Caroline shows an unusual ability to keep her head through The Duke's tantrum. What does this demonstrate about her character?

Have you ever been angry at a friend, worked it out, and ended up with a stronger friendship?

CHAPTER 29 "Self-Defense"

Caroline takes a self-defense class.

CHARACTERS

Caroline
Linda and Quincy: new characters, Caroline's self-defense instructors.

VOCABULARY

Character development
Literary Device: the dream

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

Along with her commitment to her own physical safety, what do you think is so important to Caroline about taking this class?

Why does Caroline's nightmare come back when she commits to taking the class, and why does the nightmare stop (temporarily) after she completes the class?

When Caroline is asked why she is taking the self-defense class, her own answer surprises her. What is important about her answer? How does her answer reflect her character development?

CHAPTER 30 "Surfing"

Valerie surfs in Maui (Hawaii) with her mother and brother. Lincoln (her brother) brings up the topic they're all avoiding (Valerie is gay).

CHARACTERS

Valerie

Mrs. Hartner: Valerie's mother.

Lincoln: Valerie's older brother.

VOCABULARY

Subplot

Character development

Humor (while addressing a serious topic)

Major, minor, supporting characters

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

This is the next chapter that follows Valerie's family. What do we learn about Lincoln's role in the family? What do we learn about Mrs. Hartner's character? What happens that strengthens this family's bond?

Do you agree with the author's decision to address such an important topic with the Hartners on surfboards? Why do you agree or disagree?

Do you like this chapter's title? Why or why not?

CHAPTER 31 "J.D."

The same group of athletes who beat up Jeremy (Chapter 18) have attacked another student, J.D. Caroline realizes that J.D. is The Blond, the subject of her recurring dream, one of Drake's prostitutes.

CHARACTERS

J.D.: also known as The Blond.

Billy: new character; J.D.'s boyfriend.

Billy, Johnston, Gren, Stephan, Hal: new characters, J.D.'s friendship group (all prostitutes working for Drake).

VOCABULARY

Character development (Vincent)

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

The author decided to write this novel in reaction to a rumor she heard in high school, that a gay boy had been beaten to death. At the time, she knew she'd write about it some day in the future. Have you had an experience that affected you so deeply that you knew you'd carry it with you, possibly write about it some day? Are you ready to describe the experience in writing? If not, can you describe the feeling the experience evoked in you?

What are your thoughts on Vincent's response to hearing that J.D. was assaulted? How is this different from his initial response to Jeremy's beating (Chapter 18)? How has his character developed since he met Valerie (Chapter 22)?

How does Caroline react when she learns that J.D. doesn't have a name? What makes having a name so important?

Do you think Mrs. Richardson handles this situation well? Why or why not? How does she demonstrate her ability to understand adolescents?

CHAPTER 32

"War"

Caroline enrolls in a ceramics class, taught by a man who sleeps with his students. To her surprise, Caroline finds that she likes the group of students at her assigned table in the class.

CHARACTERS

Caroline

Lacey Tract: new character, popular girl, beautiful, cheerleader.

Elton Spinrad: new character, renames himself after the rock star Elton John.

Moishe Levy: new character, a recent immigrant from Israel, a Hasidic Jew.

Manny Villacorta: new character, a recent immigrant, Mexican, gang member.

Warren "War" Lock: new character, Caroline's ceramics teacher .

VOCABULARY

Metaphor and Simile (“War”)

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

Why do you think this chapter was included in the novel?

What do you think of Lacey’s character?

What is your opinion on the name of the chapter?

CHAPTER 33

“An Unidentified Something”

Basketball practice is disrupted by Shawna and Lureen, two girls on the team who continually get into fistfights with each other. Caroline is shocked when she is benched by her coach. Caroline figures out another layer of meaning in her recurring nightmare (the rush from feeling dangerous).

CHARACTERS

Caroline

Irene

Girls Basketball Team

Mrs. Cuthbertson: basketball coach

Shawna and Lureen: girls on the basketball team who are locked in battle (first mentioned in Chapter 7)

VOCABULARY

Character Development (Caroline)

Importance of minor characters (Mrs. Cuthbertson, Shawna, Lureen)

Theme (undercurrent of violence always ready to erupt)

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

Why does the coach bench Caroline? What do you think of the coach’s decision?

How does this affect Caroline?

Have you ever been a part of a team or a club? Describe your experience.

CHAPTER 34
“The Professor”

Caroline’s friends from her ceramics class interrupt Miss Orville’s Latin class to ask Caroline for tutoring.

CHARACTERS

Caroline

The Duke

Miss Orville

Lacey: popular, cheerleader.

Elton: renamed himself after the rock star Elton John.

Manny: recent immigrant from Mexico, in a gang.

Moishe: recent immigrant from Israel, Hasidic Jew.

VOCABULARY

Character Development (The Duke)

Importance of minor characters (Caroline’s friends from ceramics)

Theme (power of respecting another person)

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

In this chapter, Caroline’s ceramics class does something that honors her. What do they do? She then does something to honor The Duke. What does she do? How does this affect The Duke’s view of himself?

CHAPTER 35
“To Not Have A Name”

Caroline goes with her father to a showing of a film at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts And Sciences.

CHARACTERS

Caroline

Geoff

Chip Harley: new character, an actor

Mel Fein: new character, a producer

Marcie Carmichael: new character, an actor

VOCABULARY

Theme (dehumanization’s leading to bigotry, J.D.’s not having a name)

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

J.D. lives without a name. In this chapter, Caroline is shaken to the core, realizing the impact of not having a name. Why is a name so deeply important?

Do you like your name/nickname? Why or why not?

If you could give J.D. a name, which name would you choose? Why?

In this chapter, the reader is given a sense of Caroline's experience growing up in a film industry family. How did this chapter add to your understanding of Caroline's feelings about the film industry?

CHAPTER 36

"The Beach"

J. D. dies of head injuries from being assaulted (Chapter 31). Caroline's friends and J.D.'s friends meet at Caroline's family beach house to conduct a memorial service for J.D.

CHARACTERS

Caroline

Valerie

Kayla

Gary

Irene

Vincent

Billy: J.D.'s boyfriend

Stephan: in J.D.'s group of friends

Hal: in J.D.'s group of friends

Gren: in J.D.'s group of friends

Johnston: in J.D.'s group of friends

VOCABULARY

Character Interaction

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPIC

This novel has lesbian and gay characters, as well as straight characters. Each character adds a vital piece to the story. Many of the characters are sexually active in different ways – lesbian sex, gay sex, straight sex, consensual sex, thinking about sex, prostitution. Yet, *Hollywood High: Achieve The Honorable* does not offer explicit details of sex. In writing the story, this was a careful choice by the author. What do you think of the author's decision?

CHAPTER 37

“Opposite Directions”

Caroline and The Duke argue over The Duke’s homophobic reaction to J.D.’s death.

CHARACTERS

Caroline

The Duke

Miss Orville

VOCABULARY

Character development

Conflict

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

Through the novel, two teachers (Miss Orville and Mr. Cohen) and one guidance counselor (Mrs. Richardson) have strong impacts on Caroline’s life. How would you describe each of these characters? What qualities are important in a great teacher or counselor? Do you think Miss Orville, Mr. Cohen and Mrs. Richardson have those qualities?

Fighting with friends is often a part of the teen experience. Sometimes the fight is resolved, and the friendship continues. Sometimes, the friendship ends. Have you ever had a fight with a friend? How did the fight resolve or remain unresolved?

How do you understand the similarities and differences between Caroline’s behavior and The Duke’s behavior?

Miss Orville speaks to The Duke in a way that is extremely tough. What is her message to The Duke?

CHAPTER 38

“Laurel’s Glossy Goddess”

Valerie and Gary attend Laurel Academy’s St. Patrick’s Day Dance. Valerie comes out to Nicole, her best friend at school.

CHARACTERS

Caroline

Valerie

Gary

Nicole: Valerie’s best friend at Laurel Academy.

Hance: new character, Nicole’s boyfriend.

VOCABULARY

Character development — reality vs. idealization

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

This chapter is a turning point in Valerie's life. What makes this a moment of truth? What does she lose? What does she gain?

CHAPTER 39

"Friendship"

Valerie's week at school, following her coming out at the Sophomore Prom, was a nightmare. Caroline, Gary, Vincent, Irene and Kayla rally around her with support.

CHARACTERS

Caroline

Valerie

Kayla

Gary

Irene

Vincent

Mr. and Mrs. Mulligan: new characters, Gary's parents.

VOCABULARY

Dialogue

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

This novel has a lot of dialogue. Does the dialogue in this chapter feel authentic as you read? Why or why not?

Do you have a favorite character in the novel? What draws you to that character?

Do you identify with any of the characters?

Would you like to have any of the characters as a friend?

CHAPTER 40

"Talent Show"

Jeremy, recovered from his assault (Chapter 18), performs in the school's talent show. A group of football players threaten to beat him up, onstage, in front of the audience. The Duke stops them, which leads to his being kicked out of his own gang.

CHARACTERS

Caroline
Kayla
Gary
Irene
Vincent
Jeremy
The Duke
Tom
Jay
Football Players

VOCABULARY

Theme: homophobia
Character Development: The Duke, Caroline.

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

Homophobia can show itself in many forms. It can be subtle, damaging, hurtful, deadly. In the novel, through different characters, the author decided to demonstrate different kinds of homophobia, and to model different paths to acceptance. How would you describe the brand of homophobia in different characters in the novel? Characters you can think about are Vincent, Kayla, The Duke, Valerie's family, Nicole, the girls at Laurel Academy, the boys who assault J.D. and Jeremy.

In your own life, have you ever seen someone move from homophobia to acceptance? Have you taken that journey yourself?

How does The Duke's behavior at the talent show reflect his character development?

How does Caroline's crying in a public place reflect her character development?

CHAPTER 41

"Empowerment"

Drake attempts to rape Caroline, who protects herself with self-defense. The Duke, Kayla, Tom and Jay care for her after the attempted rape. Caroline realizes the meaning of her dream. The Duke and Doraine invite Caroline and her friends to their wedding.

CHARACTERS

Caroline
Kayla
Drake
The Duke
Tom
Jay
Doraine
Mrs. Richardson
Leah
Geoff
Hollywood High School's Nurse
Police Officers

VOCABULARY

Theme – empowerment
Subplot – sexual assault
Conflict Resolution
Climax

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

This chapter describes an attempted rape. Was this chapter difficult for you to read?
Did the fight feel authentic to you?

What was your reaction to Caroline's figuring out the meaning of her recurring dream?

(Sexual assault should happen to nobody, but it can happen to anybody. If you have been assaulted, or if you have witnessed an assault, please tell a trusted adult, who can help you get the support you need and deserve.)

CHAPTER 42

“Kayla's Moment”

Kayla shuts down Kurt's sexual harassment by firing squirt guns filled with indelible paint. The entire English class applauds.

CHARACTERS

Kayla
Kurt
Caroline

Gary
Mr. Cohen
Students in their English class

VOCABULARY

Historical Fiction (Sexual harassment is a sad reality that too many people experience. When *Hollywood High: Achieve The Honorable* takes place, 1973-1974, most people considered sexual harassment a fact of life, and accepted it without question. There were no rules or laws to protect Kayla from Kurt's behavior. At the time, Mr. Cohen's empowering Kayla to protect herself would have been viewed as extraordinary.

DISCUSSION/PAPER TOPICS

Harassment can take many forms. Are there any situations now that people take for granted, that need to be addressed and stopped?

CHAPTER 43 "Family"

Mrs. Compston (Celia's mother) calls Valerie's mother to tell her that Valerie is gay and to suggest she see a doctor to cure her. Valerie reveals to her mother and to Lincoln (her brother) that Celia was her girlfriend, and that they broke up. Mrs. Hartnet and Lincoln fully support and accept Valerie.

CHARACTERS

Valerie
Lincoln: Valerie's brother
Mrs. Hartnet: Valerie's mother
Mrs. Compston: new character, Celia's mother

VOCABULARY

Subplot
Conflict Resolution

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

Choose one subplot in the novel. Identify the individual chapters dealing with the subplot. Track how the relevant chapters fit together to create the subplot. Track how the subplot fits in with the novel as a whole. How does the subplot add to the story as a whole?

One subplot in *HHATH* is the journey taken by Valerie and her family. Can you track their journey, finding evidence in the chapters that highlight this subplot? (Look at chapters 23, 25, 30, 38, 39, 43).

Has your family ever taken an important journey together? Your journey may be emotional, spiritual, physical, or any combination.

CHAPTER 44

“Not One Bit Sorry”

The Duke and Doraine are married. They join Caroline and her friends at their Saturday night gathering, where they meet Valerie. The Duke describes his court date (for shoplifting a can of soda) and the judge lets him off with community service. Caroline reveals to her friends that she was expelled from Laurel Academy. Doraine goes into labor.

CHARACTERS

Caroline
Kayla
Gary
Irene
Vincent
Valerie
The Duke
Doraine

VOCABULARY

Subplot: holding a secret.

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

Many characters in the novel carry secrets which they reveal at different points in the story. Think about Caroline, The Duke, Valerie. Can you find foreshadowing of any of these secrets? Can you find evidence in the text as each person’s secret unfolds?

Caroline has an overactive conscience, but she is “not one bit sorry” for breaking the rules at Laurel. Do you think this is healthy, unhealthy, or both?

CHAPTER 45 "A True Scholar"

In her English class, Caroline recites a poem, which brings her to several realizations. Caroline finally realizes she is interested in going out with Gary, who has been waiting for this moment. Caroline decides to write a book about J.D.

CHARACTERS

Caroline
Gary
Kayla
Mr. Cohen
Elvia/Andrea
Dreads
Presto
Sharon
Mort
Kurt

VOCABULARY

Theme (defying stereotypes)
Resolution
Conclusion

DISCUSSION/WRITING TOPICS

Many adolescents are stereotyped by their peers. Why are adolescents (and many adults) drawn to stereotypes?

Some stereotypes are racial, sexual and gender-based. Some are about other kinds of assumptions. What does it say about a person if they're a prostitute (J.D.), the leader of a gang (The Duke), extremely academic (Caroline), on the LGBTQ+ spectrum (Valerie), a cheerleader (Lacey)?

How does reading the poem mirror Caroline's character development?

Caroline's viewing J.D. as a "true scholar" replaces the intellectual icon. How does this demonstrate Caroline's emotional growth over the course of the novel?

ASSIGNMENT SUGGESTIONS

- Choose a character. Write a journal from that character's perspective.
- Design an alternative cover for *Hollywood High: Achieve The Honorable*.
- Write the book's next chapter, following characters into the summer.
- What was your favorite/least favorite part of *Hollywood High: Achieve The Honorable*?
- Write a personal narrative about a memory triggered by reading *Hollywood High: Achieve The Honorable*. Include enough detail to bring your reader into the experience.
- Choose a theme from *Hollywood High: Achieve The Honorable*. Write an original poem, song or short story about the theme.
- Write a blog post from a character's point of view.
- Take a chapter from *Hollywood High: Achieve The Honorable* and rewrite it as a play. Perform your one act play for the class.
- Write a song about *Hollywood High: Achieve The Honorable*. Perform your song for the class.
- Write a character analysis of a character who undergoes changes through the story. Track their development as the story unfolds.
- For a novel to work well, the writer needs to evoke feelings in the reader. Did this novel succeed in this way? What did you feel?
- If you didn't like the book, write a critique of *Hollywood High: Achieve The Honorable*. Did parts of the story make you angry? Did you disagree with the messages conveyed? Did you dislike the author's style?
- Is there a passage or chapter in the novel that caught your attention? Analyze this portion of the book, in the larger context of the story. Why did you have such a strong reaction to this particular section?
- Analyze a quotation or portion of dialogue. What is the significance of this section in the larger story? Why did you have such a strong reaction to this quote?
- The author structured *Hollywood High: Achieve The Honorable* to pull the reader into the story from the beginning. From the opening chapter, some readers expect a light, funny coming of age novel. Instead, as the story unfolds, the novel deals with extremely serious issues: bullying, homophobia, stereotyping, to name a few. What is your opinion on the author's choice to structure her book in this way?

