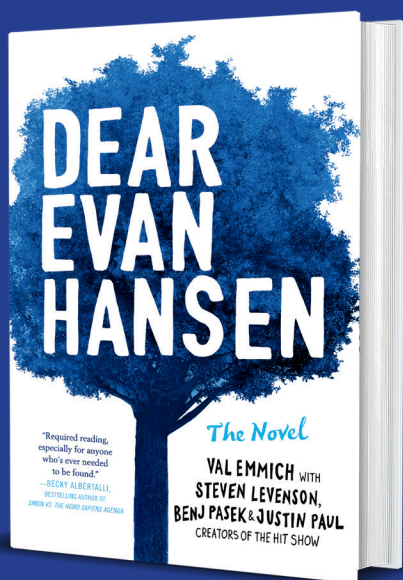


EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

AGES 12 & UP

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DEAR EDUCATOR,

The musical *Dear Evan Hansen* has taken Broadway by storm. Tickets are at a premium and it's not hard to understand why. Its core message is that none of us is alone. As John Donne said in his signature sonnet in 1623, "No man is an island." It is ironic that, in a world that is increasingly small given the ubiquity of technology, technology systematically keeps us apart—especially teens who are vulnerable to cyberbullying, the vicious texts and posts that marginalize one from one another.

Just like the musical, the novel adaptation addresses these contemporary issues: peer pressure, bullying, suicide, depression, and most importantly, hope.

This month-long curriculum suggests a way to approach *Dear Evan Hansen* in a junior high or high school classroom. It includes several parts: The Reading Guide "chunks" the book so that it can be read in about three weeks (if class sessions are about forty-five minutes and students read at home each night), and includes discussion prompts. These chunks can easily be subdivided into additional sections, but caution is suggested. A sure way to "kill" a great read is to dissect it into too many pieces. A novel, while it can be more fully appreciated by chunking it into meaningful segments, is meant to be read as a whole. Students who are "readers" may very well read ahead. Please ask these students not to share information or thoughts about the book ahead of the class discussion. The timeline of the Reading Guide concludes with opportunities for students to research, write, and present their work.

Within this Guide is a set of writing prompts called "Reflect and Write." For each chapter, students could be asked to write a response to a quote from that chapter.

Also included are some ideas to extend students' knowledge "For Exploration." Based on literary or cultural allusions, some mini research projects are suggested, each of which is connected to the novel. Any of these could become the basis of one of the component parts of the final project.

The culminating activity for this novel is a Multi-Genre/Multimedia Project, which is also included within this Guide. The multi-genre project is the brainchild of Dr. Tom Romano; his book, *Blending Genre, Altering Style: Writing Multigenre Papers* (Boyton/Cook, 2000) prompted a new vision of what a research paper or extensive writing project could be.

In a multi-genre project, a student creates a collection of written/visual documents that all focus on a theme or topic. In this case, in honor of the powerful new understanding of himself that Evan discovers, students are asked to create a project that shares who they are and who they are striving to be. Through this project, students will reveal bits of their personality through a variety of types of texts, including description, exposition, persuasion, poetry, and directions, including music, video, and other artistic formats. A potential Scoring Guide is also included.

A NOTE OF CAUTION: Because each student is in charge of what they reveal, students may try to protect themselves, but at this vulnerable age, they may reveal more than expected because they need to be found. Discussing the sensitive topics of depression and suicide may cause students to reveal more than they intended, so paying close attention to conversations, journal responses, and finished projects is critical. This is not a new caution for English and drama teachers. When students discuss the words, actions, and motivations of characters in literature of all types, or write in response to such works, students find a medium to share themselves. As educators, we need to be alert to the possibility that intervention is necessary. At the end of this guide are resources that may be helpful. Of course, knowing school and local resources is important as well.

DAY 1

Begin the novel together. Read aloud the Prologue. Have students hypothesize who is narrating this section.

Ask them: What do you notice about the font? The narrator states, "Better to burn out, right, than fade away?" The narrator attributes those words to Kurt Cobain. Who was he? Ask students what they know about the other names listed in the Prologue: Hemingway, Williams, Woolf, Thompson, Plath, Wallace, van Gogh. What do they have in common?

Keep the momentum going. The reading goal for this section is the first three chapters, pages 5 to 42. If time permits, read the first chapter aloud to provide more context for students. Perhaps pause to discuss these lines:

- ✓ "It's like the sweaty hands thing; the more you acknowledge the problem, the worse it gets" (p. 10).
- ✓ "Sure, our conversations are scheduled, inorganic, and typically one-sided, but there's some comfort in sitting down and talking with another human being" (p. 14).

For homework, ask students to finish reading that chapter (if needed) and then to read Chapters 2 and 3. Because we want students to spend more time reading than "proving" they have done the reading, ask them to give titles to these first three chapters. That is, ask them to name each in a few words. Potentially, they can do this throughout the novel, creating their own "summary" of the book.

DAY 2

Begin the conversation by asking students to share their chapter titles with the class. Look for similarities; discuss the ones that don't seem to focus on the overarching sentiments but highlight certain parts of the chapter. How does each title strengthen the students' understanding of these opening chapters as a whole?

Ask students to revisit the advice that Evan shares from Dr. Sherman in regard to writing letters to himself:

- ✓ "You don't have to know. That's the point of the exercise. To explore. For example, you could start with something like, *Today is going to be an amazing day and here's why.* And then go from there" (p. 7).
- ✓ "The problem with talking with Dr. Sherman, though, is I'm bad at it. I sit there, struggling to squeeze out even the simplest monosyllabic answers. I assume that's why he suggested I write these letters to myself. He told me it might be a better way of extracting my feelings and could also help me learn to be a little easier on myself" (p. 15).
- ✓ "I can't show it to Dr. Sherman. He keeps asking me to seek optimism and this letter is nothing but hopelessness and despair. I know I'm *supposed* to share my feelings with Dr. Sherman, and make my mom happy, but they don't want my actual feelings. They just want me to be okay or, at least, say that I am" (p. 33).

As a class, read Chapter 4, either aloud, silently, or a combination (read aloud from page 43 to the bullets on page 51 and then have students finish the chapter silently). Ask students to recount the various scenarios that Evan imagines in the absences of Connor and Zoe.

For homework, have students finish Chapter 4 (if needed) and read Chapter 5.

DAY 3

Review what happens in Chapter 5 when Connor's parents, Cynthia and Larry, come to the school to share the news of Connor's suicide. They ask Evan to read aloud from the letter that they believe Connor wrote to him. "I wish that everything was different. I wish that I were part of something. I wish that what I said mattered—to anyone" (p. 59). During this conversation, Evan tries to share the fact that Connor didn't write that letter. Ask students: Do you believe Evan tried? Tried hard enough? Why doesn't it happen? What evidence from the chapter supports your stance? How does seeing Connor's name on Evan's cast cement Connor's parents' belief in the guys' friendship?

Read aloud the Connor commentary on pages 62 to 68. Ask students: What do we learn about the dynamics of Connor's family? What does the incident with the deer/tree reveal about Connor? Who is one of the nurses at the hospital?

For homework, ask students to read Chapter 6, Commentary II, and Chapter 7.

DAY 4

Evan reveals that no one he has ever known has died—not even a pet (p. 70). Ask students to write about their experiences with death—with the assurance that no one will be required to share or turn in their thoughts. Given their experiences, ask them to consider whether they would do what Evan did: go to the funeral. He is one of the few in attendance and thinks to himself, "They'll post something about Connor online, but couldn't be bothered to pay their respects in person?" (p. 77). Ask students: Is Evan right? Does peer pressure keep them away? Or something else?

Give students three to five minutes to write the "moral" of the Mrs. Gorblinski narrative, Commentary II. What did she learn about addressing a student's need?

How does this vignette prepare readers for Chapter 7? How does it link Connor and Evan?

For homework, ask students to read Chapters 8, 9, and 10, again writing chapter titles for each.

DAY 5

Today's conversation focuses on characterization. Discuss what the reader learns about Evan as Chapter 8 begins. What does the story about acquiring a driver's license tell us about him?

The dinner is tough for Evan. How does he negotiate the conversation? What do we learn about Connor's parents? How could they be described? What about Zoe? What does the reader learn about her, especially in Chapter 8? Make a chart with three columns: what she says, what she does, and what she seems to be feeling.

Next, talk about the characterization of Jared in Chapters 9 and 10. What kind of guy is he? Is a "family friend" or a real friend?

For homework, ask students to read Commentary III, plus Chapters 11 and 12.

DAY 6

Continue the conversation about characterization. What does Connor share about himself in the third commentary? What character traits are reinforced? What conflicts(s) does Connor face? What new information does this chapter reveal about Connor? What does this commentary reveal about Zoe?

In Chapter 11, Cynthia writes Evan a letter, specifically asking if Connor ever shared any names connected with substance abuse. Why would that be important to her? Why does she want more emails? Why does she want Evan to come to dinner again?

Together, discuss the list of books in Connor's room: *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, *The Catcher in the Rye*, *The Great Gatsby*, *The Mysteries of Pittsburgh*, *Into the Wild*, and multiple books by Kurt Vonnegut, such as *Slaughterhouse-Five*. Ask students: Has anyone read any of them? If so, how does it seem appropriate that Connor read them? Evan says, "It seems a contradiction: Connor Murphy in a library" (p. 155). Why does it seem ironic for Connor to have been in a library?

For homework, ask students to read Chapter 13 and 14, and Commentary IV.

DAY 7

Recount how the Connor Project began. What was Evan's inspiration (Chapter 13)? Who joins forces with him? Why is Alana a perfect choice? How does the "pitch" go with Connor's parents and Zoe? Why does Cynthia giving Evan the tie make him extra anxious (Chapter 14)?

How does Commentary IV move the narrative forward?

Read Chapter 15 aloud. Ask students to choose the "golden line" of this chapter. Discuss their choices.

Read Commentary V aloud. How is the last word, "Applause," the perfect ending to this commentary, given the preceding chapter?

For homework, ask students to read Chapters 16 and 17.

DAY 8

Discuss the aftermath of Evan's speech, the skyrocketing numbers of followers, and their potential chapter titles for Chapter 16. Ask students if they can give other examples of videos going viral.

Ask students if they noticed that Chapter 17 is in Part 2. Ask students why they think the novel has two parts. What happens in Chapter 17 that separates it from Part 1? Discuss proposed titles for Chapter 17.

For homework, ask students to read Chapter 18, Commentary VI, and Chapters 19 and 20.

DAY 9

Jared seems different in Chapter 18. How so? And Evan seems haunted. How so?

Commentary VI provides significant information about the person Connor was referring to in previous commentaries:

- ✓ "I reached out to the only person I thought might help. And then, when that didn't work..." (p. 65).
- ✓ "Even now, I don't like saying his name. I wonder: has he even noticed I'm gone?" (p. 137).
- ✓ "I tremble. Could it really be him? Maybe my absence finally registered" (p. 192).
- ✓ "...and the most from... He should have been the one standing up there, saying those words. Because for him, I actually did show up. For him, I risked it all" (p. 198).

Evan's mom plays a central role in Chapter 19. How would you describe her? What do we already know about her up to this point? What new insights are revealed in this chapter? How are Evan's mom and Connor's mom similar? Different?

Chapter 20 focuses on the conversation Evan has with Connor's dad. Larry gives Evan the baseball glove he bought for Connor. Why is this such a significant conversation for both of them? How is Larry different from Connor's dad?

For homework, ask students to read Chapter 21, Commentary VII, and Chapters 22, 23, and 24.

DAY 10

Talk about a potential title for Chapter 21. How about "New Beginning"? Other ideas?

After reading Commentary VII, ask students what they think happened between Miguel and Connor. What made Connor literally run away?

In Chapter 22, Jared and Evan have a fairly heated conversation. Why? Does Jared cross the line? Does Evan deserve it?

In Chapter 23, Evan is surprised when he goes to dinner at the Murphys' and discovers that his mother is already there, which was Zoe's idea. Why does Zoe's plan go so horribly wrong?

In Chapter 24, Alana and Evan quarrel, Jared and Evan quarrel, and Zoe and Evan quarrel. How are these three conversations alike? Different?

For homework, ask students to read Chapter 25, Commentary VIII, and Chapter 26.

DAY 11

Evan lays out the truth of his situation at the beginning of Chapter 25. Read pages 292 to 294 aloud, ending with "It's time to refocus." Ask students: Did the rest of the chapter unfold the way you had anticipated? Were you surprised Evan shared the "suicide note"? Were you surprised by the effect it had?

Read page 311 aloud, from "Get up, I say" through the end of Commentary VIII. What is Connor's message to Evan?

How does that message focus Chapter 26?

DAY 12

Read Commentary IX aloud. In the quiet space after the reading is over, give students a chance to write their thoughts: What would they say to Connor if they could send him a message?

If desired, have students share. If not, ask them to read the Epilogue, finishing it for homework, if needed.

DAY 13

Ask students to reflect on the Epilogue, and what Evan and Zoe have learned over the year they have been apart. Why don't the Murphys ever expose Evan's lies? Why does Zoe want Evan to see the orchard? Why does Evan share the information about Miguel with Zoe?

Share one of the numerous videos available online called "No Man Is an Island."
Perhaps begin with Joan Baez's reading of John Donne's sonnet:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=uhrRWlhMH-k

Afterward, discuss the poem. Are there connections between the poem and the themes students just explored? How does the poem fit with the themes of *Dear Evan Hansen*?

Then listen to "No Man Is an Island" by Tenth Avenue North:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zlw3jG2pE8w

And then perhaps play one or more of these versions of "No Man Is an Island," performed by different artists but with the same basic melody/lyrics. How are the Tenth Avenue North rendition and any of these others alike? Different?

- ✓ "No Man Is an Island" by The Lettermen:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wlmkf0V7u-4
- ✓ "No Man Is an Island" by the Victoria Junior College Choir:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=Olhma2Dt-ZY
- ✓ "No Man Is an Island" by Simon and Pontus Åkesson:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=tS4S5WMh6pk

Do students know other songs with similar themes? If time permits, have students share the song titles and other concluding thoughts about *Dear Evan Hansen*.

DAY 14

If students completed a research project from the "For Exploration" section, ask them alone or in small groups to share what they found with the class.

DAYS 15 TO 19

Give students time to work on their individual Multi-Genre/Multimedia projects with a goal of selecting one piece to share with the class on Day 20. Alternatively, students may be given time to work on pieces for their Multi-Genre/Multimedia project while reading the book so that discussion and writing support one another throughout the process.

DAY 20

Celebrate student writing! Have each student share a piece of their choice from their completed Multi-Genre/Multimedia project with the class.

DAY 21 AND BEYOND

The Connor Project was testimony that each human being is important, that each of us is worthy of recognition and remembrance. Ask students to consider what project makes sense in their communities beginning with their school or local communities but potentially growing to the state, nation, or world community. Ask: How does the power and energy of this novel transform your understanding of yourselves as citizens of the world? What issue might you want to tackle? What could you do to make the world a better place? What could your legacy be? Challenge each to finish this letter:

Dear _____,

*Today is going to be an amazing day and here's why....
followed by their action plan
to change the world for good...*

RESOURCES

Bullying:

www.stopbullying.gov/what-is-bullying/index.html

Depression:

www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/depression/symptoms-causes/syc-20356007

Depression in Children and Adolescence:

www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/depression/depression-in-children-and-adolescents.shtml/american

Peer Pressure:

<https://teens.webmd.com/peer-pressure#1>

Suicide:

<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

<https://knowledge.samhsa.gov/ta-centers/suicide-prevention-resource-center>

REFLECT AND WRITE:

Chapter 1: “Positive outlook yields positive experience” (p. 7). Agree or disagree? Why?

Chapter 2: “Alana Beck and I have a lot in common. Even with her class participation and her gigantic backpack always slamming into people, she goes around this school the same way I do: unnoticed” (p. 21). What other words or phrases could be substituted for “unnoticed”?

Chapter 3: Evan calls Zoe “normal as in real” (p. 27). Is “real” a good definition of “normal”? How does he use this definition to support this conclusion? What does he appreciate about Zoe?

Chapter 4: Evan is trying to figure out why Connor isn’t in school. Evan says, “Really, though, what do I know about what another person is capable of? I still don’t have a clue what I’m capable of. I keep surprising even myself” (p. 45–46). Do you agree with Evan, that you still don’t “have a clue” about what you are capable of? Do you “keep surprising” yourself?

Chapter 5: Evan is surprised when he is called to the office. He says, “I’m not the kind of person who gets called to the principal’s office. Isn’t it saved for...People whose actions affect others? I don’t affect anyone. I’m nonexistent” (p. 53). How does a person who thinks they are “nonexistent” feel?

Chapter 6: Evan commiserates with himself: “I finally expressed the truth [in the letter], and look what happened: it got turned into a lie” (p. 73). This is an example of irony. Can you think of a time when there was irony in your life?

Chapter 7: Evan’s mom leaves a note on his door: “*Sit tight. Take hold. Thunder road!*” (p. 88), which is a Bruce Springsteen lyric. Are there particular artists or lyrics that resonate with you? Who or what are they? Why?

Chapter 8: “What I’m doing, what I’m saying, is working, it’s helping, and that’s all I want, to help” (p. 110). Is Evan *really* helping?

Chapter 9: Evan says, “I’m much better at interpreting books and stories than I am at understanding the decisions made by living, breathing people. But in this case, I can easily apply Mrs. Kiczek’s strategies for critical analysis to the real-life behavior I just witnessed” (p. 122). Can he? Is Evan’s assessment of Zoe’s opinion of him accurate? Why or why not?

Chapter 10: On p. 130, When Jared says, “I have to say, the friendship you guys had is just precious,” Evan notes that “Jared’s smirk [meant] that he wasn’t serious.” Evan thinks, “I just meant that a friendship like this would probably be nice. Having someone to talk to about things, someone who would listen.” Whose perspective do you embrace? Jared’s or Evan’s? Why?

Chapter 11: Evan says that “Ranger Gus is one of those off-the-grid types who thinks technology is ruining society” (p. 149). Do you agree or disagree with Ranger Gus?

Chapter 12: The final few lines of this chapter read, “Eventually, we turned to the topic of Connor. They asked me questions. I told them what I thought they wanted to hear. What I thought would make them happy. I wish someone could do the same for me” (p. 165).

Chapter 13: Write a letter to yourself that begins like this: “Dear _____, Today is going to be a good day and here’s why” (p. 166).

Chapter 14: Alana tells Evan, “Life is an interview” (p. 182). Is she right?

Chapter 15: Evan panics onstage. What words show how terror-stricken he is? Have you ever been in his situation?

Chapter 16: One of the comments among all the posts in this chapter is “The meaning of friendship” (p. 206). What does friendship mean? How would you define it?

Chapter 17: Zoe asks Evan what he did with his cast when the doctor took it off. He tells her he kept it, but he doesn’t know why. “It’s the truth: I did keep it and I really don’t know why” (p. 218). Why do you think he kept it?

REFLECT AND WRITE: *continued . . .*

Chapter 18: At the end of the chapter, Evan thinks, "By now I'm used to Jared's blunt humor, but this latest jab feels more brutal than normal" (p. 232). What other "digs" does Jared make in this conversation? Do you think something has changed for Jared? What?

Chapter 19: Evan defines "followers": "I guess they're fellow lonely people who have found hope in our little community, the one I happen to be the face of" (p. 239). Is this accurate?

Chapter 20: Connor's dad says, "There's no substitute for doing the work. None. It just takes a little patience" (p. 251). He's talking about breaking in a baseball glove. In what other situations would this advice apply?

Chapter 21: The line that comes to Evan's mind is "*What came before won't count anymore, or matter. Can we try that?*" (p. 257) Where does that line come from? Why would Evan focus on that line?

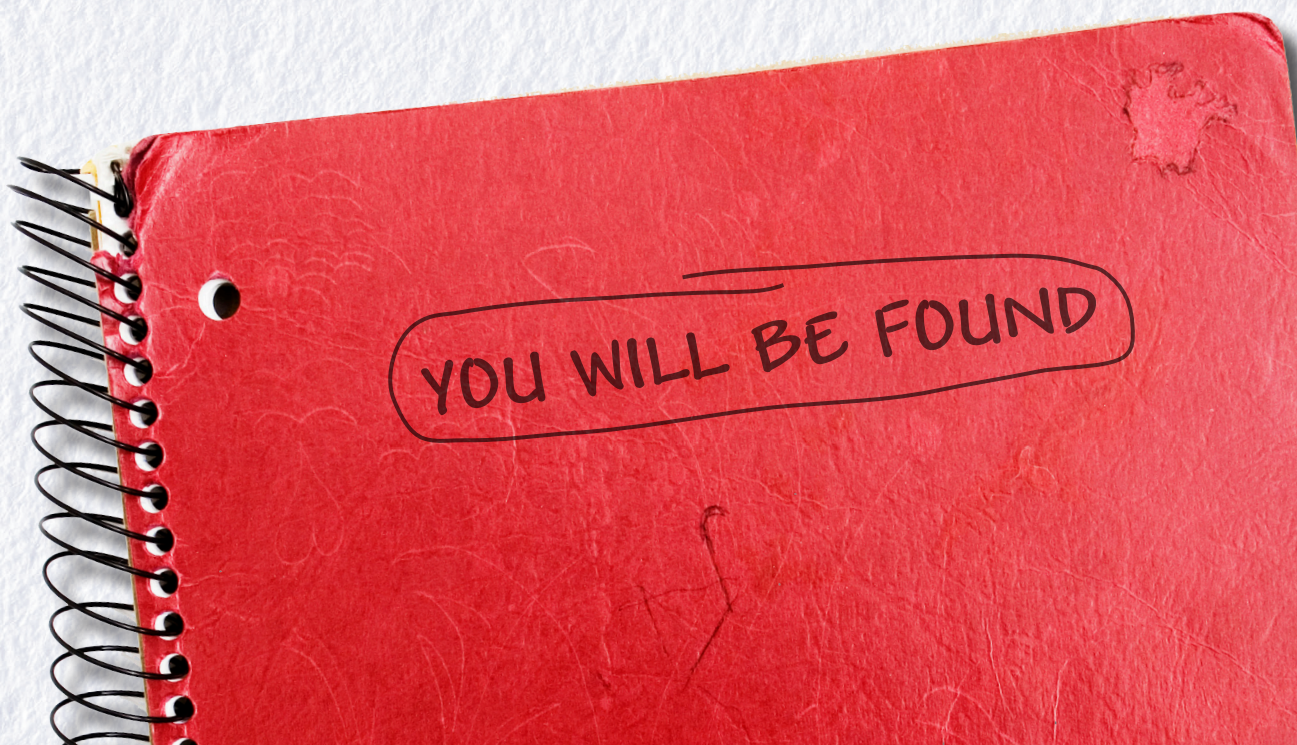
Chapter 22: Evan tells Jared, "All I ever wanted was to help the Murphys" (p. 273). Do you believe Evan? Does Jared?

Chapter 23: Evan tells his mom, "They like me. I know how hard that is to believe. They don't think there's something wrong with me. That I need to be fixed, like you do" (p. 292). Is this a fair assessment by Evan of his Mom? Why or why not?

Chapter 24: As Zoe and Evan are talking, Evan notices that a "gust of wind rattles the leaves of a black oak. That kind of tree, at that height, is probably older than my house. And yet, as mighty and proud as it looks, it still shakes in the wind" (p. 290). How do these words apply—symbolically—to Evan's current situation?

Chapter 25: Evan tells the Murphys, "You didn't fail him" (p. 306). Is this a relief to them? Why or why not?

Chapter 26: "Own it" (p. 315) is the message of this chapter. Evan's mom says to him, "I didn't know you were hurting like that. That you felt so...how did I not know?" Evan responds, "Because I never told you....I couldn't even tell myself. It's taken me the longest time to find my way back to the truth" (p. 318). Day to day, what does it mean to "own it"?



FOR EXPLORATION:

1. In the Prologue, the writer lists Kurt Cobain, Ernest Hemingway, Robin Williams, Virginia Woolf, Hunter S. Thompson, Sylvia Plath, and David Foster Wallace and states that they "actually made an impact." Choose one. What did he or she do to make an impact? What do they all have in common, including the writer?
2. In Evan's first letter, he tells himself, "Be yourself. Be true to yourself" (p. 8). Shakespeare's Hamlet tells himself in his famous soliloquy, "To thine own self be true." Centuries apart, the two wrestle with the same issue: the challenge of being who they are. Why do you think this is?
3. Evan reveals that he is taking Lexapro and Ativan in the first chapter (p. 9). Research these medications. Why is Evan taking them? How do they help? Connor took Adderall (p. 64). How was it supposed to help him?
4. Explore the topic of depression in adolescents. What are the most typical causes of depression? How is depression linked with suicide? What are signs that a classmate or friend might be depressed? What are the signs that must *never* be ignored?
5. Evan's mom tells him in the opening chapter, "Seize the day" (p. 14). Carpe diem. Watch the film *Dead Poets Society* and deepen your understanding of this concept. Why does the teacher hope his students will embrace this concept? How is it a helpful motto for living?
6. Evan says that he likes the music of Miles Davis and Django Reinhardt (p. 28). Do a little research and create a powerful slide for each that includes a picture of the artist and some information. Embed a link to share their music.

Or create one about the life of Vivian Maier (p. 47), Edward Snowden (p. 47), Friedrich Nietzsche (p. 63), Bruce Springsteen (p. 88), or Norman Rockwell (p. 132). How does knowing a bit more about these people help the reader understand the authors' meaning? What is the authors' purpose for doing so? How does it enhance your understanding of this novel?

Or create a slide or two about electronic dance music (EDM) (p. 28) and pictures within pictures—stereograms (p. 30). What are these? Are they interesting/to your liking? Why or why not? Why are EDM and stereograms mentioned? How do these contemporary cultural allusions provide more depth to the content of the novel?
7. In Chapter 3, Connor says, "to kill a mockingbird" (p. 34), referencing the book by Harper Lee. In Chapter 5, Herman Melville's "Bartleby, the Scrivener" (p. 52) and "Big Two-Hearted River" by Ernest Hemingway (p. 53) are referenced. In Chapter 7, Daisy Buchanan of *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald is mentioned (p. 87). In the third Commentary from Connor, he references *Macbeth* and the famous line "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing" (p. 138), and on the next page he mentions Lady Macbeth. Read any one (or more) of these literary works, or part of one, and then write a short paper explaining how these references fit with the theme of *Dear Evan Hansen*. What purpose do these literary allusions serve?
8. In Chapter 7, Evan's mom discovers that there is a plethora of scholarships for attending college. What scholarships can you find that would support your future goals? Of attending a particular college/university? Or support your dreams of being a ____ (name a potential career here)?
9. In Chapter 9, Evan says he streams a playlist called "Jazz for Newbies" (p. 120). Create a playlist of ten (10) songs that would fit this title.
10. In Chapter 12, Evan notices Connor has shelves crammed with books: *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, *The Catcher in the Rye*, *The Great Gatsby*, *The Mysteries of Pittsburgh*, *Macbeth*, *Into the Wild*, and *Slaughterhouse-Five* (pp. 155–156). Do a little research and find out what each is about. If one sounds promising, read it! Then do a book talk for your classmates.

11. Interestingly, the musical DEAR EVAN HANSEN was created and staged before the novel of DEAR EVAN HANSEN was written. If you are interested in that creative process, check out the book *Dear Evan Hansen: Through the Window* (2017), written by Steven Levenson, Benj Pasek and Justin Paul, Grand Central Publishing, New York, New York. Share your most interesting discoveries with the class in whatever medium suits your information best.
12. Similarly, listen to the original Broadway recording (Atlantic) of DEAR EVAN HANSEN through the link below. Compare the lyrics to the text. Are they Similar? Artistically different? How does the music influence your understanding of or appreciation for the novel?
www.bing.com/videos/search?q=dear+evan+hansen+soundtrack&docid=608049483416602304&mid=4D59F4279373861DAEC54D59F4279373861DAEC5&view=detail&FORM=VIREHT

Who Am I?
Who Am I Striving
to Be?

Project Description for the
Multi-Genre/Multimedia
Project

WHO AM I?

This is the central question of the novel. How would you answer that question? Create either a digital or paper collage of images that describes the overall “you.” Include at least ten. Accompanying this visual, write a page which lists all ten images and how each describes you.

WHO AM I STRIVING TO BE?

Evan’s mom thinks that writing essays to earn scholarships to go to college is a great idea. It’s helpful to know what you might like to study. Create a “Fast Facts” brochure that describes a career you are considering. Be sure to name it and then to include 1) the responsibilities of someone in this career, 2) where in the country/world they would most likely pursue this career, 3) level of education required, 4) top schools, colleges and/or universities for that specialty, 5) anticipated salary, and 6) personal qualities needed for this career. Add graphics and photos, if possible.

WHAT PLACE WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE WITH A FRIEND?

The orchard is a significant setting in this novel. Highlight a particular setting (place) that is significant to you—or a place you have yet to visit but is nevertheless significant to you—by writing a poem(s) celebrating it. Then create a

background of some kind for the poem, deepening your reader’s appreciation of why this is a special place for you/why it means so much, by overlaying the poem on the image.

WHAT ARE THE HIGHLIGHTS OF YOUR LIFE SO FAR?

This novel is Evan’s life...so far. Create a timeline of your life, linking at least 8 photos or representations of your early, preschool, primary, and middle years, including annotated (50–100 words) captions. Be sure the captions link together and move chronologically.

WHAT IS ONE OF YOUR SPECIAL TALENTS?

Zoe has a talent for writing and sharing songs. Create a one-minute video showcasing your special talent—your academic, musical, athletic or other talent. Be engaging! Even if you decide to speak spontaneously in your video, write a script ahead of time so that you 1) have a catchy beginning, 2) name exactly the talent you are highlighting, 3) explain how you continue to refine that talent, including how much time and attention it takes, 4) demonstrate the talent itself (completing the equation, playing the flute, shooting the basket) and 5) detail why you enjoy pursuing this talent.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW HOW TO DO THAT YOU COULD SHARE WITH SOMEONE ELSE?

Connor’s dad explains to Evan how to condition a baseball glove. What do you know how to do? How did you learn? Who taught you? Write the directions so that they can be shared with someone else. These directions might be related to the talent you share in your video; this project highlights a step-by-step approach to something (how to use a compass to draw an arc in geometry, how to fully cover the keys of a flute, how to position your feet and arms to shoot a three-pointer).

WHAT IS THE "THEME SONG" OF YOUR LIFE?

Zoe shares a "brand new song" called "Only Us" (pp. 282–283). Might it be Evan's theme song? Choose a song and imbed it in a visual representation of that song by creating a video file. In a separate document, write out the lyrics of the song, explain why you chose it, and finally, the decisions you made as to why you chose at least five of the visual elements you did.

WHO WOULD YOU LIKE TO MEET?

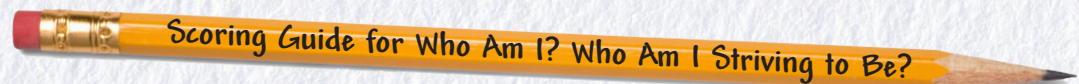
The life of photographer Vivian Maier fascinated Evan. Name someone you would like to meet—living or no longer living—and write an introduction for him/her as if he/she were going to speak to your class at school. Be sure to include their name in the introduction, including how you first learned of this person, what makes them special, and why everyone in the school should know about them.

WHAT BOOK (OR FILM) WOULD YOU RECOMMEND TO A CLASSMATE?

Books are clearly important to Connor. Choose a book (or film) that is important to you. Write a review; describe it without giving away the ending, explaining why you find it such a satisfying experience. Be as persuasive as possible.

YOUR CHOICE

Create one last document that reveals something about who you are or who you are striving to be. Are you a writer? Share a short story you have written. Are you a musician? Write a piece of music. Are you a sports aficionado? Share a "fool proof" game plan. Share your gift!



WHO AM I?

- ✓ Paper or digital collage with ten images
- ✓ List of images with an explanation as to how each describes you 1 point for image + explanation, up to 10 points
_____/ 10 points

WHO AM I STRIVING TO BE?

- ✓ Named career (1 point)
- ✓ Responsibilities of that career (2 points)
- ✓ Geographic opportunities to practice this career (1 point)
- ✓ Level of education required (1 point)
- ✓ Top schools/colleges/universities to pursue this specialty (1 point)
- ✓ Anticipated salary (1 point)
- ✓ Personal qualities needed (2 points)
- ✓ Brochure format, with graphics/photos as possible (1 point)
_____/ 10 points

WHAT PLACE WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE WITH A FRIEND?

- ✓ Poem of at least 12 lines, or a group of poems totaling at least 12 lines (7 points)
- ✓ Background for poem(s) (2 points)
- ✓ Poem(s) superimposed on background (1 point)
_____/ 10 points

WHAT ARE THE HIGHLIGHTS OF YOUR LIFE SO FAR?

- ✓ Timeline of life with 8 photos/representations, plus captions of 50 to 100 words for each (1 point each)
- ✓ Timeline moves from early through middle years, chronologically (1 point)
- ✓ Visually clear it's a timeline—not collage (1 point)
_____/ 10 points

Multi-Genre/Multimedia Project

WHAT IS ONE OF YOUR SPECIAL TALENTS?

- ✓ Video is 1 minute (2 points)
- ✓ Starts with a catchy beginning (1 point)
- ✓ Explicitly names talent (1 point)
- ✓ Details how the talent is continually refined (1 point)
- ✓ Demonstrates talent (2 points)
- ✓ Explains why this is an enjoyable pursuit (1 point)
- ✓ Accompanied by script (2 points)
_____/ 10 points

WHAT DO YOU KNOW HOW TO DO THAT YOU COULD SHARE WITH SOMEONE ELSE?

- ✓ Name the skill (1 point)
- ✓ Step-by-step directions how to accomplish it (7 points)
- ✓ Within the directions, share how you learned how to do it, and who taught you (2 points)
_____/ 10 points

WHAT IS THE "THEME SONG" OF YOUR LIFE?

- ✓ Choose and name the song, including who wrote it and performed it (1 point)
- ✓ Create your own video of the song, merging the song and at least 5 different visual elements (6 points)
- ✓ Submit the link for the video along with the lyrics of the song, why you chose that song, and why you chose each visual element (3 points)
_____/ 10 points

WHO WOULD YOU LIKE TO MEET?

- ✓ In an engaging opening (1 point), include person's name (1 point)
- ✓ How you learned of them (1 point)
- ✓ What makes them special (3 points)
- ✓ Why everyone should know his/her accomplishments (2 points)
- ✓ Script should take 1 to 2 minutes to deliver (2 points)
_____/ 10 points

WHAT BOOK (OR FILM) WOULD YOU RECOMMEND TO A CLASSMATE?

- ✓ The book (or film) is named, including author (or director) (2 points)
- ✓ Provide at least three compelling reasons—with at least one example for each reason (6 points)
- ✓ Begin and end with clear and powerful statements as to why your choice is a compelling "read" or film experience (2 points)
_____/ 10 points

YOUR CHOICE

- ✓ Create it! (7 points)
- ✓ In an accompanying paragraph, explain why you created what you did and evaluate your own work. Did your "Your Choice" project fulfill your own expectations? How do you know? (3 points)
_____/ 10 points

TOTAL ____/100 points

ABOUT THE BOOK

From the show's creators comes the groundbreaking novel inspired by the hit Broadway show *Dear Evan Hansen*.

Dear Evan Hansen,

Today's going to be an amazing day and here's why . . .

When a letter that was never meant to be seen by anyone draws high school senior Evan Hansen into a family's grief over the loss of their son, he is given the chance of a lifetime: to belong. He just has to stick to a lie he never meant to tell, that the notoriously troubled Connor Murphy was his secret best friend.

Suddenly, Evan isn't invisible anymore—even to the girl of his dreams. And Connor Murphy's parents, with their beautiful home on the other side of town, have taken him in like he was their own, desperate to know more about their enigmatic son from his closest friend. As Evan gets pulled deeper into their swirl of anger, regret, and confusion, he knows that what he's doing can't be right, but if he's helping people, how wrong can it be?

No longer tangled in his once-incapacitating anxiety, this new Evan has a purpose. And a website. He's confident. He's a viral phenomenon. Every day is amazing. Until everything is in danger of unraveling and he comes face-to-face with his greatest obstacle: himself.

A simple lie leads to complicated truths in this big-hearted coming-of-age story of grief, authenticity, and the struggle to belong in an age of instant connectivity and profound isolation.

PRAISE FOR THE BOOK

★ "This story deserves to be read and discussed school wide." —*School Library Connection*

"Teens will clamor to read it." —*Kirkus*

"Unexpected and endearing." —Cindy Beth Minnich, the *Nerdy Book Club*

"Required reading for anyone who's ever needed to be found."
—Becky Albertalli, author of *Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda*

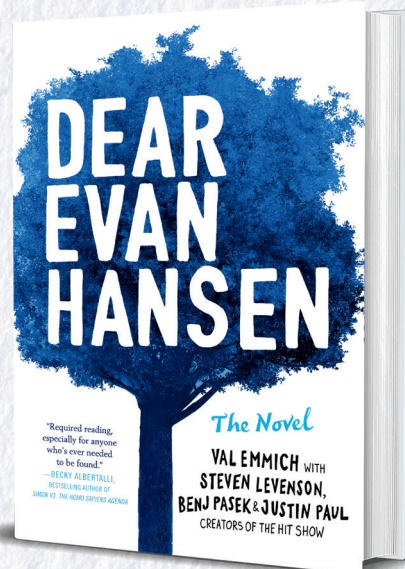


ABOUT THE CREATORS

VAL EMMICH is a writer, singer-songwriter, and actor. He has had recurring roles on *Vinyl* and *Ugly Betty* as well as a memorable guest role as Liz Lemon's coffee-boy fling, Jamie, on *30 Rock*. His debut novel, *The Reminders*, was a B&N Discover selection that *Library Journal* called "quirky, touching and addictive."

STEVEN LEVENSON is the Tony Award-winning playwright of *Dear Evan Hansen*. His other plays include *If I Forget*, *The Unavoidable Disappearance of Tom Durnin*, *Core Values*, *The Language of Trees*, and *Seven Minutes in Heaven*. He was also a writer and producer on Showtime's *Masters of Sex*.

BENJ PASEK and JUSTIN PAUL are the Oscar, Grammy, Tony, and Golden Globe-winning songwriting team behind the Broadway musicals *Dear Evan Hansen* and *A Christmas Story, The Musical*. Their film projects include *The Greatest Showman*, *La La Land*, and *Trolls*, as well as the upcoming live-action movie musicals *Snow White* and *Aladdin*.



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Also available in ebook and audio formats