

STATE'S EVIDENCE
The State of TEXAS vs. MICHAEL BELLAZEN
Exhibit A: THE DIARY OF THERESA WHITE

CONFIDENTIAL

***Theresa thought she was the lucky one when she fell in love with Michael.
Then she realized - she'd be lucky to get out of the relationship alive!***

* * * *

Story Description: Theresa White's diary has been entered into state's evidence against her abusive boyfriend, Michael Bellazen. The diary chronicles their relationship – from its seemingly innocent inception to its violent conclusion. In this diary, Theresa recorded her thoughts, doubts, and fears about losing touch with her friends, moving in with Michael against her mother's wishes, and the emotional rollercoaster she endured while dating Michael.

Issue: Domestic Violence (Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Oct. 2009)

Intended Audience: Young Adults (ages 15 – 21)

Author: [Michelle Stimpson, M.Ed.](#), National Bestselling Author and Educator

Ancillary Materials: Discussion Questions, Multiple Choice Questions, Non-fiction connection



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Possible Discussion Questions

Feel free to pick and choose appropriate questions for your group. Be sure to have students explain their responses.

Before Reading

- How do you know when it's time to break up a romantic relationship? A friendship?
- If you were in a romantic relationship with someone, what would make you break up with them immediately?
- When you forgive, do you also forget?
- How do you know when someone loves you?
- How do you know when someone is sincerely sorry for something they did?
- Can people change?
- Would you disobey your parent/guardian in order to fulfill your boyfriend's/girlfriend's desires?
- Is it important to have romance during the teenage years?
- Do you think Rihanna should have resumed her relationship with Chris Brown after the incidence of domestic violence?
- Do you know someone who has been involved in a violent relationship?
- Is it okay for girls to hit guys? It is okay for guys to hit girls?
- Is it possible for someone else to make you hit them?
- People often say that "good girls" like "bad boys." Do you agree? Why or why not?
- How do you know when someone has low self-esteem?
- If someone is cruel to animals, will they eventually be cruel to humans?
- Explain this concept: Actions speak louder than words.

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During Reading

After reading the diary entry dated October 8:

- How would you characterize Theresa? Michael?
- What do you think of their relationship so far?

After reading the diary entry dated November 4:

- What is Michael afraid of?
- Theresa says that she cannot throw away the good times because of a few bad times. Do you agree or disagree with her decision?
- Is there anything Theresa's mother can do to put a stop to this relationship between Theresa and Michael?
- What do you think of the relationship between Theresa and her mother?

After reading the diary entry dated December 25:

- Do you think Theresa's mother has given up on her?

After reading the diary entry dated January 6:

- The term, "I saw the writing on the wall," can be translated, "I saw what was coming before it happened." Make a prediction about the relationship between Theresa and Michael.

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After Reading

- Do you think Theresa will ever get over Michael?
- Does Theresa have any responsibility for what happened to her?
- Do you think Theresa was brainwashed?
- Is it possible for fear to paralyze people?
- Theresa says that it is impossible to know what you would do in a situation until it happens to you. Do you agree?
- What gave Theresa the courage to finally leave?
- If you were the judge, how long would you put Michael behind bars?
- Does Michael deserve to go to prison?
- Is it possible for Michael to be rehabilitated?
- When people say, “The apple doesn’t fall far from the tree,” they mean that children turn out just like their parents. Do you think the example Theresa’s mother set had anything to do with the choices Theresa made?
- What lesson(s) do you think Theresa’s mother might have learned through this situation?
- Why do you think the author chose to convey this story through diary entries?
- What might have been left out of the diary?
- How would Michael’s diary read for this same 10-month span?

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August 18

I went to see Dad today in prison. He looked so old and skinny. He said he should be out soon - which is the same lie he's been telling me for seven years, ever since I was in third grade. He asked me if I had a boyfriend. I told him "no" and he said "good." He asked about Mom and I told him she was the same - working two jobs, trying to keep the bills paid. He said that maybe if I didn't want all these expensive clothes, she wouldn't have to work so hard.

September 22

Michael and I have been going out for two weeks now. I can't believe that a guy so cute (and who's 19) wants to be with me! Nobody ever told me that I am pretty - not even my dad or my mom. But Michael told me that I remind him of Eva Longoria. Then, we looked in my compact mirror ~~together~~ together and he started pointing out all of these things on me that look like Eva's - my hair, my skin.

This was all at his sister's house, when I skipped school Tuesday and spent the day with Michael. I know it's wrong to skip and I don't want to get pregnant like my cousin Reyna did, but when I'm with Michael, nothing else matters. I feel like that song, Teenage Love Affair, by Alicia Keys. If I go to school, all I think about is him, so it doesn't really matter anyway. He says he thinks about me all the time, too. Right now he is only working part-time at a carwash place, so he says he has lots of time to think about me.

Even though we have not been going out very long, I totally love him.

September 30

Michael got me a card just because he wanted me to feel special today. He says that I make him feel like the luckiest guy on earth, and he doesn't think he can live without me. I was like, Awwwwwww

October 8

Today, I skipped school to be with Michael ~~again~~ again. We went downtown (had to catch the bus because his car is in the shop). We almost got caught by the police for my truancy, so we had to get off the bus in this rich neighborhood. We started walking around all these big houses, but people were looking at us like we were crazy, so we caught the next bus and went back to his sister's house again. We were watching TV and then my cell phone rang. It was DeAnna - she was calling to ask where I was. DeAnna is supposed to be getting all the notes from Mr. Smith's class for me because I know there's a big test coming up.

Well, DeAnna asked me that one quick question about whether or not I was coming to class. I said "no" and she said "ok" then we hung up. It was, like, so fast. Then Michael was all asking me who it was. I told him the truth, but he didn't believe me. He was all "Who's the guy, Theresa?" and he was getting so mad, he went outside to the back yard. His sister's dog doesn't really know him all that much, I guess, so the dog started barking at Michael. I heard him tell the dog to shut up like three times. Then I went to the back door so I could talk to him. That's when I saw Michael kick his sister's dog so hard, I thought it was going to die. I told him to stop and he said, "See what you made me do?" It was crazy. I walked back home. Well, I couldn't actually go in the house because my mom was home from work already and I didn't want her to know I wasn't at school. I waited in the park for like an hour. Michael kept calling my cell phone, but I didn't answer. He sent me a text saying that he loved me and he was sorry, so I called him back. We made up.

October 14

I couldn't skip school today with Michael because Mr. Smith says he is going to call my mom if I miss one more day of school. When I sent Michael

a text in first period saying that I couldn't meet him outside, he asked why not. I told him about Mr. Smith and he said he didn't believe me - he asked me if I had something going on with Mr. Smith.

I was so busy texting that I didn't see Miss Hartley come up from behind me. She took my phone. I was mad that she took it up, but she was nice enough to let me come get it after school instead of making me go to the office and pay ten dollars. She says it's like a warning - the next time she will take my phone to the office like the rule says.

I waited until I was outside of the building, then I turned on my phone as I started walking home. That's when Michael pulled up beside me in his car and told me to get inside. I was sooooo happy to see him! He said he was happy to see me, too, but I could tell he was mad. I tried to tell him what happened with my cell phone - about Miss Hartley. He said I was not telling the truth, so we started arguing. He told me I was a liar, a cheater, and a slut. I couldn't believe he was being so mean. I just started crying like crazy. Michael had never seen me cry. He totally stopped acting mean and gave me a hug. Then a kiss. We made up and went to get some ice cream. Then it was just like old times - laughing and talking together. And at the end of the day, Michael told me that he loved me. OMG! I never had a guy tell me that before. Well, except for grandpa, when I was little.

November 1

Happy 16th Birthday To Me - NOT!!!!

The worst thing happened today. After Michael and I got back from the mall (he bought me a teddy bear for my birthday) Patrick called. He didn't really want anything. He was just asking me what was up and telling me happy birthday. Michael got so mad, he said he knew that was my real boyfriend on the phone. We argued about it until we got to the park by my house. Then he threw my phone on the ground and stomped on it until it was totally beyond repair. I was sitting there trying to stop him and

telling him that Patrick is my half-brother from my dad, but Michael ignored me. We argued for like ten minutes, standing down the street from my house. I told him he was going to have to pay me back. He's still on this idea that I'm cheating on him. Then, from out of nowhere, my mom walks up and wants to know what's going on. She totally freaked because it's pretty obvious that Michael is a lot older than me. Then, me and my mom are arguing and Michael kind of walks off because my mom told him she was gonna call the cops if he comes around me any more. When me and my mom got ready to leave the park, my mom saw my ~~phone~~ phone smashed on the ground and she starts fussing again. I lied to her and told her I was the one who smashed it, but she didn't believe me because she knows I was crazy about my Sidekick.

So now I'm sitting here looking at the pieces of my broken phone and wondering if this is it for me and Michael.

November 4

Michael was waiting for me after school today. He showed me the new phone he got me. It's not a Sidekick, but it will do. I kept telling him to leave me alone, but then he almost started crying, saying how much he loved me and how he couldn't live without me. How he's never felt this way about any girl before. DeAnna was walking beside me. She was whispering "don't go with him" to me (I told her about all the stuff that's happened). But I started thinking about the good times me and Michael had together. He does have this side of him that is so sweet and adorable. I can't throw away the good times because of a few bad times.

So, call me stupid, but I got in his car. We went to his job so he could pick up his check. He showed me off to all of his friends at work - he told them I was his fiancé. I asked him what that was all about. He said he wants to be with me forever. I want to be with him forever, too, but we haven't even been together for two months. He told me that he already

knows he loves me, so we don't have to wait. He wants me to have a baby next year - my senior year. I told him I didn't know about that, and he starts getting all upset, asking me if I want to have a baby with Patrick. I told him that was sick, since Patrick is my brother. I didn't really want to argue with him, so I started talking about my mom and stuff. Michael says that if they let him go full-time at work, he'll get an apartment and I can move in with him.

So when I got back home, my mom was straight trippin'. She says she saw me get out of Michael's car at the park. Now I'm supposedly on punishment. She says she's glad I don't have a phone, so now she doesn't have to take it away from me. So now I'm hiding the phone that Michael gave me because if she finds out, she will flip.

November 9

Michael and I broke up. I'm so sad, I can't even write about it right now.

November 11

Oh. It's ok now. Michael and I are back together. What happened was, I saw him at the store with this other girl and I just jumped to conclusions. She's some girl who likes him, but he told her he already has a girl. Michael said she was basically just following him around the store. She did leave him alone when she saw me talking to him, so I guess she must have gotten the picture.

Michael starts full-time next month. He asked me what I wanted for Christmas already. He says he already knows he's getting me a ring so other guys won't try to talk to me. I told him that what I really want is a WiFi.

November 13

I think I might be pregnant.

November 15

False alarm.

November 24

We've been out of school all week for Thanksgiving. Since my mom has to work, I've spent almost every day at Michael's apartment. There's nothing there - just a TV and a coffee table and an air mattress. Michael's not even there half the time because he works a lot now, but he let me have a key. He also gave me some money to buy some things for the place. I bought a few towels and some dishes. I swear, it's like we're married or something. DeAnna thinks it's bizarre. I think it's great. I'm seriously thinking about moving in with him. It would hurt my mom, though.

December 11

I can't believe I ever agreed to use this phone Michael gave me. He's using it like a tracking device. He got the first bill for it yesterday and he yelled about every single call that wasn't to him - even though he wasn't charged anything extra. So I left the apartment and caught the bus back to my house. Then DeAnna called me. She said that Michael called her and asked who she was and he actually told her not to call me any more. Next thing I know, all my friends are ~~are~~ calling me telling me that Michael called them and told them to stay out of my life because I'm with him. I guess he was just going through the whole phone bill calling everyone I know and convincing them that he owns me.

I got a break up with Michael. It hurts, but I know I have to. He's getting too possessive.

December 21

We're out of school for Christmas break now. I tried to break up with Michael yesterday, but since I couldn't give him a reason, he said he wasn't breaking up with me. He said, "I love you too much to lose you." He hugged me real hard and kissed me like it was the last time he would ever see

me. I was thinking to myself, Dang! No one has ever loved me this much, and probably nobody else ever will. So I didn't break up.

Went to visit my dad again. He still looks bad. I don't think I want to see him any more any time soon because I get sad every time I see him.

December 25

You want to know what Michael got me for Christmas? A promise ring, a jacket, and a new address. I moved in with Michael. At first, my mom said she was going to call the cops because Michael is 19 and I'm a minor, but I told her that if she does, I'm just going to run away from home and be with him anyway.

So then my mom and I actually sat down and talked. She says she thinks I picked Michael because he's a lot like my dad - no good. I told her that she's wrong about Michael.

Then she and I talked about me going to school and about birth control. In a way, I feel kind of bad because it's like she's giving up on me.

Sometimes I feel like the only person who cares about me any more is Michael. Maybe I'm lucky he picked me.

January 6

Can't go to school today. Me and Michael had a big argument yesterday and he hit me. He actually hit me! We were sitting on the floor in the kitchen eating pizza. I got a text message from my mom and he went crazy - saying my mom doesn't love me and she's stupid. I told him to stop calling my mom names and he asked me who I loved more - him or my mom.

I honestly didn't know how to answer that question. He started yelling about how he's taking care of me, providing for me, giving me a place to stay and I told him that he didn't have to do it. I could always move back home with my mom. That's when he REALLY lost it. He told me that

I'm never leaving him - ever. Not after all we've been through and all he's done for me.

So I stood up, dusted the crumbs off my lap, started walking toward my purse. He grabbed my hair from behind and pulled me back down to the floor. I think he punched me in the face two or three times, but it happened so fast I don't remember.

I just remember lying on the floor and crying, crying while he paced around me, telling me it was all my fault. I shouldn't have made him so mad. He loves me so much he can't live without me.

Then he got down on the floor with me, held me. I couldn't stop crying. He started crying, too, telling me how sorry he was.

I've never seen a guy cry before. He wouldn't stop crying until I told him I forgave him, so I did. I know it sounds crazy, but it was like we went to another level in our relationship. I've seen him be weak, and he's only been weak with me. I'm the only person who knows the real him and he's the only one who really loves me.

No one can take that away from us.

Michael got me some make-up to cover the bruise, but he says I shouldn't go anywhere for a few days.

February 4

Michael told me to stop taking the pills because he wants us to have a family. I told him that I wanted to finish school first. He got mad and said I want to finish school so I can leave him. Now he doesn't even want me to go to school any more. I think I'm going to have to leave. I'll wait until he goes to work, though.

February 7

I'm back home with my mom, but I miss Michael like crazy. He calls three or four times an hour and texts even more on the phone he bought me, but I don't respond. I have to get him out of my life.

I don't know why, but I'm still wearing his promise ring.

February 12

He showed up after school today - almost tried to kidnap me while I was walking home. I threw that stupid phone into his car so he would know that we have no connection any more. He threw it back at me. My mom says I need to get a protective order.

February 14

I know it sounds crazy, but I moved back in with Michael. He totally apologized for everything. He also got me a huge teddy bear for Valentine's Day to make up for what he said about school. But he still wants me to have a baby next year.

My mom says that I'm on my own now - she's not dealing with me any more. She said I was stupid for moving back in with a maniac. I don't know how she can talk since my dad went to jail for armed robbery. They're not together any more, but if he was out, she would probably get ~~back~~ back with him. So, I'm like whatever.

March 9

Another month, another black eye. I told Michael I was thinking about getting a job and he went ballistic. He says I'm just trying to meet other guys.

Sometimes I think about leaving again, but I don't know where I would go. I can't go back to my mom's. My friends don't even talk to me any more because Michael has told them all to leave me alone. If I had a father, maybe I'd go to him, but my dad is out of the picture. My grades are so bad this semester, I might as well not even go to school any more - not that anyone there would really help me.

I feel trapped.

March 12

This lady I see at the laundromat gave me the phone number to a women's shelter. I guess she's seen the bruises on my face and arms. She says they can help me leave if I want to.

Michael found the card with the number and tore it to pieces. He says if I leave him again, he'll find me and kill me, then kill himself.

I believe him.

April 1

I wish this was an April fool's joke, but it's not. I'm pregnant. Michael says I'm his for life now. Every day, I get more and more scared of him. I thought that maybe since I'm pregnant, he wouldn't hit me any more, but I was wrong. He still hits my face when he gets really angry. The best thing I can do is just be quiet, agree with him, don't call anyone on the cell phone, and keep my head down when we leave the apartment so he won't think I am looking at other guys.

April 14

Me and Michael got into a fight because he thinks I like this guy on American Idol. I was going to use my phone to call in and vote for the guy because he really is a good singer. Michael grabbed the phone right out my hand and hit me in the face with it. Blood started gushing right under my eyebrow and I ran to the bathroom. I locked myself in there for like thirty minutes, crying and trying to stop the blood. Nothing helped, so I knew I had to get stitches.

Michael took me to the county hospital and he went in there with me because he said he didn't want me to tell them the truth. I was really thinking about telling the nurse everything, but that wouldn't help anything. If Michael goes to jail, who will pay our rent? How will I eat? I can't go home to my mom. I guess I could get help from social services, but

it will take months for me to find a place. Plus whenever Michael gets out of jail (which won't be long with the way the jails operate these days) he will be even madder than he is now. He's already told me that he would kill me before he lets me go. I don't want my baby to grow up without a mom and (like me) with a dad who is in prison. So I told the nurse I slipped while I was getting out of the shower and hit my head on the counter. I think she knew I was lying. She asked me like three times, and every time I told her the same thing. Then she rolled her eyes at me like I was stupid. I wanted to scream to her that I am not stupid! People always think they know what they would do if stuff was happening to them - but they really have no idea what they would do until it does. Would she snitch on her man if it meant she would have to go live in a homeless shelter and end up getting killed anyway?

Besides, this is not just about me anymore. I have to think about the baby, too. He or she will need a place to stay and lots of care. At least if I stay with Michael, I won't have to work and leave my baby with someone I don't even know.

And maybe my eye will heal up so good there won't even be a scar.

May 3

Michael changed his mind. He says he doesn't want a baby. He says I talk about the baby all the time so he knows a baby would take my attention from him. He set an appointment for me to have an abortion tomorrow. I know I've done a lot of bad stuff that's against my religion and everything, but I can't go through with Michael's plan.

I'm going to have to tell someone the truth.

May 4

Today is the big day. I called my mom and she actually listened to me, probably because I was crying like crazy. She said that she will meet me at

the clinic, and when Michael drops me off, she will bring me back to her house. Then 

May 13

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What was supposed to be my big day turned out to be the worst day of my life. Michael found me writing in my diary. He grabbed it from me and read what I wrote. Then he turned into this mad, evil man I had never seen. He was worse than all his bad days put together times ten. He picked up a floor lamp and started beating me with it for like fifteen minutes - maybe it was thirty minutes, I don't know. I blacked out. Someone called the cops. I remember being put into the ambulance. They arrested Michael.

I lost the baby.

I guess it took all this for me to finally tell someone what was going on. Right now I really don't care if Michael is mad at me because I'm mad at him, too. I don't know why, but now that I'm around my mom and talking to my friends again, it's like I have more courage. Like I'm turning back into the old me again. I had to get a new diary because the other one was ripped, plus the attorney said we could use it for evidence.

I like my new diary. It's like a fresh start.

Michael is in jail right now. He has a trial coming up in a few days. I don't know what's going to happen. He could get anywhere from a few months to maybe years for the charge. People have told me that guys who beat on girls and guys who are child molesters get treated real bad by other prisoners. I know it's stupid, but I hope they aren't mean to Michael. I do still love him, even after all the bad stuff. But I think if I get back to the real me, I'll get over him.

Eventually.

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

“The Diary of Theresa White”
Multiple Choice Questions

Choose the best answer for each question.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>___ 1. What is the diary entry on November 1 mostly about?</p> <p>A. Theresa and Michael had an argument at a park that resulted in her phone being destroyed and her mother forbidding Michael to see Theresa again.</p> <p>B. Theresa’s mother found out Michael was much older than Theresa. Because Theresa was a minor, her mother feared that Michael was taking advantage of her.</p> <p>C. Patrick called to wish Theresa a happy birthday. Michael got angry because he believed Theresa was cheating on him with her ex-boyfriend.</p> <p>D. Michael and Theresa celebrated her birthday, but her mother interrupted the celebration and broke Theresa’s phone so she can’t call Michael any more.</p> <p>___ 2. Read the following dictionary entry. Which definition best matches the meaning of the word <i>skip</i> as it is used in the diary entry on September 22?</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">skip \skip\ v. 1. Flee without notice 2. Pass from one point to another 3. A light dance 4. Bounce along a surface</p> <p>A. Definition 1</p> <p>B. Definition 2</p> <p>C. Definition 3</p> <p>D. Definition 4</p> <p>___ 3. Based on the September 22 diary entry, the reader can tell that –</p> <p>A. Michael had many girlfriends in the past.</p> <p>B. Theresa is flattered by Michael’s compliments.</p> <p>C. Theresa has several brothers and sisters on her father’s side of the family.</p> <p>D. Theresa and Michael have known each other for several years.</p> <p>___ 4. What does the diary entry on October 8 foreshadow?</p> <p>A. Theresa’s pregnancy</p> <p>B. Michael’s hate for animals</p> <p>C. Theresa’s ability to protect herself</p> <p>D. Later episodes of violence</p> | <p>___ 5. The diary entry on May 3 represents a –</p> <p>A. falling action.</p> <p>B. conflict between Theresa and her mother.</p> <p>C. turning point for Theresa.</p> <p>D. moment of weakness for Theresa.</p> <p>___ 6. In the entry on May 13, Theresa uses a simile to describe –</p> <p>A. how the diary parallels her new life.</p> <p>B. the relationship between good ideas and bad ideas.</p> <p>C. how her relationship with her parents has changed.</p> <p>D. her decision to stay single.</p> <p>___ 7. Why did Theresa feel her mother had given up on December 25?</p> <p>A. Her mother said, “Good luck.”</p> <p>B. Theresa’s mother wants Theresa to leave.</p> <p>C. Theresa’s mother decides not to talk to Theresa about the situation any more.</p> <p>D. Her mother has stopped arguing and decides to simply give advice.</p> <p>___ 8. Michael gained control of Theresa’s life by –</p> <p>A. isolating her from friends and family.</p> <p>B. making her skip school.</p> <p>C. buying nice things for her family.</p> <p>D. lying about his other girlfriend.</p> <p>___ 9. From the tone in Theresa’s November 11 diary entry, the reader can tell that –</p> <p>A. Michael loves Theresa very much.</p> <p>B. Theresa trusts Michael.</p> <p>C. Theresa does not want to leave home.</p> <p>D. Theresa has grown suspicious of Michael.</p> <p>___ 10. Which statement leads the reader to conclude that Theresa’s life will return to normal?</p> <p>A. “I do still love him, even after all the bad stuff.”</p> <p>B. “...it took all this for me to finally tell someone what was going on.”</p> <p>C. “...I’m turning back into the old me...”</p> <p>D. Things always turn out best...”</p> |
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Answer Key

“The Diary of Theresa White”

1. A
2. A
3. B
4. D
5. C
6. A
7. D
8. A
9. B
10. C

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When Candy Overton started dating the most popular guy in school, she had no idea the relationship would nearly end her life. “He was so nice and fun at first. And he was really cute, which made me put up with a lot of disrespect from him. Plus all my friends thought we made the perfect couple,” Candy recalls.

For months, Candy was able to hide evidence of the abuse from her parents, but her teammates were much more observant. Candy admits, “When we changed clothes for basketball practice, it was pretty easy to see the bruises and marks all over my body.”

Candy says, in retrospect, the warning signs were there all along. If only she had known how to recognize them, she might have been able to evade the physical, mental, and emotional abuse suffered at the hands of her boyfriend.

The following questions, compiled from several publications, can provide some guidelines for evaluating a relationship. If you can answer “yes” to these questions, your relationship may be falling into a dangerous pattern.

My boyfriend/girlfriend...

- wants to know where I am and who I am with at all times
- is always accusing me of cheating
- likes to control what I wear or where I go
- says that no one else will want me
- threatens to hurt me, my family, or my friends
- puts me down and makes negative comments about me
- yells at me, pushes, hits, grabs, or hurts me in some way
- pressures me into having sex or going further than I want to go
- does not like it when I am around my friends or my family
- acts very jealous or possessive
- gets angry when I do not do what he/she wants me to do
- constantly texts or calls when I am not with him/her

For more information about teen dating violence, visit www.thesafeplace.org. If you are in an abusive relationship, call 911 for an immediate crisis, or the National Teen Dating Abuse Hotline at 1-866-331-9474 for guidance and additional information.

21 For more high-interest reading for secondary students, visit www.WeGottaRead.com

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Discussion Questions

“Stop: How to Tell When a Relationship is Not Healthy”

Possible Discussion Questions

Feel free to pick and choose appropriate questions for your group. Be sure to have students explain their responses.

After Reading

- Do you agree that the warning signs listed are strong indicators of potential violence?
- What laws are in place in your state to curb domestic violence?
- Is it ever okay to be jealous when in a relationship?
- Describe what it means to be treated with respect.

Connecting Across Texts

- What signs from the article “Stop: How to Tell When a Relationship is Not Healthy” were evident in the relationship between Theresa and Michael?
- How is Theresa’s story similar to Candy’s? How is it different?

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