



Who Is Tanksy?

Bev Katz Rosenbaum

Reading level: 3.9

978-1-45982-085-2 PB

Book Summary

Tanya Kofsky feels invisible. No one listens to her, at home or at her new school. So as student elections get underway, Tanya starts expressing herself by secretly painting controversial images on the walls of the school. Soon everyone is talking about this amazing artist with a lot to say. The election results trigger a surprising rebellion. And not just from the students. But will speaking up really make a difference?

Author Biography

Bev Katz Rosenbaum is the author of several works of fiction. She has worked in-house as an editor for book publishers and magazines and has taught writing at the college level. Currently she juggles writing children's books with freelance editing. Bev lives in Toronto. For more information, please visit bevkatzrosenbaum.com.

Connecting to the Text—Elements of the Novel***Character and Theme***

1. Each of the book's characters exhibits a wide variety of personality traits, as humans do. Identify some of your favorite character's most interesting personality traits.
2. An ongoing theme of the book is dissent (meaning "to differ in opinion"). Some characters, like Tanya, express their dissent in obvious ways. Which characters express dissent in less obvious ways, and how?

Connecting to the Curriculum***Language Arts***

1. Pretend you are running for school president. Write the two-page speech you will present at the first election assembly.
2. Now pretend you are a candidate with opposing views and do the same.

History

In recent years North American high-school students have started movements and campaigns about all sorts of school-related things, from dress codes to gun violence to curricula changes. Can you think of a high-school aged changemaker you admire?

Personal Planning/Life Skills

1. How do you handle differences of opinion with people at school?
2. In the book, Tanya is the recipient of anti-Semitic comments. How can you help make your school a safe place for everyone?

Connecting to the Students—Discussion Questions

1. How do you feel about your cafeteria's food? And if you'd like to see changes, how would you go about getting them made?
2. How would you feel if someone wrote messages like Tanksy's on a) a school, b) a place of business, c) someone's home and d) an abandoned ravine tunnel, and why?

Connecting to the World

1. Can you think of a real-life instance of art effecting change in the world?
2. How can we help bring together people who might have differing views or opinions?

Writer's Craft

1. The author ended most chapters with a new graffiti image and slogan. What effect did this have on you as you read through the chapters?
2. How do the scenes of Tanya's home life reflect the book's main plot and theme?

Creative Writing/Vocabulary Enrichment

Words that could be used in discussions about the book:

dissent, divisive, solidarity, authoritarian, inclusive

- Pretend you're a student at Grayson School and that you've been tweeting about Tanksy's graffiti. Write three of these tweets using at least one of the above words.
- Now pretend you are a Grayson student who writes in a journal nightly. Write an entry about the election and what it's done to the student body, using at least one of the above words.