

Panic

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. Panic begins with a confrontation between Justin, a dancer, and some local bullies. How does beginning the plot with this event help capture the reader's attention? How does Justin handle the bullies? Is it successful? Support your answer with specific details from the text.	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3 W.6-12.1
2. Based on early text details, what predictions can the reader make about Justin and his role as a dancer and a teenager? Compare those predictions to what really happens at the end of the novel.	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3 RL.6-12.4
3. Describe the dance academy and the role it seems to play in the lives of the students who take lessons there. How is the relationship between a dance teacher and her students different from an academic classroom teacher and his or her students?	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.2 W.6-12.1
4. Describe Diamond's home life. As you first meet Diamond, how is she like many young people today? How is she different? What seem to be her biggest insecurities? Her greatest strengths? What character traits does she have that will help her through the difficulties to come?	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3
5. Describe the initial meeting between Diamond and Thane. How believable is it that he is able to convince her to leave with him? Do you think he planned that confrontation? Support your answer with details from the text. What would you have done in the same situation?	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3 W.6-12.1
6. Discuss the reactions of the students to Diamond's disappearance. Which characters stand out and why? Explain using details from the text.	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3
7. How does Diamond gradually discover the enormity and evil of her situation? What is both ironic and horrible about Thane's explanation of what is to happen?	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3
8. Describe Donovan--physically, emotionally, and socially. Why do you think a girl like Layla lets him mistreat her? What factors in her life might play a part? How is Donny's behavior another form of bullying?	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3 W.6-12.1
9. If available, listen to the music Justin dances to in chapter 11. Visualize his performance as you listen. How do the words match both the movement and the music?	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.7 RL.6-12.9 W.6-12.1
10. Compare and contrast the Sunday morning of April 14 of Mercedes and of Diamond.	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.5
11. How do extraordinary events affect the lives of ordinary people? Describe how Diamond's disappearance affected her parents and her sister and her friends.	RL.6-12.1 W.6-12.1
12. Compare and contrast the relationship of Mercedes and Steve, and the relation of Layla and Donovan. Give specific examples of noticeable differences in the text.	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3 RL.6-12.5

13. The source of pleasure for most of the characters in the book is dance. Describe how music and dance in the novel help to aid various characters throughout. Why are music and performance easy ways to explain complicated feelings? How can self-expression be used as a tool for helping or healing? Support your answer with specific details from the text.	RL.6-12.1 W.6-12.1
14. Layla thinks she is in control of the situation when she lets Donny take the pictures. Describe how innocent lapses in judgment led to her problems the next day.	W.6-12.1
15. Discuss the power of social media, the Internet and instant sharing of information. How can that be both positive and negative?	W.6-12.1
16. Compare and contrast the reaction of students at school to Layla's pictures, and Justin's reaction to the pictures and to Layla. Support your answer with specific details from the text.	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.4
17. How does Diamond find the strength to survive her ordeal? What does she do to cling to hope? How successful do you think her re-integration into both school and dance classes will be?	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3
18. Compare and contrast Diamond's abuse and Layla's abuse. How are their situations similar? How are they different?	RL.6-12.5 W.6-12.1
19. Explain the title of the novel. Why does the title have more than one possible interpretation? Use specific examples to support your answer.	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.4
20. Partner abuse in high school, bullying, and the criminality of Internet sexual abuse are topics that need to be discussed. How realistic are the lives of Diamond and the others in light of these issues? Support your answer with specific details from the text.	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3 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 "As they headed for the stairs, Mercedes counted three policemen in the living room and two more in the den. Phones rang. Strange wires had been stretched across the floor. A bulky piece of electronic equipment sat on the dining room table next to a set of telephones. 'That stuff is for in case the kidnappers call for ransom-so they can trace the call,' Shasta whispered. 'How do you know all this?' 'I listen at the top of the stairs.' Write a narrative paper from the point of view of someone who listened at the top of the stairs, or someone who overheard a conversation. Tell what the person might have learned, the reactions to the information, and the results of that knowledge. Make sure you use specific details to make your paper effective.	RL.6-12.6 W.6-12.3 W.6-12.4
Newspaper Article A. Trace the story of one of the following characters: Thane, Donovan, Miss Ginger, or Zizi. 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 magazine article. B. You are a reporter at one of the following scenes. Write the story for your newspaper. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dance recital 	RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.2 W.6-12.3 W.6-12.4

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The video made by Diamond's parents, pleading for her release • The scene where rescue crews arrive for Diamond • Classes and activities at the dance academy 	
<p>Letters</p> <p>A. 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 Diamond, Layla, Justin, or Mercedes?</p> <p>B. Imagine it is three months after the end of the novel. Write a letter or create a conversation between the following characters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Layla to Justin ○ Diamond to Shasta ○ Mercedes to Miss Ginger ○ Zizi to Jillian ○ Thane to his lawyer 	<p>RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3 W.6-12.3 W.6-12.4</p>
<p>Point of View</p> <p>A. Pretend you are Diamond and write several diary entries for the months after Diamond's return. Include details about how she copes with her bad memories, her lost dreams, and her hope for the future.</p> <p>B. "Another song began. 'Just the Way You Are' by Boyce Avenue. It was slower, more sensuous. Breathing hard, Justin extended his hand to Layla. She smiled and reached out her hand to him. They moved together, almost as if they were one person. They twisted and stepped together. He twirled her around, then gently lifted her while the music surged around them. The words to the song were so perfect for Layla-for the two of them, Mercedes thought. 'It's so sad to think she don't see what I see/When I see your face, there's not a thing that I would change/'Cause you're amazing, just the way you are . . .' Layla landed delicately and spun within the circle of Justin's arms. For a moment, there was only Justin, Layla, and the music that swirled around them."</p> <p>Read the passage above and think about how the point of view of the character who makes the observation influences the description. How would Donovan have written this passage? Rewrite the scene from Donovan's point of view.</p>	<p>RL.6-12.6 W.6-12.1 W.6-12.4 W.6-12.9</p>
<p>Descriptive Paper</p> <p>"But as the flickering lights sputtered out in tiny puffs of smoke, Justin felt a cold chill. It was too much like a hundred small deaths happening all at once..."</p> <p>Write a descriptive paper that uses sensory imagery. 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> <p>A. Investigate the issues surrounding child abductions in the United States. Find at least 3-4 current, relevant, authoritative, accurate, and credible sources that talk about the issues surrounding child abductions. How frequent are abductions? What can be done to safeguard children and teens from</p>	<p>W.6-12.1 W.6-12.2 W.6-12.4 W.6-12.7 W.6-12.8</p>

<p>abductions? Be sure to cite your sources used.</p> <p>B. Investigate the issues surrounding bullying in schools including the current laws and punishments. Find at least 3-4 current, relevant, authoritative, accurate, and credible sources that talk about the issues surrounding bullying. How have students been getting involved to stop the problem of bullying? Find out statistics as well as solutions. Be sure to cite your sources used.</p>	<p>W.6-12.9 RI.6-12.1 RI.6-12.2 RI.6-12.4 RI.6-12.8</p>
<p>Comparison Paper</p> <p>A. "I thought you loved me." He increased the pressure. Layla's mind reeled-he was going to kill her if he didn't stop. She could barely speak. "Please. You. Are. Hurting. Me. Stop! Stop!" He squeezed even harder. "Then you got some decisions to make." She felt dizzy. Her words gurgled. "You. Know. I. Love. You. Please. Let. Go." She could tell she was about to black out. He released his hand. Layla slumped in relief against the door, inhaling and exhaling sharply. She rolled down the window, gulping the damp air.</p> <p>B. Please, please untie me!" Her head pounded, and her brain felt so fuzzy. She couldn't think. Why was the room spinning? Thane laughed again. "You still don't get it, do you? You wanted to be in a movie, and you're just in time for your audition." Diamond tried to think straight. Nothing made sense. She felt drugged. "Wha? What? I-I don't understand." "No!" she screamed. "Let me go! Please, please, let me go!"</p> <p>Write a paper comparing the situations of Layla and Diamond. OR Write about two people you know who faced horrible situations and compare how they dealt with it. Make sure you use specific details to make your paper effective.</p>	<p>W.6-12.1 W.6-12.4</p>
<p>Persuasive Paper</p> <p>A. Is friendship enough when situations become monumental and overwhelming to young people? Write an essay arguing your opinion and persuading your reader to agree with you.</p> <p>B. Layla's father is in prison and it has a big impact on her life. Write a persuasive paper that argues whether children who have parents who are incarcerated are negatively influenced because of it, positively influenced or both. Give specific examples to support your opinions.</p>	<p>RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3 W.6-12.1 W.6-12.4</p>
<p>Expository Essay</p> <p>"Exhausted, she sat down and paid close attention to where she was. The room was small, the walls steeply slanted. It made her feel a little dizzy to look at them. A converted attic, she figured. The only window, a small octagon, was tucked at least twenty feet above her head, in the triangle where the two walls met. A chance to escape? Probably not. How would she ever get up there? Thin light, made gray by the rainy weather, filtered through it. She paced the room, checking for anything she could use to help her. She tried to remove a picture from the wall, but found it was nailed there. There were no lamps. No decorations. No television. There was nothing</p>	<p>RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.3 W.6-12.3 W.6-12.4</p>

<p>she could use as a weapon. Not one thing. She put her ear to the door, but she all she could hear was thick silence. It was as if she were in a tomb..."</p> <p>Write an expository (explanatory) paper that describes a room in your house, or in your school, or an area in your neighborhood. Use as many specific details as possible.</p>	
<p>Character Sketch</p> <p>"...her pointe shoes barely making a sound as she spun effortlessly with the music. The final strains of the music, as bold and strong as Jillian's leaps, echoed in the background. The cheers and applause from the audience resounded. Jillian took her bows gracefully, then trotted off the stage in that awkward walk of girls who would prefer to be on pointe, in the air, above the rest of the world, rather than walking flat-footed on solid ground in heavy-toed pointe shoes. Her makeup smeared with sweat, Jillian pushed Zizi and Layla out of her way, headed to the nearest garbage can, and threw up. Jillian always vomited after her performances. As Zizi said, she danced like the devil, then she puked."</p> <p>Write a character sketch of a strong powerful person--a friend, a relative, a family member. Use strong verbs and adjectives, as well as sensory imagery to paint a vivid portrait.</p>	<p>W.6-12.3 W.6-12.4</p>
<p>Personal Essay</p> <p>"She found energy in thinking about the studio, which always felt comfortable, like a favorite sweatshirt. The smell of popcorn from the microwave in the café, the swirling strains of thousands of songs, the glaring reality of the mirrors that covered each wall. Miss Ginger's voice, demanding and gentle at the same time. The sound of fifteen pairs of tap shoes on the wooden floor. Sweat-honest, exhilarating sweat after a great class. Diamond opened the door to the Crystal Pointe Dance Academy, walked into the main dance room, and inhaled deeply. It smelled of cocoa and costumes, of perspiration and popcorn, of happiness and hope. Happy smells a lot like leftover sweat, she thought with a smile."</p> <p>Write a personal essay that describes a special memory or objector place in your life. Explain why it is meaningful to you. Be sure to include sensory imagery--sights, smells, touches, tastes, and sounds.</p>	<p>W.6-12.3 W.6-12.4</p>
<p>Poetry</p> <p>Write a poem about one of the following topics, or another topic of your choice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stupid Decisions ○ Lost and Alone ○ Forever Friends ○ The Joy of Dance ○ Escape ○ Thunderstorms ○ Controlled by Love 	<p>W.6-12.3 W.6-12.4</p>
<p>Literary Analysis</p> <p>A. <i>Panic</i> borrows very loosely from the children's story <i>Peter Pan</i>. Explain how</p>	<p>RL.6-12.1 RL.6-12.2</p>

<p>the quotes from <i>Peter Pan</i> fit into the flow of each chapter and add to the story. How does reading the quotes from <i>Peter Pan</i> in the context of <i>Panic</i> change the meaning of the texts?</p>	RL.6-12.4 RL.6-12.5 RL.6-12.7
<p>B. Listen to the songs used in the novel and analyze how each one fits into the themes of the story and the lives of the characters. How does the song choice impact the analysis and interpretation of the text?</p>	W.6-12.1 W.6-12.4 W.6-12.9