



See No Evil

Diane Young

Reading level: 2.2

978-1-55143-619-7 PB

978-1-55143-664-7 LIB

AR Quiz # 110022

Book Summary

When Shawn and Daniel witness a gang beating behind the local mall, they flee the scene, terrified that they've been seen. They recognize one of the attackers as an infamous local gang member. When they learn that the kid who was attacked is in critical condition, Shawn wants to go to the police, but Daniel convinces him that they are in more danger if they speak up. The threats they receive from other members of the gang reinforce the boys' fears. When the gang attacks Daniel, Shawn has to put his own safety at risk to help his friend.

Author Biography

Diane Young is a writer and editor who lives in Toronto, Ontario. When she was a child, she created illustrated books that she sold to her friends for a quarter. When she grew up, becoming an editor seemed like the most natural thing in the world. After working on many novels for children and adults, she decided that it was finally time to write something herself. *See No Evil* is her debut.

Connecting to the Text

Language

1. In *See No Evil*, Diane Young, chooses powerful, suggestive words to describe characters and situations. These words help us understand the characters and situations in a meaningful way. In a group discussion, consider the following description of Damien Sykes:

(ch. 1) *...I catch a glimpse of his face. It's angular and bony. Skull-like.*

- ◆ Which descriptive words give us hints about what Damien's like? What is he being compared to?
 - ◆ Now, change those words to provide an image that suggests something else entirely. For example, what words would you use to describe the same type of face if it belonged to a circus clown, a grandmother, or a puppy?
2. Consider Shawn and Daniel's getaway from the scene of the crime. You may wish to write these sentences on the board or have students read them aloud.

(ch. 1) *Beside me, Daniel has finally found his feet. He slams into me as he wheels around and takes off in the same direction we've come from. I am right behind him. And then I'm ahead of him, because I'm taller and my legs are longer. And we're pounding back toward the parking lot, dodging honking cars and gasping for air.*

- ◆ Which descriptive words tell us about this situation—more than simply the facts? What do these words compare the situation to, to give us a deeper meaning? For example, the words wheels and takes off compare the boys' movements to cars or airplanes. That tells us they're going fast. The words pounding and gasping lend a sense of urgency.
 - ◆ Now, change those words to provide an image that suggests Shawn and Damien are somewhere completely different. For example, what words would you use if they were having relaxing day at the beach and where headed to the snack bar?
3. Similes connect ideas, giving us images that expand our understanding of situations and characters. Read the following examples aloud to the large group, or write them on the board. Discuss the connection that is being made and how it lends meaning to the text. What comparison is being made? How does it expand our understanding of this situation?

(ch. 1) *I push through the mall doors, and the cold air hits me like a slap.*

(ch. 3) *I feel like I've dragged myself through heavy glue.*

(ch. 3) *...stuff starts sliding out like an avalanche making its way down a mountain—books, binders, papers, and eventually my basketball.*

(ch. 7) *Suddenly I feel like I have an electric current running through me.*

4. Write the following sentences, which use the novel's context, on the board. Ask students to complete the sentences, either working alone or with a partner.
- ◆ The mall was packed with people. It was like _____ .
 - ◆ My locker was overflowing with books. It looked like _____ .
 - ◆ I ran away, scared. My heart was beating as fast as _____ .
 - ◆ I just can't concentrate. My thoughts are all mixed up, just like _____ .
 - ◆ I worried that Travis knew what was going on. When I talked to him, my voice became high-pitched like _____ .
 - ◆ Only three out of twenty on my Chemistry test! I feel as low as _____ .
 - ◆ When Wendell stands next to me, I feel like _____ .

Connecting to the Curriculum

Vocabulary

Ask students to write a short story or imaginary letter using six or more of the words or phrases below.

apparently	incredulous	conversation	involved	deliberately
reactions	disappear	reluctant	disguise	remember
eavesdropping	suddenly	expression	unbelievable	

Language Arts

1. Invite students to complete one of the following:

Early in *See No Evil*, Shawn and Daniel witness a crime. Read the following text from the novel, and then choose one of the options below to respond to.

(ch. 1) *Down the lane, about thirty feet away, three guys are kicking someone who is curled up on the ground. One of them has an object in his hand, maybe a lead pipe. Is there a pool of something dark on the pavement, oozing around the person's head? I can't be sure.*

- ◆ Shawn says seeing this was something he should put out of his mind. Witnessing the crime wasn't his fault, so why does Shawn feel like he is in the wrong? Pretend that you are Shawn. Write a diary entry or a letter to your mom in Los Angeles, describing your feelings at that moment.
- ◆ Imagine you are a close friend of Shawn and Daniel's and they have shared their experience with you. What advice would you give them? Write a letter to them, describing what you think they should do next.
- ◆ The night Shawn sees the crime, he lays awake for hours, wondering if the guy died. Would that make him an accessory to the crime? With this in mind, what do you think Shawn's options are? Write a paragraph that gives two options for him, and describe what you think would happen in both cases. For example, Shawn could tell his Dad or a teacher at his school. What would happen next?

2. We learn that Wendell was often in some kind of trouble in school and that he dropped out. We also learn that he is bored and says, "It really sucks around here" (ch. 4).
 - ◆ Do you think that these factors contributed to Wendell joining the gang? Why, or why not? Write a paragraph describing why you think Wendell joined the gang. Use evidence from the novel to support your argument.
 - ◆ Wendell was jealous of his brother, Cody, who "was the easygoing one that teachers loved, while Wendell was the rebel" (ch. 4). Sometimes it's hard to stand out when you have a sibling who seems to succeed in areas where you don't. Make a list for Wendell, giving him step-by-step advice on how to cope with this family situation, rather than feeling jealous. What could he do to feel better and have a more positive attitude? Provide examples for each step.
3. Shawn didn't tell the police when he first saw the crime behind the mall. Later, when he saw Daniel being edged toward the mall exit by Damien and Wendell, he ran to the mall security office. Later, he told the whole story to the police.
 - ◆ What changed for Shawn? Why did he not tell the officials after the first incident? Write a diary entry for Shawn, describing why he reacted the way he did when he saw that Daniel was in danger.

Geography

1. Shawn's friend Maya is from Mumbai. Invite students to research this city in Maharashtra, India, and create a travel brochure or poster advertising this city as a destination for tourists. Include:
 - ◆ A map of India, with Maharashtra and Mumbai highlighted
 - ◆ General information about Mumbai such as language, population, climate, major industries, rivers and mountains, etc.
 - ◆ Five interesting places to visit in the city, such as famous buildings or temples
 - ◆ Two things you'd like to do in Mumbai; then write a paragraph describing why these things would be of interest to you.
2. Encourage students to consider two things they would like to do in Mumbai and write a paragraph describing these activities and explaining why they would be of interest to someone.

Art

1. Have students create a picture of the characters in *See No Evil*—using a different media for each. What media would work best for a picture of Shawn? Of Damien, Daniel and Wendell? Ask students to write a caption for their pictures, describing why they chose that medium. For example, *I chose torn strips of paper arranged in a collage for Damien because he seems torn up inside* or *I chose to do a black and white silhouette for Shawn because he seems so alone.*
 - ◆ Ideas for media might be: magazine collage, watercolor paint, repetitive print work, abstract design or silhouette.
2. Explain to students that when we are stressed, our bodies react differently than they normally do. Like Shawn, we may find that our voices sound different, we can't sleep, or we feel "frozen." What are ways to remain calm when we're stressed? As a group, brainstorm ways to cope and stay calm. Create a list of catchy slogans for students to remember when they are stressed. Ask each student to decorate an index card with a slogan of their choice and a list of four calming or coping methods they prefer. Ideas might be deep breathing, yoga, going for a walk, drawing a picture, talking to a friend or writing in a journal.

Connecting to the Students—Ideas for Exploration

1. One of Shawn's responsibilities is taking care of his little brother Ethan after school. He watches over Ethan and also cooks their supper. He knows how to make macaroni and cheese, and chili.
 - ◆ Are you responsible for making supper sometimes? What is your favorite meal to make?
 - ◆ Ask each student to write or type one easy-to-prepare recipe. Include the name of the dish, a list of the ingredients (and measurements), followed by a numbered list of instructions. Students may also wish to include a picture or illustration of their recipe.
 - ◆ Collate and photocopy these to make a cookbook of simple recipes your class can enjoy.
2. Early on in *See No Evil*, we learn that there is "graffiti scrawled over the school wall. It reappears just as the janitors can clean it off...Some storefronts are boarded up on this side of the street. Others have iron bars on the windows" (ch. 1). What do these images tell us about this community?
3. When Shawn and Daniel talk about what to do, Shawn suggests calling the "Crime-line." In many communities, there is an anonymous "tips line" where people can talk to police about crimes in a safe way. Does this service exist in your community? After he saw the crime, Shawn said he would have really liked to have someone to talk to. Are there anonymous help lines in your community, particularly one for kids or teens who are struggling and don't know what to do?

4. When Wendell talks to Shawn at the bus shelter, he uses body language that makes Shawn feel uncomfortable, even threatened. Make a list of five things Wendell did using body language to make Shawn feel uncomfortable. List the body language gesture, then describe how you think it made Shawn feel.
5. Sometimes it's really hard to say the truth, especially when you feel that you are in danger. Constable Chen says to Shawn's dad, "I'm sure you're proud of him" (ch. 12). Why does she say this? What would you have done in Shawn's place?