

Before-reading questions

- 1 **Example answer:** a horror story, a crime story
- 2 *Reader's own answer.*
- 3 *Reader's own answers.*
- 4 *Reader's own answer.*
- 5 **Example answer:** As well as normal chapter numbers, there are also days and dates at the start of each chapter. Inside each chapter, there are times and the name of the person who is speaking.

During-reading questions

CHAPTERS ONE AND TWO

- 1 About That is a gossip app for the students at Bayview High School run by Simon Kelleher.
- 2 Simon tells us that they are like stereotypes from a teen movie: Bronwyn is a “brain,” Nate is a “criminal,” Cooper is a “jock,” and Addy is a “homecoming princess.”
Example answer: In some ways, they are stereotypes. Bronwyn and her family want her to succeed at school and go to Yale University, like other family members. Nate is on probation for dealing drugs. Cooper is a school sports star and wants to be a professional baseball player. Addy is very concerned about her appearance, particularly her hair. But all of them behave like real people as well [*readers should give examples*] to show they are not just the stereotypes that Simon thinks they are.
- 3 **Example answer:** Nate is very good-looking, but he is the bad boy of the school, and Bronwyn and her friends don't normally notice him.
- 4 Jake is Addy's boyfriend; Keely is Cooper's girlfriend; Janae is a strange Goth girl who was Simon's only friend.

- 5 The text has a link to a post on a Tumblr page from Simon's murderer, saying he or she was clever enough to murder Simon and for no one to know who he or she is.

CHAPTERS THREE AND FOUR

- 1 Maeve is Bronwyn's younger sister, who is 16 years old. Maeve had cancer from when she was seven and wasn't really better until she was 14. The sisters get on well, and Bronwyn says she joins clubs, gets awards, and does well in school because Maeve doesn't like those kinds of things. Bronwyn says that Maeve is becoming very good with computers.
- 2 Jake seems to control Addy. We can see this because, when he doesn't approve of what she's wearing because it isn't cute enough, she doesn't argue and gets changed.
- 3 The police find posts for About That that Simon hadn't published. These posts give reasons why each of the four students might want to kill Simon: Bronwyn cheated in chemistry; Nate is on probation for selling drugs, but he is still selling them in school; Cooper has been taking drugs so that he can play baseball better; Addy cheated on Jake with somebody whose initials are TF.
- 4 Addy goes to Jake's house to tell him that she slept with TJ before he finds out about it from another student.

CHAPTERS FIVE AND SIX

- 1 Robin Stafford is the lawyer who Bronwyn's parents have found for her. She makes sure that Bronwyn understands how serious things are and advises her not to talk to the other three suspects.
- 2 **Example answer:** Since Cooper is clearly keeping Kris a secret from his friends, maybe Cooper is gay, and Kris could be a boyfriend. Or maybe Kris is the man who supplies Cooper with drugs to improve his baseball.

- 3 The About That posts that give reasons why the four suspects could each have wanted to kill Simon have been published on Tumblr. There's also a note that says that all of them are lying. Principal Gupta wants to talk to them about the accusations.
- 4 Nonny helped Cooper's parents to buy the house, so that they could move and, so that Cooper could go to a school where they play baseball all year round. She understands Cooper better than his friends and his parents, and she knows that he cares about someone who isn't his girlfriend. She gives him good advice.

CHAPTERS SEVEN AND EIGHT

- 1 Addy lied because Ashton was there at the police interview, and Ashton never liked her relationship with Jake because he controlled Addy. So, Addy hadn't wanted to say it was Jake who asked her to get the painkillers from the nurse's office.
- 2 Maeve uses a computer in the library to see the unpublished posts that the police are looking at. She finds out that the post about Cooper has a later date than the posts about the rest of them. And she finds a file with Cooper's name on it that she can't open.
- 3 Bronwyn leaves school the back way on Nate's bike, so that she won't be seen by reporters who are outside the front of the school.
- 4 Addy has her hair cut short at a cheap hairdresser's. It's surprising because she's proud of her beautiful long hair.
Example answer: Addy is changing the way she looks so that she doesn't look the way Jake wanted her to look. She is becoming free from Jake.
- 5 Mikhail Powers is a journalist who has a television program called *Mikhail Powers Investigates*. It's a popular program, but he's a serious reporter, and he asks serious questions about Simon's murder and the police investigation.

CHAPTERS NINE AND TEN

- 1 Because someone planned it. He says maybe someone came into the room and put peanut oil in Simon's cup while they were looking out the window at the crashed cars.
- 2 Because Nate has told everyone that his mother died in a car crash.
Example answer: Nate will be upset and surprised. He won't be very pleased to see her because she didn't look after him when he was a child. We can guess that he said she was dead so that people stopped asking about her. Bronwyn might be angry with Nate because he lied to her, and this shows he doesn't trust her.
- 3 The police interview Bronwyn again because they find another post. The post is very nasty about Maeve, who behaved stupidly at a party. Bronwyn had been really angry because Maeve was so upset that she refused to go out again after the post. The police believe they have proof of why Bronwyn might be the murderer when they show her and her mother what she wrote: "Go away and die, Simon."
- 4 Because she doesn't want to talk to Jake about real things that are happening in the police investigation.
- 5 Because he visited his boyfriend, Kris. Cooper is scared of what his father will say if he finds out that Cooper is gay.

CHAPTERS ELEVEN AND TWELVE

- 1 Because the police have managed to open another computer file. There is a post that outs Cooper as gay and gives the name of his boyfriend, Kris. The police believe that this gives Cooper a reason to want to kill Simon.

- 2 Nate supports Cooper by making people laugh at Vanessa, who is being nasty to Cooper because he's gay. Nate and Bronwyn kiss each other to take attention away from Cooper.
- 3 On *Mikhail Powers Investigates*, people say what good grades Simon got, and how nice his family is. But Leah Jackson and Aiden Wu talk about how horrible he was to them, and the terrible effects that it had on them. Mikhail Powers also shows a screen from a forum where Simon is celebrating school shootings. Maeve had sent this to the program.
- 4 Cooper is grateful to Nate for protecting him in the canteen, and he remembers that Nate tried to save Simon. So he realizes that Nate is a good person, although he is a criminal. Nate has become important to Cooper, and Cooper wants to help him. Cooper is going to find out about the red Chevrolet that crashed in the car park on the day Simon died.

CHAPTERS THIRTEEN AND FOURTEEN

- 1 Bronwyn learns that, after somebody called the police and said there were drugs in Nate's locker, they found Simon's water bottle and his EpiPen in it, but no drugs. They also found the EpiPens from the nurse's office. They also found a computer in Nate's bedroom with all the Tumblr posts that came since Simon died.
- 2 Addy realizes that the information includes the story about the detective eating cookies in an interview, which she made up and told Jake. The only person who knew this false story was Jake. Jake may be the killer.
- 3 Sam Barron is a student at another school, Eastland High. Bronwyn finds out that Simon paid Sam and one of his friends to have a crash in the car park at Bayview High on the day Simon died.
- 4 Kris listens to all the evidence and reads the sticky notes that Bronwyn writes. Then, he suggests that Simon killed himself. He has worked out that if the killer was in the lab, and it wasn't any of them or Mr. Avery, then Simon was the killer. And Simon was depressed. He also suggests that Janae may know something about what has happened since Simon died.

CHAPTERS FIFTEEN AND SIXTEEN

- 1 Because Addy is the only person who has ever been kind to her since Simon died. And Addy was the only person who asked Janae if she missed Simon.
- 2 Addy forgets to turn her phone to silent. Cooper sends her a text, and Jake recognizes the sound of Addy's phone. Addy runs away, and Jake chases after her.
- 3 Janae runs after Jake to try and save Addy. Jake, who has been kneeling on Addy's neck, stands up and hits Janae, so she falls and fractures her arm. Then Jake puts his hands round Addy's neck to continue trying to kill her. But Cooper hits Jake so hard that he flies backward and can't get up again. The police arrive.
- 4 **Example answer:** Nate is upset and angry because he could do nothing to save himself and other people had to help him. He is not used to accepting help from anybody, and he feels stupid. But he knows that the way he has behaved made it easy for him to be a scapegoat. So mostly, he is angry with himself. He makes himself believe that he is not a good-enough person to be with Bronwyn, so he punishes himself by breaking up with her.
- 5 The end of the story takes place at a concert, where Bronwyn is playing the piano with the San Diego Symphony Orchestra. Bronwyn plays the same piece of music as she played the first time Nate came to her house,

so we feel sad about the breakup of Bronwyn and Nate, and are then happy when Nate appears and they get back together again.

After-reading questions

1 *Reader's own answers.*

2 *Reader's own answers.*

3 **Example answer:**

a TJ is a student in the same group of friends as Cooper, Jake, and Addy. Addy slept with him once while she was going out with Jake and has to confess to doing this because the police find out that Simon was going to tell everyone about it on About That. TJ seems to be a nice guy who really likes Addy. Jake is so angry that TJ and Addy slept together that he joins Simon in trying to ruin Addy's life.

b Ashton is Addy's older sister whose marriage breaks down. She supports Addy in the right way, unlike their mother, and at the end of the book invites Addy to live with her.

c Kris is Cooper's boyfriend. Cooper has kept him secret because he was scared of people knowing he was gay, particularly his father. Kris understands from all the information they have that Simon has killed himself and that Jake is responsible for all the posts for About That that appear after Simon's death. He also understands that Janae must be involved.

d Vanessa is a student in the same group of friends as Cooper, Jake, and Addy. She is a very unpleasant girl who likes harassing and being nasty to other students. She laughs at Cooper when he is outed as gay. Nate supports Cooper and makes Vanessa look stupid. When Nate does this, he makes Vanessa experience how other people feel when she is nasty to them.

4 *Reader's own answer.*

Exercises

CHAPTERS ONE AND TWO

- | | | |
|---|------------|------------|
| 1 | 1 ruin | 2 trick |
| | 3 break up | 4 gasp |
| | 5 grin | 6 cheat on |
| | 7 date | |

CHAPTERS THREE AND FOUR

- 2 1 b 2 c 3 c 4 b

CHAPTERS FIVE AND SIX

- 3 1 Vanessa asked Cooper if Keely should be jealous.
 2 Vanessa asked Cooper if Kris with a K was a guy.
 3 Nate asked Bronwyn if she had been asleep.
 4 Addy asked TJ how Simon had found out.
 5 Nate asked Addy how she knew that.
 6 Nonny asked Cooper how Keely was feeling about it / that.

CHAPTERS SEVEN AND EIGHT

- 4 1 Addy tells Ashton she went to get **painkillers** for Jake because he had a headache.
 2 Finally, Addy stops crying, and Ashton gives her some **tissues**.
 3 Bronwyn wonders when her little sister turned into a **hacker** and detective.
 4 Outside of the school, a lot of students are giving **interviews**.
 5 Maeve is on her laptop looking at the **forums** that Simon had looked at.
 6 Mikhail Powers wonders if Bronwyn will never get to Yale because of **cheating**.
 7 Keely says she **hooked up** with Nate at Luis's party.

CHAPTERS NINE AND TEN

- 5 1 investigate
 2 accuse

- 3 post
- 4 recognize
- 5 suspect
- 6 annoy / be annoyed

CHAPTERS ELEVEN AND TWELVE

- | 6 | Who spoke? | Who to? |
|---|------------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Mary (Cooper's lawyer) | detective |
| 2 | Nonny | Cooper's father |
| 3 | Nate | Vanessa |
| 4 | Maeve | Bronwyn |
| 5 | Eli Kleinfelter | Bronwyn |

CHAPTERS FIFTEEN AND SIXTEEN

- 7 1 Addy remembers Jake pulling her backpack off her shoulder on the day Simon died.
- 2 Cooper says he'll drive Addy to Janae's house.
- 3 Addy wraps her arms round Janae and gives her a hug.
- 4 Simon told Jake about Addy and TJ to make him mad so Jake would help Simon.
- 5 Janae put the EpiPens and the computer in Nate's locker and his house.
- 6 Cooper saves Addy from Jake.
- 7 Eli answers all the questions from the reporters about Nate.
- 8 Kris is a hero because he worked out what really happened.
- 9 Addy's fractured skull and broken ankle are getting better quickly.
- 10 Nate tells Bronwyn that there is no point in being together.
- 11 Addy told Nate that he should talk to Bronwyn again at the concert.

ALL CHAPTERS

- 8 1 I'm not **used to** writing with a pen.
- 2 "I'd **better** go," I said, giving Keely a kiss.
- 3 He **made** it a big event in a nice hotel with dinner and flowers.

- 4 "I **don't mind**—but remember I can't help you if you don't talk to me now."
- 5 Bronwyn puts her arms round me too tightly, but I **don't mind**.
- 6 "I stopped seeing Nate **as soon as** you asked me out."
- 7 I decide I'd **better** leave.
- 8 Why doesn't anybody talk about how awful About That **made** this school?
- 9 They're sitting in the living room **as if** they've been waiting for us.
- 10 "**As soon as** you did something he didn't like, he got really, really mad."

Project work

Reader's own answers.

Essay questions

Reader's own answers.