

Just Another Hero

Study Guide

The following questions could be used for small group discussions, whole class discussions, or short answer written questions.	Common Core Standard(s)
1. The novel opens with a scene of violence--cruel mistreatment of a weaker student by a group of bullies. How does this plot technique help capture the reader's attention? Support your answer with specific details from the text.	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.5
2. Based on the text, what predictions can the reader make about Arielle and Osrick? Compare those predictions to what really happens at the end of the novel.	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3
3. Why doesn't Arielle report the abuse of Osrick? Use specific details about his character that you pull from the text to support your answer. What would you have done in the same situation?	RL.6-12.3 RL.6-12.4
4. Arielle seems to be a social outsider just like Osrick, although she used to hang with all the popular kids in school. What had caused this? How did she feel about it? What do you think could be done about the situation? Support your answer with specific details from the text.	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3
5. Describe Arielle's home life using details from the text. Compare the outward luxury of her home with the inner tensions. How does she feel about her stepfather? How does she feel about her mother's relationship with Chad?	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3 W.6-12.1
6. Chad exerts extreme control over Arielle and her mother. Do you consider him to be abusive? Use details from the text to support your answer. Where do you draw the line between control and abuse? Would you be willing to live in such a household if you were given a large allowance and a lovely home?	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.4 W.6-12.2
7. How did Kofi get addicted to prescription pain pills? How realistic is his addiction? How does his home life contribute to his stress? Describe his relationship with his parents using evidence from the text.	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3 W.6-12.1
8. Describe Mrs. Witherspoon. What makes her a great teacher? Support your answer with specifics from the novel.	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3
9. Why does the return of Eddie upset Dana? How does Kofi respond and why? What predictions can you make about Eddie, Kofi, and Dana? Support your answer.	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3 W.6-12.1
10. Someone who keeps pulling the fire alarm and a thief plague the school. What indications are given that the same person is responsible for both? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3 RL.6-12.4
11. Why is Arielle so upset about the theft of her iPhone? How does the loss of the phone help her re-gain some friendships? Support your answer with specific details from the text.	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3
12. How is Eddie able to convince the younger boys that juvenile detention was pleasant? Why do you think they believed him? What is Kofi's response?	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3
13. Because of the damage to her car, Arielle's mother is devastated. What does this tell you about her relationship with her husband? Chad places Arielle's mom on punishment. Discuss your feelings about one adult placing another adult on punishment.	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3 W.6-12.1

14. Describe the relationship between Dana and Kofi using specific details from the text. How does she react to his drug use, his college plans, and his family situation? What might have been Kofi's future without Dana in his life?	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3
15. How successful is November's re-integration into high school life? What difficulties and challenges does she face? Support your answer with specific details from the text.	RL.6-12.3 W.6-12.1
16. Use specific details from the text to describe what Chad did to the house Arielle lived in. How did it make you feel? How does she react? How would you react to such a thing?	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.5
17. As she adjusts to living in a homeless shelter, how has Arielle changed, both personally and socially, from the beginning of the book to this point? Support your answer with evidence from the text.	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3
18. How is Osrick able to figure out who the thief is? How do he and Arielle work together? Why doesn't he trust her to tell her everything he knows?	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3
19. Describe the scene with the blue light using details from the text. Who do you suspect to be the thief at the beginning of the scene? How surprising is it when the real thief is revealed? What connection do you predict between the thief and the person who is pulling the fire alarm?	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3 RL.6-12.4
20. Describe the events upstairs in the classroom during the shooting and compare the events downstairs as people watch and worry and speculate. Why are both points of view necessary?	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.5 W.6-12.1
21. Describe the heroic events in the final confrontation with Jack. Do you consider Eddie to be a hero? Explain why or why not by supporting your answer with specific evidence from the text. Can a negative character be considered a hero? Explain.	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.5 W.6-12.1
The following questions are designed to be individual writing projects or small group writing projects depending upon the needs of your classroom.	Common Core Standard(s)
Narrative <i>Just Another Hero</i> is full of very vivid descriptions of key moments in Arielle's life. Write your own personal essay that describes a special memory or event, or a particular loss in your life. Explain why it is meaningful to you. Be sure to include sensory imagery--sights, smells, touches, tastes, and sounds.	RL.6-12.5 W.6-12.3 W.6-12.4
Newspaper Article 1. Trace the story of one of the following characters: Osrick, Olivia, Chad, Kofi, or Jack. Imagine you are a reporter doing a story on one of their lives. Write everything you know, as well as whatever you can infer about the character in order to write your article. 2. You are a reporter at one of the following scenes. Write the story for your newspaper. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The gunshots at Douglas High School o The arrest of a teacher at Douglas High School o The police and fire response as a result of school violence o The gathering of newspaper reporters and what they say during an emergency 	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.2 W.6-12.3 W.6-12.4

<p>Letters</p> <p>Write a letter to one of the characters in the book explaining your feelings about the events in the story. What advice would you give Arielle, Osrick or Kofi, or Jack?</p>	<p>RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3 W.6-12.3 W.6-12.4</p>
<p>Point of View Paper</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write a narrative paper from the point of view of Eddie. Tell what kind of life he must have lived to become the person that he is. Describe possible difficulties he might have had to overcome, or hidden strengths he might have. 2. Read the passage in the novel where Arielle overhears her mom and Chad talking about her. Explain how the point of view of the character that makes the observation, in this case Arielle, influences the description. Discuss Arielle's point of view, her mother's point of view, and Chad's as well. 	<p>RL.6-12.6 W.6-12.1 W.6-12.4 W.6-12.9</p>
<p>Descriptive Paper</p> <p>Draper uses a lot of specific sensory images in her novel. For example, "The classroom windows--dull, yellowed, and streaked. The stacks of chemistry books on the floor--covers curled at the edges. The computers--humming and glowing with fuzzy printed text. A wastebasket--overflowing with paper and chip wrappers and dirty Kleenex. The sharp smell of orange peels and spilled chocolate milk--more trash. Desks--scuffed, scratched, and bent, never quite balanced on all four legs. The late winter sun--dull gold, trapped outside the locked windows. The painted concrete floor--criss-crossed with the shadows of dusty footprints. The periodic chart of the elements--creased, ripped, and memorized." Write your own descriptive paragraph that uses sensory imagery. Describe a specific scene and bring it to life with your words. Use vivid verbs and powerful adjectives and adverbs as you write. Use as many of the senses as you can (sight, sound, smell, touch, taste).</p>	<p>RL.6-12.5 W.6-12.3 W.6-12.4</p>
<p>Research Topics</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Investigate the problems of prescription drug abuse, especially among high school students. Find out statistics as well as possible solutions for help. Find at least 3-4 current, relevant, authoritative, accurate, and credible sources that talk about the issue. Be sure to cite your sources used. 2. Research current laws and punishments for pulling a fire alarm at school or bringing a gun to school. Find at least 3-4 current, relevant, authoritative, accurate, and credible sources that talk about the issue. Be sure to cite your sources used. 3. Research current treatment options for young people like Jack. What punishment might Jack receive considering his physical and mental state? Find at least 3-4 current, relevant, authoritative, accurate, and credible sources that talk about the issue. Be sure to cite your sources used. 4. Write a paper that discusses the effects of guns and violence in a high school setting. You might discuss causes, effects, and possible solutions. Show the results of the effects on students, but personally, socially, and academically. Find at least 3-4 current, relevant, authoritative, accurate, and credible sources that talk about the issue. Be sure to cite your sources used. 	<p>W.6-12.1 W.6-12.2 W.6-12.4 W.6-12.7 W.6-12.8 W.6-12.9 RI.6-12.1 RI.6-12.2 RI.6-12.4 RI.6-12.8</p>

<p>Persuasive Paper</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write a persuasive paper that answers the following question: What makes a hero? Be sure to use specifics to support your answer. 2. Think about the relationships between the friends in the book. Write a persuasive paper that answers the following question: Is friendship enough when situations become monumental and overwhelming to young people? Be sure to use specifics to support your answer. 	<p>W.6-12.1 W.6-12.4</p>
<p>Comparison</p> <p>Compare and/or contrast the characters of Mrs. Witherspoon and Miss Pringle. Discuss their effectiveness at teaching their subjects, as well as how they relate to students. Use specific examples from the book to support your statements.</p>	<p>RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3 W.6-12.1</p>
<p>Expository Essay</p> <p>The bullies make a video of their mistreatment of Osrick on a cell phone, which is later posted on a social networking site. Discuss the implications of these kinds of events, and the short-term, as well as long-range results. How does it affect the victim socially, emotionally, and personally? What effect, if any, do such things have on a school community?</p>	<p>RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3 W.6-12.3 W.6-12.4</p>
<p>Character Sketch</p> <p>"As she turned back around she saw Jack Krasinski on the other side of the room and instantly grinned. Kids called him Crazy Jack, and he loved it, even encouraged it. Tall and skinny and generally liked by everybody, Jack always wore bright, showy colors--like green neon shirts and red plaid pants. When Osrick dressed in wacky clothes, students laughed and made fun of him, but if Jack decided to wear pajamas to school, Arielle noticed, everybody thought it was really cool. She wondered why Jack could get away with it, but Osrick couldn't. Jack played in the school band--cymbals and drums--instruments that made maximum noise. The louder the better. Jack had once told her the racket made the voices in his head get quiet. She had no idea what he'd been talking about." Use Draper's sketch as an example to write a character sketch of a strong powerful or unusual person--a friend, a relative, a family member. Use strong verbs and adjectives, as well as sensory imagery.</p>	<p>RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3 W.6-12.1 W.6-12.4</p>
<p>Conversation/Dialogue</p> <p>Imagine it is six weeks after the end of the novel. Write a conversation between one of the following pairs of characters using a style that mimics Draper's style:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Jericho to Olivia o Arielle to Brandon o Kofi to his parents o Arielle to Chad o Osrick to Arielle 	<p>RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3 W.6-12.3 W.6-12.4</p>
<p>Poetry</p> <p>Write a poem about one of the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The Hidden Hero o Guns and Violence o The Need for Friends o Fear and Destruction o Courage 	<p>RL.6-12.4 W.6-12.3</p>

<p>Literary Analysis</p> <p>"The monster knew at once that nowhere on earth Had he met a man whose hands were stronger. The monster's mind was filled with fear . . . Horrible shrieks of pain and defeat, Tears torn out of Grendel's monstrous throat, Caught in the arms of the one man Who of all men on earth was the strongest."</p> <p>The passage above comes from the ancient story called <i>Beowulf</i>. The teacher in <i>Just Another Hero</i> uses this passage as she discusses the subject of heroism in class. Write what you think the author was saying in this passage about good and evil and how the lines in this quote apply to the themes of the novel. Think about what is emphasized in each text. Think about what is different about each text. Be sure to provide evidence to support your argument from both texts.</p>	<p>RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.2 RL.6-12.4 RL.6-12.5 RL.6-12.7 W.6-12.1 W.6-12.4 W.6-12.9</p>
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