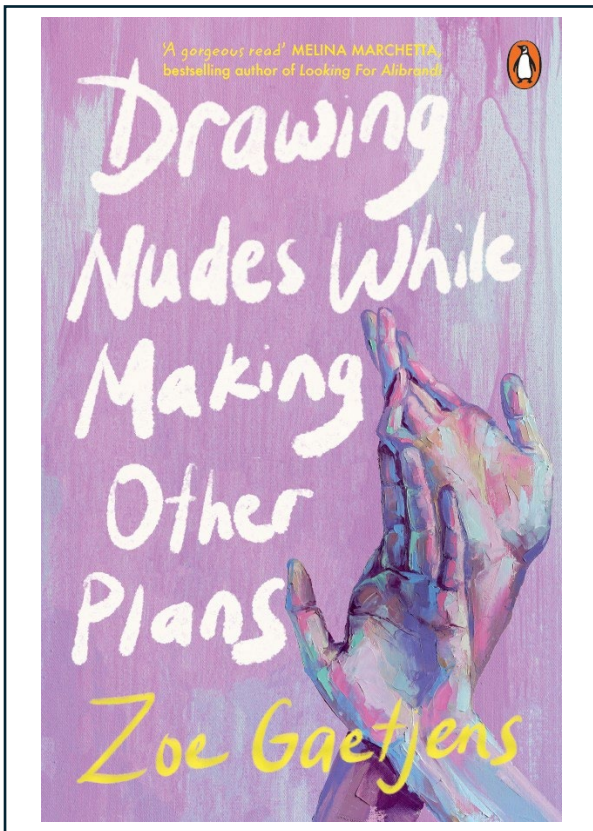




TEACHERS' RESOURCES



Drawing Nudes While Making Other Plans Zoe Gaetjens

PLOT SUMMARY

Cleo would have loved an ordinary summer hanging out with her sister. Instead, she finds herself alone, without a plan – except for the opportunity to attend a life drawing class.

At the Australian Art School, she must navigate new friendships, (alarmingly handsome) nude men and first love to discover who she is and what she is capable of.

A warm and funny novel about finding yourself . . . in a room full of strangers, drawing naked people.

RECOMMENDED FOR
Ages 13+ (Years 8 to 11)

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KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- Learning areas: English
- General capabilities: Literacy; Critical and creative thinking; Ethical understanding

REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

- Authentic, relatable Australian story by a debut author.
- Engaging insights about creating art.

THEMES

- Grief and loss
- Trust, boundaries and consent
- Creativity
- Identity and self-belief

PUBLICATION DETAILS

ISBN: 9781761358012 (paperback);
9781761358029 (ebook); 9781761623677 (audio).

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Drawing Nudes While Making Other Plans by Zoe Gaetjens

ABOUT ZOE GAETJENS

As a year 11 student, Zoe Gaetjens attended a life drawing workshop where she failed to plan anything significant. She has since traded her charcoal for a laptop and writes books for children and young adults.

When Zoe is not writing, she works as a high school English teacher. She believes that the books you love as a teenager stay with you forever. Zoe lives just outside of Sydney with her husband and three kids.



AUTHOR'S INSPIRATION

Zoe says:

The setting of this story is largely inspired by a life drawing class I attended when I was in year 11. While my experience was vastly different from my main character's, the class I attended was wonderful and

pushed me out of my comfort zone in a number of different ways.

Using this setting for my story allowed me to explore the social dynamic of teenagers coming together in a new and potentially awkward setting with no preconceptions of each other. I was interested in how this new environment could foster both personal, social and relationship growth in a way that a school setting can't.

I think our familial relationships and experiences at school are integral to the formation of our personal identity, but I also like the idea that when we place someone in a new environment, it provides a freedom from these past influences. This new setting becomes a space where teens have the potential to forge an updated version of themselves, either consciously or subconsciously. With the life drawing course as my setting, I was able to use the art-making process – and my main character's approach to this process – to represent her character growth and development.

I really wanted to write something that was relatable, that was warm and at times humorous. I wanted teens to read it and see themselves, or their friends, or 'that boy at school' in it. I also wanted to show that personal growth often only happens without a clear plan and when we step outside of our comfort zone.

WRITING PROCESS

Zoe says:

Before I started writing, I researched the components of satisfying Coming of Age and Romance stories. I then began to write notes about the characters I wanted to include in my story, slowly developing who they were and what their background was. I thought about who their parents were, what their upbringing was like and whether they needed to grow or be challenged. It wasn't till I had fully fleshed these characters out that I began writing the opening scene.

As I wrote each chapter and the story developed, new ideas and themes rose. I realised that I was writing a story about the importance of consent. It became about processing grief and how different people deal



with grief in different ways. I realised it wasn't just about the beauty of sibling relationships, it was also about the importance of new experiences and our need to embrace them and the opportunities they bring even if we are scared. All of these ideas worked together to inform the plot and build the story.

While writing, I worked to bring an authenticity to the characters' emotions. It might sound strange or a little silly, but I would spend a lot of time imagining how they were feeling. I would sit and imagine my younger self and what I might say in a given situation or how I might process it. I really would put myself in their shoes!

PRE-READING QUESTIONS

1. Look at the cover. What can you tell about the book from the images used? How has the designer used the typography, placement of illustrations and colours to communicate what the book is about?
2. Now, read the blurb and add to your ideas about what the story might be about and the concepts it might explore. What elements capture your interest?
3. Have a go at writing a paragraph predicting what you think will happen in the story. Then, once you have finished reading the book, re-read your paragraph and see if you were close. You might like to swap your answer with the person next to you and see what they thought would happen too. Which version do you like better?

WRITING STYLE

There are two different voices in *Drawing Nudes While Making Other Plans*, and two text types. The main voice is Cleo's, in the first-person narration that makes up most of the book. This narration positions us inside Cleo's perspective, so we experience the story through her mind, body and emotions. But we also have her sister Emmy's voice, in the plans that she wrote for Cleo. Each plan is preceded by a short

introduction, and the plan itself is in the form of a list. In both of these, Emmy speaks directly to Cleo.

Questions and activities

1. What effect does including Emmy's plans have on how you experience the characters and the story? What does it tell you about the relationship between the sisters?
2. Why do you think the author wrote Cleo's narration in present tense? Choose a passage from the book, and rewrite it in past tense. What are the biggest differences between the original and yours? Does one have more impact than the other?
3. What other books have you read that feature multiple voices or text types? Do you think this is an effective way to tell a story?
4. Emmy wrote plans for Cleo based on her own experiences. '*Anytime she learned or experienced something new, it was her way of both sharing it with me and preparing me.*' (p.194) Think about something you have learned or experienced, and write a plan for it, imagining you are writing it for a younger sibling.

KEY STUDY TOPICS

Consent

Lachlan's tongue is in my mouth and I don't even know how this happened. Did I give him the impression that I wanted this? I don't want this. (page 233)

The scene where Lachlan kisses Cleo without her consent is one of the most dramatic moments in the book. It completely upends their friendship, and casts everything that came before in a different light. It also impacts Cleo's relationships with Remi and Mattias, and the harmony of their friendship group.

Questions and activities

1. Look back through the book and make a list of other moments where Lachlan pushes/tests other people's boundaries, or shows disregard for consent. (These moments do not necessarily



have to be sexual or romantic.) Is there a pattern to his behaviour?

2. Why do you think Lachlan kisses Cleo? Rewrite page 231 from his perspective. Swap with another student and discuss your versions of the scene.
3. Compare pages 232-233 (Lachlan kissing Chloe) and pages 271-272 (Cleo and Mattias kissing). What are the key differences between the two kisses?
4. In small groups, brainstorm what respect and consent mean in relationships. Is it just about sex? What other areas might it involve? How can you tell if someone has given consent?

Creativity and character

Cleo's engagement in life drawing serves as a metaphor for her journey of self-discovery. In the first session of the course, she is so anxious about finding the right way to start that she barely gets any marks on the page. She is used to living her life according to Emmy's plans and avoiding mistakes. In contrast, her teacher Betty loves working in charcoal because she finds its messiness liberating. Over the course of the story, Chloe embraces a looser approach to her art (and her life), becoming more confident in herself.

Questions and activities

1. How does Cleo use her artwork to express her emotions and experiences? Find some examples from the text where her drawings reflect her internal state.
2. Do you think Cleo needed to 'make a mess' and break away from her usual way of doing things in order to grow as a person?
3. Create something inspired by the themes of the novel. Use any medium you like – visual art, music, poetry, drama. In small groups, present your piece and explain how the novel influenced your work.

Creative Writing: Research and Development

In her comments about the writing process, Zoe Gaetjens talked about some of the preparation that

she did before she started writing *Drawing Nudes While Making Other Plans*.

The first thing she did was research two story types: Coming of Age and Romance. *Drawing Nudes While Making Other Plans* is a Coming-of-Age story because it focuses on the main character's transition from 'childhood' to maturity. And it's a Romance because it has a central love story.

The other thing Zoe did before she started writing was to develop her characters, working out things like who their parents were and what their upbringing was like. While these details might not have all been included in the book, they enabled Zoe to understand who her characters were as a person and the way they would behave. The result is characters that feel authentic.

Questions and activities

1. Zoe researched the components of satisfying Coming of Age and Romance stories. Pick one of these genres and do your own research to identify its key elements. Then analyse *Drawing Nudes While Making Other Plans*, identifying how it uses these components. Do you think it is a satisfying example of this type of story?
2. Why do you think there are so many Coming of Age novels about teenagers?
3. Romance is one of the most popular genres in the world. Why do you think people enjoy it so much?
4. Using the worksheet, develop a character who is another student in the life drawing class. As a bonus activity, you could write a short diary entry from their perspective, reacting to Cleo's confrontation with Lachlan in chapter 28.



WORKSHEET

Answer these questions to develop your character.

What is your character's name?

Who are their parents (and siblings, if they have any)?

What was their childhood like?

What do they do on the weekend?

What is their favourite song, and why do they like it?

What makes them happy?

Do they need to grow or be challenged? In what ways?



FURTHER READING FROM PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE AUSTRALIA

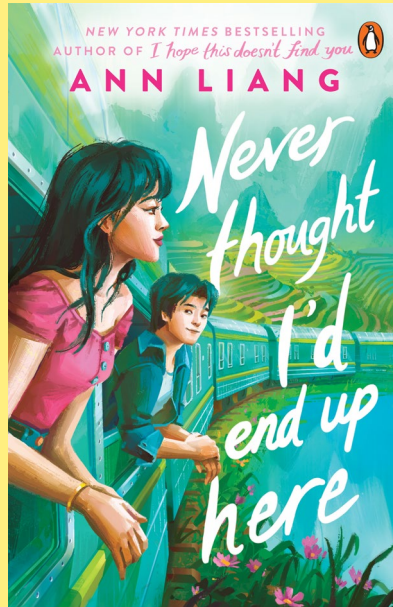


Our Chemical Hearts by Krystal Sutherland

Henry has never been in love. He's busy trying to become editor of his school paper. Then he meets Grace, who wears boys' clothes, walks with a cane, and is hiding crushing secrets. When the two are chosen to co-edit the paper, sparks fly.

A potent reminder of the bittersweet bliss that is first love, from a bestselling, award-winning Australian author.

Teachers' resources available.

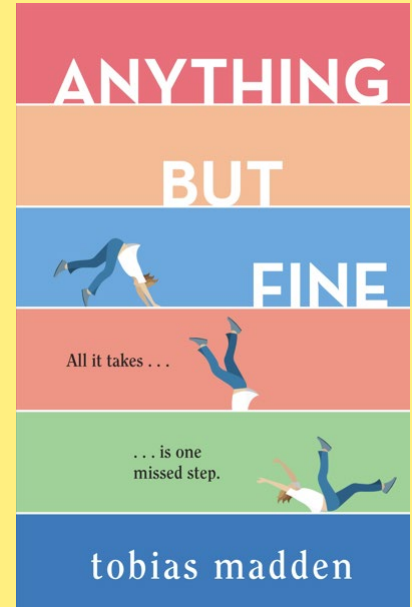


Never Thought I'd End Up Here by Ann Liang

When Leah's parents send her on an intensive two-week travel program across China to get back to her roots, it's a much-needed escape.

But cynical, sarcastic Cyrus, her least favorite person ever, is also on the trip and he's somehow only gotten more annoyingly handsome since they last saw each other.

A gorgeous YA rom-com from a Chinese Australian author.



Anything But Fine by Tobias Madden

Luca is ready to audition for the Australian Ballet School . . . until one missed step breaks his foot and his dreams. Jordan is the gorgeous rowing star and captain of Luca's new school.

As their unlikely bond grows stronger, Luca wonders: who is he without ballet? And is he setting himself up for another heartbreak?

A heartfelt and hilarious YA debut from a rising star.

Teachers' resources available.



ORDER FORM

TITLE	AUTHOR	ISBN	SCHOOL YEAR	RRP	QTY	TOTAL
<i>Drawing Nudes While Making Other Plans</i>	Zoe Gaetjens	9781761358012	8-11	\$19.99		
<i>Our Chemical Hearts</i>	Krystal Sutherland	9781761048760	9-12	\$19.99		
<i>Never Thought I'd End Up Here</i>	Ann Liang	9781761351495	9-12	\$19.99		
<i>Anything But Fine</i>	Tobias Madden	9781761042027	9-12	\$19.99		
				TOTAL		

<p>NAME: _____</p> <p>SCHOOL: _____</p> <p>ADDRESS: _____</p> <p>STATE: _____</p> <p>POSTCODE: _____</p> <p>TEL: _____</p> <p>EMAIL: _____</p> <p>ACCOUNT NO.: _____</p> <p>PURCHASE ORDER NO.: _____</p>	<p>PLEASE SEND ORDER FORMS TO YOUR LOCAL EDUCATION SUPPLIER.</p>
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