

Reflections:

A Student Response Journal for...

Killing Mr. Griffin

by Lois Duncan

Copyright © 2001 by Prestwick House, Inc., P.O. Box 658, Clayton, DE 19938.
1-800-932-4593. www.prestwickhouse.com Permission to copy this unit for
classroom use is extended to purchaser for his or her personal use. *This material,
in whole or part, may not be copied for resale.*

ISBN: 978-1-60389-583-5

Item No. 202287

Chapter 1

1. Susan seems to suffer from low self-esteem. Write a letter giving her advice on how she can raise it.
2. Betsy Cline appears to be the most popular girl in the class, and Susan is not sure why. Think of a popular person in your class and describe what it is that makes that person popular.
3. Assume you are a transfer student in Mr. Griffin's class. Write a letter to a friend from your old school and describe Mr. Griffin. Consider how demanding he is and how you feel about his teaching methods.
4. Susan smiles at two girls in her class, but they don't notice her, so she keeps pretending to be smiling at something else. Did you ever find yourself in a situation like that? What did you do?
5. As everyone else chats before the beginning of class, Susan feels painfully alone. If you had a good friend who expressed a similar feeling, what would you advise him or her to do?
6. The first and last sentence of this chapter suggest that this will be a murder mystery. What line do you think this plot will follow?

Chapter 2

7. Mark's plan to "scare" Mr. Griffin is designed to make Mr. Griffin feel like an "underdog." Explain to a classmate, who may not understand, why it was important for the group to make Mr. Griffin feel that way.
8. Jeff refers to Betsy as "the all-American girl." Assume you are Betsy; how does Jeff's comment make you feel?
9. As part of the plan, Mark is going to use Susan's affection for David to get her involved as a decoy. Do you know of an instance in life, a book, or the movies when someone's affections were used to manipulate that person?
10. From what you know of Mr. Griffin's class so far, how is it similar to or different from some of your classes?
11. What does the last sentence in chapter two tell you about Mark? Would you want to have Mark for a friend?
12. From his actions and his comments, we learn some important things about Mark, his personality, and his character. In a letter to a friend, describe Mark with as much detail as you can.

Chapter 3

13. David is a strange sort of character. He is class president and handsome, but he doesn't hang out with Mark's group. Have you ever known anyone like him? How does his home life explain why he went along with Mark's plan?
14. David's mother states, "You're our hope for the future." What makes David his family's hope? If someone said that to you, how do you suppose you'd feel?
15. Imagine that Mark asked you to come in on the plan, and he said to you the same thing he said to David. Write the dialogue that might follow.

Chapter 4

16. In the cafeteria, when Susan has to decide where to sit, she often feels like a loner. If she were a friend who asked you how to handle the situation, what would you advise her?
17. Assume you are Susan, and you sit down to write in your diary. Write an entry describing the picnic invitation you received from David and how it made you feel.
18. Mrs. McConnell is excited about Susan's date with David. Assume you are Mrs. McConnell; in a dialogue, try to explain your excitement to Susan's father, who can't understand why all the fuss is being made.

Response Journal

19. Susan, who is trying too hard to fit in, is blind to the fact that Mark, Jeff, Betsy, and David are suddenly her friends. Drawing on your own experiences, explain Susan's behavior to a classmate who can't understand how Susan can be so ignorant of what's happening.

20. Imagine it is ten years later and you, as Susan, are talking to someone with whom you are very close. Try to explain to this person what your initial response was when you heard Mark's plan and why you went along with it.

Chapter 5

21. If you can, explain to a classmate who can't understand why Brian Griffin left college teaching and took a cut in pay to teach high school students.

22. What is your impression of Brian Griffin's wife, Kathy?

23. Kathy Griffin is expecting a baby and is a little concerned about how Brian will treat their child. Project years into the future and write a dialogue that takes place between Brian Griffin and his 14 year-old son or daughter.

24. Mr. Griffin describes another English teacher, Dolly Lana, as a 30 year-old teenager. What is your reaction to that comment?

25. Kathy has told her husband that he ought to moderate his behavior with the students, but he doesn't seem to hear her. As Kathy, write a letter to Brian telling him how you think he might change his behavior with the students and why.

Killing Mr. Griffin

26. Mr. Griffin tells Kathy, “Call the pharmacy and order a refill on my pills...” If you know what the term “foreshadowing” means and what its purpose is, explain it to a classmate. Also, tell him or her how this might be an example of foreshadowing and what you think it might hint at.

Chapter 6

27. What did you think of the plan that the five students carried out? Do you see any weaknesses or faults in it?

Chapter 7

28. At this point, Betsy is a tough character to pin down. From what you know of her, would you like, or not like, to have a person like Betsy as a friend?
29. Betsy says, “I’d rather be cute than beautiful.” What is your opinion of this comment?
30. Assume you are Mr. Griffin, and you have just received a paper from Mark that you suspect he plagiarized. In a dialogue, discuss the situation with your principal, explaining the situation and how you intend to deal with it.
31. Lana’s father, upset by what she has done for Mark, says of Mark; “He’s a sick kid...she’s obsessed by him.” As a result, her father sends her to school in a distant part of the state. Imagine you are Lana’s friend, and she is crying as she packs to leave because she doesn’t want to leave Mark. Write the dialogue you have with her.