

On the Jellicoe Road

By Melina Marchetta

Overview

Taylor Markham is in year eleven at the Jellicoe School. She has just been made leader of the boarders by the secret society of students that have run the school, unofficially, for the last twenty years. Taylor is a reluctant leader – she is not particularly community-minded, preferring to escape at every opportunity to the unfinished house on the edge of the school where her house mistress, Hannah, lives. Hannah has been like a surrogate parent to Taylor ever since she was abandoned by her mother on the Jellicoe Road six years before. She knows there is a connection between Hannah and her mother, but Hannah will never talk about it.

As leader of the boarders, Taylor is responsible for keeping the upper hand in the territory wars with the townies (the kids who live and go to school in the nearby town), and the cadets who camp on the school's property over summer. The wars are at first violent and acrimonious – boarders are beaten up by the cadets, and a couple are kidnapped and held to ransom. Taylor herself is chased through the bush and only just makes it back to her territory in time. To make it worse, Taylor does not have the support of all of the other leaders, one of whom, Richard, is actively working against her, and she has to deal with Jonah Griggs – the leader of the cadets and someone she thought she'd never see again. A few years before, Taylor had run away from school to find her mother, but had instead found Jonah Griggs, standing on the station platform, escaping from his own family dramas. But he had betrayed her, or so she had believed all this time, and contacted the school to let them know where she was. But as they work more and more closely together she discovers that it was not nearly that straightforward. And that the attraction between the two of them was still very much there.

Then Hannah disappears, leaving only a short note, and not saying when she will be back. Taylor is even more determined to unravel the mystery of Hannah and her mother and their past. The only clue she has is a partially written manuscript by Hannah about a group of five friends from the Jellicoe School, twenty years before. The kids in the manuscript were brought together in a horrific accident on the Jellicoe Road. Two cars carrying two families crashed, killing both sets of parents and one of the kids. Three kids survived – Webb and Narnie (brother and sister) and Tate, who lost her sister as well as her parents. They were pulled from the car by a townie called Fitz, who was riding along the Jellicoe Road. Taylor knows that the story is somehow connected to her missing parents and Hannah, and she gradually discovers that it is the story of her parents – Tate and Webb – and Hannah, who is Narnie.

Eventually she makes peace with the cadets and the townies, and falls in love (again) with Jonah Griggs. But she knows that what she needs to do more than anything is to find her mother, and to find Hannah. The manuscript, combined with snippets of information, rumours and stories Taylor comes across in the local town, finally gives her enough information to make her take off, again, but this time Jonah sets out with her from the start. In their journey to the city she and Jonah grow even closer and she discovers more about his difficult past, and what really happened the night when an escalating family domestic resulted in Jonah's father's death.

On reaching the city and tracking down a few people Taylor and her mother knew when they lived there, they finally discover that Tate is in the final stages of cancer and has only a short time to live. Tate comes home with Hannah to Hannah's house, where she is reunited with Taylor, and they have a few final days together before she dies.

Themes

- Family structure
- The bonds of friendship
- Loyalty/Honesty
- Authority
- Abandonment
- Grief
- Identity
- Parental roles
- Turf warfare
- Friends and Enemies

Characters

Taylor Markham

- *"I watch Raffy's mother standing behind her chair . . . there's this pride on her face . . . It's not that I miss my mother. It's just that I miss the idea of what one would be."* (p156) Often when something is missing we can romanticise it, make it more than perfect. Is this what Taylor is doing? The idea of what her mother might have been is a fantasy, but one that she can escape into. What might it be like to have only sad or negative memories of your parents? How do you think this might affect the way you approach your own life? This would make for interesting classroom discussion.

- It takes Taylor a long time to embrace her friends, especially Raffaella, Ben and Jessa. Is she aware of her coldness, or could it be that this is a coping mechanism for her? She refuses to let anyone in, to allow them to get close to her, as she feels she has been abandoned both emotionally and physically by the only people in her life that she has cared for. Even her relationship with Hannah, prior to Hannah's disappearance, is made up of a lot of 'two steps forward, three steps back'. How similar are Taylor and Hannah as people? They have had very similar life

experiences: both lost their parents at a young age (though in very different circumstances), both have found shelter and comfort in the Jellicoe School and the friendships formed there, and both have formed attachments to strong men who are able to help them through a traumatic time in their lives.

Jonah Griggs

- Consider Grigg's confession to Taylor about his real reason for being on the train platform the day they travelled together to Yass. (pp177/178) Did Taylor save his life, just by being on the platform that day? What were Jonah's reasons for wishing to end his life?
- We are never given the full details of Jonah's family life, although it is clear from his conversations with Taylor that he and his family are victims of vicious physical and emotional abuse at the hands of his father. How does this experience affect Jonah? Does it help explain why he is so quick to resort to violence when faced with intense situations? Discuss the impact of family violence on young people's lives, but always be aware that you may have students in your classroom with personal experience of family violence, so tread gently.
- It takes some time for Jonah's 'hard Cadet' image to give way to a more sensitive side in the story. When Taylor remembers the journey they took together on the train, it reveals the pain Jonah dealt with over his father's death and the guilt he carries with him. *"He sits on a train with me when we're fourteen and he weeps, tearing at his hair, bashing his head with the palm of his hand, self-hatred pouring out of him like blood from a gut wound in a war movie, and for the first time in my whole life I have a purpose. I am the holder of the grief and pain and guilt and passion of Jonah Griggs and as we sit huddled on the floor of the carriage, he allows me to hold him, to say, 'Shhh, Jonah, it wasn't your fault.' While his body still shakes from the convulsions, he takes hold of my hand and links my fingers with his and I feel someone else's pain for the first time that I can remember."* (p127) In what other ways do we see the softer side of Jonah Griggs revealed in the story?

Raffaella

- The relationship between Taylor and Raffaella has been through ups and downs, but it is cemented in the time over which the story is told. Raffaella is the one person Taylor has told about her time living in the city with her mother, and from that moment Raffaella seems to have taken Taylor under her wing and cared for her with a great passion and intensity, in what is almost a maternal way. At the end of the novel, after all the upheaval of the past months, Taylor acknowledges the truth of their friendship to herself, and in a way she is acknowledging that she is now willing to let people get close to her. *"Silently I vow to keep Raffy around for the rest of my life."* (p272) Discuss as a class the power of these sorts of friendships. Does boarding together allow you to form stronger friendships?
- Raffy is a 'townie' girl at heart, although she attends the Jellicoe School as a boarder. She has a strong connection to the other townies, including Chaz, and in some ways Taylor envies her for that. It seems it is the idea of knowing where you come from that Taylor wants to find. The irony of this of course is that Taylor comes from Jellicoe and has a direct link to the town through a number of people. What does it mean to belong to a place? How important is it to know your roots?

Chaz Santangelo

- Taylor describes Santangelo as *“far too handsome for his own good, but at least he doesn’t have that mean, hard, feral look that Townie leaders from the past have had.”* (p32) Chaz is the leader of the Townies, and he also has a long history with Raffaella. He is kind-hearted and sensitive and Taylor and he become good friends through the course of the story. To begin with he has an ongoing battle with Jonah, but eventually they put their differences aside and form a strong friendship.
- The group spend a lot of time at Chaz’s house over the holidays, which Taylor describes as *“a madhouse”*. (p166) Again, the Santangelo house represents all those things that Taylor misses about a family home, and amidst all its messiness it is clear that there is a lot of love in Chaz’s family.

Ben Cassidy

- Ben is an important secondary character. He is Taylor’s second-in-charge when she is made leader of the houses in the territories war, and he has also been a good friend to Taylor and Raffy over the years at the Jellicoe School. Ben is a house leader also. His friendship with Taylor is platonic, although there are several instances when Jonah shows jealousy at the time Ben is able to spend with Taylor.

Jessa

- Jessa is one of the year seven students at the Jellicoe School, transferred to Taylor’s house, and as Taylor describes it, has become *“surgically attached”* to her and nothing she does can push her away. Jessa is another student who has been taken under Hannah’s wing.
- There are obvious similarities between Taylor and Jessa, but it takes Taylor some time to acknowledge the connections and to learn to appreciate and even love Jessa. *“More than anything, we have Hannah in common, and somehow during these holidays I begin to see Jessa as a kind of link to whatever it is out there that I need to work out.”* (p167) When the girls finally discuss their connection to Hannah and the way that they were ‘found’ by her they realise there are many unanswered questions to their own backgrounds. Taylor asks Jessa how Hannah came to have just turned up at her home, and she replies, *“Uh-huh. I just thought she was so beautiful. She said, “Let me look at you,” and then she cried and held me and said that if she had known about me, she would have come much sooner.”* To which Taylor replies, *“Funny. She turned up just like that for me as well.”* (p168)
- Who, or what, does Taylor see when she looks into Jessa’s eyes? (p30) This might be a good opportunity to discuss the foreshadowing that the author has used in the book to set the plot. How subtle is this, and does it work for you as a reader?

Chloe P.

- Chloe P. is another interesting secondary character. She is a year seven student in Taylor’s house, a good friend to Jessa, and towards the end of the story it is Chloe and Jessa who end up caught in the tunnel that runs beneath the houses in a most dramatic rescue scene.

Hannah Schroeder/Narnie

- *“Whenever I look for clues, my sleuthing always comes back to one person: Hannah.”* (p16) What assumptions do you think Taylor has made about her relationship with Hannah, prior to the truth being revealed?

- Taylor's links to Hannah are clear to her, and she knows that Hannah coming past on the day her mother left her at the Seven Eleven was no coincidence, but does she have any idea of the real story that lies behind Hannah having found her that day? In the one conversation that Taylor has with Hannah before Hannah 'disappears', it seems the past is on the verge of being revealed. *"Ask me what the Hermit whispered in my ear that day." I can tell that she's stunned, her hazel eyes wide with the impact of my request. She takes a moment or two, like she needs to catch her breath. 'Sit down,' she says quietly. I shake my head and hold up the list she gave me. 'Sorry, no time. I've got fragile kids to look after.'*" (p18) What might Hannah have revealed to Taylor if the conversation had continued? What does Hannah think the Hermit revealed? How might Taylor's life have changed if that conversation had gone differently? Discuss.

- What might Hannah's reasons be for not being open and honest with Taylor from the beginning? How would it have impacted Taylor's life, growing up at the school with no knowledge of who her family were? Discuss the 'for and against' arguments for keeping Taylor's background a secret from her. Was Hannah just being true to Tate, or was she in some way protecting herself?

- Consider the young Hannah we meet after the accident on the Jellicoe Road. She is sometimes described by the others as fragile or weak, yet Hannah's enormous strength is revealed in the way she shields her brother from seeing their mother's body after the accident. What the others see to be terror or fear is her way of protecting her brother, who she knows to be a gentle soul who would be ruined to see what she sees. What does this tell us about the Hannah we meet in Taylor's story, who rescues two young girls and takes them under her wing, keeping them safe as they grow and mature and giving them her guidance and counsel, in place of the love she has promised to keep at arm's length?

Webb Schroeder

- Webb is Taylor's father and Hannah's brother. We learn very little of him from either story, other than that he was a young man with plans for his future, and his family, and that his life was taken in a tragic accident when his friend Fitz accidentally shot him.

- There are many instances in the story where we see Webb's character as the boy in the tree from Taylor's dreams. He becomes someone in whom she can confide, and in her dreams they discuss many things, including the death of 'the hermit', her mother, Hannah, and other things that affect her life. The boy pushes her to speak about the Brigadier, and although she insists he is not important to her story, the boy seems to know better. In the final dream Taylor has she is able to bring Fitz and Webb together and Fitz is able to apologise to Webb for taking his life. It is with Webb's help that Taylor is able to lead a rescue team to save Chloe P and Jessa from the fire.

Tate Markham

- *"She stood at Webb's door. Tate, with the wild hair and the grin that went on for ever. Sometimes Webb believed that he would never experience a better feeling than when he was looking at her; would never see anything or anybody bursting with more life and spirit. Sometimes he felt he needed to inhale it and place it in a storage area in his soul. Just in case."* (p59) How different this is to the Tate that we finally meet at the end of the story, just days before her death.

- Tate has been a terrible mother to Taylor in the times they were together, putting her in physical and moral danger, exposing her to a world of drugs, sexual violence and menace. And yet as readers we are asked to forgive her these things, as Taylor is asked to forgive her. How comfortably does that sit with you? To what extent can you blame drug addiction on behaviour that risks children's lives? Does the fact that Tate ultimately sacrificed any life she may have had with her daughter to ensure Taylor's own safety excuse what has come before? How do we learn to forgive people for such things? What does it take for Taylor to learn to accept her own past and move beyond it? Discuss these things as a group, through unstructured debate or more generally, to see how people feel about this extremely sensitive issue.

- There are several ways that Taylor learns to understand how much her mother had loved her. In understanding why her mother left her with Hannah, in finding out that her mother had decided to die 'clean' as the one thing she could do for her child, and even in the manuscript of Hannah's. *"Can you hear that?" she said softly, touching her belly. "Because you belong too."* (p254) How important is this for Taylor's healing? What might it mean to learn of these things, knowing what Taylor knows about her mother's life?

Jude Scanlon

- Jude is the one member of the 'five' who has no association to the accident on the Jellicoe Road that ravaged both families. His first meeting with them comes when he returns to a spot on the road where fellow Cadets have trampled poppies, to replant them. When he is approached by the other four – Narnie, Webb, Tate and Fitz – we learn that the flowers have been planted to mark the accident site.

- Jude's desire, almost desperation, to be their friend is felt keenly in the questions he asks himself upon returning to Jellicoe the following year. *"Had they fallen out of love with each other? Did Narnie still have that half-dead look? Had Fitz got himself into trouble? Had they outgrown him?"* (p23) This last question goes to the core of his uncertainty, and when he sees them there, *"Waiting. For him" he says "They're my best friends. I'm going to know them until the day I die."* (p23) Several times in the novel there is a sense that Jude wants desperately to be more connected to the others. *"They think I saved them, but they saved me," Fitz once told him. "I didn't exist before I belonged to the Fucked-Up Four." 'Five,' Jude had corrected.* (p162) . . . *"He wanted to be the hero riding by on a stolen bike. He wanted to be the one carrying their parents and Tate's sister out of the cars. He wanted to belong to them. With them he found solace."* (p130)

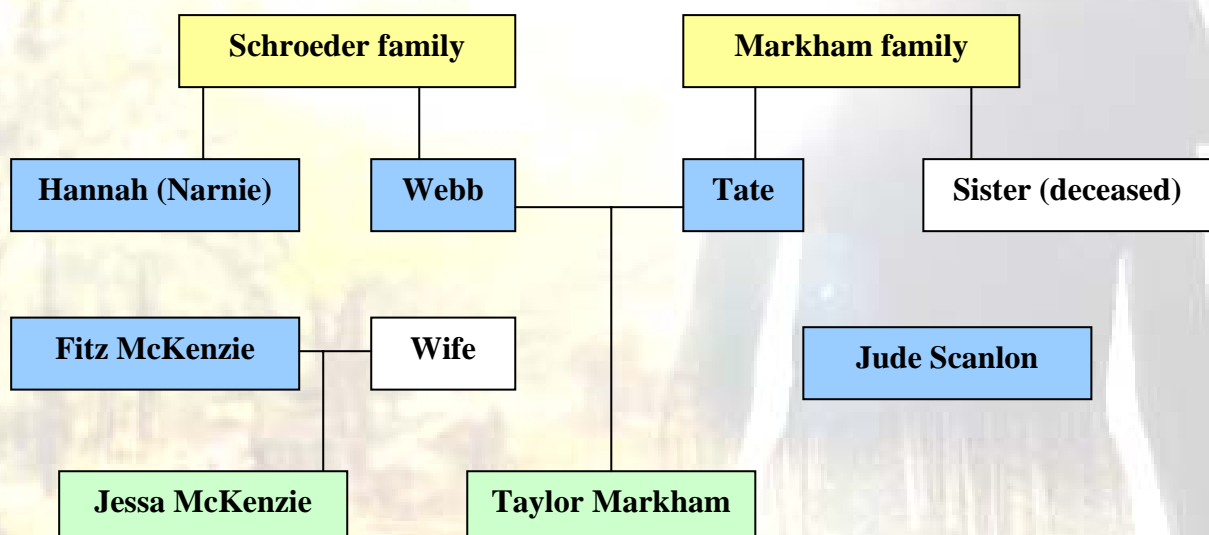
- Jude's adult character, the Brigadier, is seen as a hard, cold man, and is linked through several different passages to the serial killer in the news at the time. Although Taylor dismisses this at first, even she is drawn into the idea that he may be the murderer, and the few times she comes across him – in Hannah's house, when she is following the cat, in the jail cell, and when she thinks back to the time he came to get her and Griggs – the scenario is often a menacing one, making us as the reader go along with her fear and intimidation. Obviously it is the author's intention is to make her readers suspect one thing and then be surprised by the truth. How surprised were you when the Brigadier's true identity was revealed? Was this foreshadowed in any way? If so, how successful was it as a plot device?

Fitz

- Taylor first refers to the Hermit in the opening sequence of the book, when she speaks about the boy in her dreams. *“I tell him of the time when I was in year eight, just after the Hermit whispered something in my ear and then shot himself.”* (p4) It is not until much later in the book that we learn the true significance of the Hermit's character, and what he whispered into Taylor's ear. What are your thoughts about the Hermit? Is your curiosity aroused by the references to him? Who do you think he might be, and how might he be linked to Taylor's life?
- Fitz comes from a very tragic background and his association with Webb, Narnie and Tate change his life forever. *“All his life he'd been treated like crap to the point that he believed he was crap. He'd never done anything good and nobody had ever said anything positive about him. But that night, on the Jellicoe Road, it was like he was reborn. The lives he saved gave him purpose and he loved those kids more than anything.”* (p181) This makes the tragedy of Webb's death even more powerful.
- Re-read the sequence from Hannah's manuscript when she explains what happened the day police divers dragged the river, looking for Webb's body. (pp196-199) How subtle is the passage in your view? Is it clear what has happened? Is this where you first make the connection between Fitz and the Hermit?
- Taylor sees real love in the Hermit's eyes. What is it that he sees when he looks into Taylor's eyes? (p199)
- Why does he apologise to Taylor before he commits suicide? (p200) What might this mean to her ultimate healing, and coming to terms with her family's history? How important is an apology for something so huge? Discuss.

Family Tree

To assist with the understanding of where each character fits in the 'family tree' of the book, use the following table. Each generation has been shaded accordingly.



Popular Culture

- Once again, Melina Marchetta has used popular culture as a way of referencing her characters' lives. She has placed them firmly in the eighties, and used the music from that time to bring her characters' experiences to life. There are two songs that come up several times in the novel and they appear to be the songs that Webb may have listened to on his Walkman. One is *Flame Trees* by Cold Chisel, and the other is *Whole of the Moon* by The Waterboys. It would be interesting to listen to these songs with your students, perhaps with a print-out of the lyrics, and to discuss what the songs represent. Both songs have a melancholy feel to them, and a sense of nostalgia for time past, friendships and relationships lost, opportunities missed.
- Discuss how these two songs speak for the characters in Hannah's manuscript, and why the author has chosen these particular songs.
- What music would be used if this story was being set today?
- What would you use if you were writing your own life story? Do you have a 'theme song' that applies to your own life?
- Ask your students to write a small piece about themselves and attach an appropriate piece of music to it. These could be shared with the class if all students were in agreement.

Identity

- Identity becomes an important theme in *On the Jellicoe Road*. Taylor speaks about the time she spent with her mother in Sydney, when each time they moved she was given a different identity. "*But I'd lie in bed at night and I'd say to myself over and over again, 'My name is Taylor Markham'.*" (p224) Through identities not revealed (Narnie, the Brigadier) it takes Taylor some time to put together the five characters in Hannah's manuscript with the adults already in her life – Hannah, Jude and Fitz, along with her parents Tate and Webb. Because of this it takes time for Taylor's own identity to be fully revealed.

Parental Roles

- "*We're just a tad low on the reliable adult quota...*" (p246) Taylor feels as though she has been let down by the adults in her life. It is only after she begins to know her own real life story that she comes to understand the interconnectedness she is a part of. Not only does she have Hannah and Jude as her guardians, it also seems she always had Fitz watching her grow into a young woman (before his suicide), along with others who knew her family story, like Sal Santangelo.
- Consider the way families have been portrayed in the novel, both good and bad. Taylor's mother is shown in the extremes of bad, as is Jonah's father, yet both Chaz's parents are examples of successful parent/child relationships. Hannah and Jude are proof that those things traditionally provided by parents – emotional support, unconditional love, respect and loyalty – can come from many sources, and that biology is not the only way to parent. This is shown clearly through Taylor's memory of lying in bed between what she thought were her parents, who turn out to be Hannah and Jude. She recalls that "*it is between this man and Hannah that I once slept as a child. I remember waking up from nightmares, my heart thumping so bad, and how his voice, reading me stories of dragons and wild things would calm me.*"

(p252) What does it take to be a family? Do you get everything you need, physically and emotionally, from your parents, or are there other things you need to be fulfilled? Talk about the sorts of extended families students have, perhaps drawing a 'circle of emotional need' chart that places the student in the centre circle and positions those that provide other emotional needs in the surrounding circles. Students could form small groups to discuss their own circles.

Significant passages

- Although not significant to the development of the main plot line, the scene in which Taylor and Jonah are sexually intimate for the first time is enormously significant to them as characters, and to the development of their relationship. Aside from the story itself, this is the first time that teenage characters in a Marchetta novel have ever 'gone all the way'. What does that tell us about these characters specifically? Does it show a greater depth of emotion, or is it merely a sign of the times that more teen characters in novels and films are now sexually active? Does it make them seem more or less responsible? How significant is this scene in relation to the entire story? Do you feel that it adds to the realism of the story, and that it was a natural plot development, or could it have been left out without affecting the novel? What would you have done if you had been the author? Explain your reasons. If students are willing (and mature enough), discuss the scene as a class.
- One of the most dramatic scenes in the novel is the school fire, in which a great deal of property is damaged and the lives of many students, but two in particular, are put in grave danger. This passage is also significant because it brings the past and the present colliding in potentially disastrous, but ultimately positive ways. The tunnel was originally built by Webb, Fitz, Jude, Tate and Hannah, and now it is Fitz's daughter Jessa who has used the tunnel to escape the fire and is trapped inside it, and Webb and Tate's daughter Taylor who is able to lead the rescuers to the tunnel and save the girls inside. This 'coming full circle' is a recurring motif throughout the story.
- The most significant scene of the story is the car accident on the Jellicoe Road in which two families are torn apart. This scene is the impetus for the manuscript of Hannah's, and it is this manuscript that leads Taylor on her journey to find her mother, and to heal her own life.
- Taylor meeting her mother again at the end of the book is a momentous occasion for them all, and is the culmination of the entire story. It is a fitting ending to the journey Taylor has taken, both physically and emotionally, and it is also what brings Jude and Hannah together once again, with Taylor's help.

Points for discussion

- There are two stories being told here: one is Taylor's story of the time towards the end of year eleven when she meets Jonah Griggs again and the relationship that unfolds, while at the same time she struggles to piece together the history of her parents and their lives. The second story being told is of Webb, Tate, Narnie, Fitz and Jude, five friends whose lives are intertwined following a tragic accident on the Jellicoe Road. This story is not told chronologically, and it is quite difficult to follow initially. To assist in your understanding of the events of both plots, make a detailed timeline of events, showing key moments in the stories and how they impact on Taylor's life.

- The family trees of the Schroeders and the Markhams, although short, are initially quite complex, especially because the story is delivered in a fragmented way. To help make people's places clear, draw a detailed family tree, including the Schroeders, the Markhams and the McKenzies (Fitz's family), or use the one above.
- *"I sit there and listen to the history of my family, the Schroeders and the Markhams, who set out on their separate journeys that day not realising the tragic ironies and joys of that collision of worlds on the Jellicoe Road. And of the people they would never have met if it hadn't happened. Like Fitz and Jude. And me."* (p271) Consider the impact that events from our past can have over our future, and the futures of others. In a sense Taylor is saying that from everything terrible, some goodness must come. Is this something that you agree with? Discuss this idea as a class and how it applies to Taylor's experience. Does it apply to Griggs as well? What about to Tate?
- There are similarities between the friendships in both storylines, most especially the friendship that existed between Webb and Jude, and the friendship between Jonah and Chaz. *"Where Webb's memories of childhood were idyllic and earthy, Jude's reeked of indifference and role-playing. Webb read fantasy, Jude read realism. Webb believed a tree house was the perfect place for gaining a different perspective on the world, whereas Jude saw it as perfect for surveillance and working out who or what was a threat to them. They argued about sports' codes and song lyrics. Jude saw the rain-dirty valley, Webb saw Brigadoon. Yet despite all this, they connected..."* (p23) This description of the friends could easily be transferred to Jonah and Chaz. Are there other similarities between characters in the two storylines? Consider the lines *"I'm going to know them until the day I die"* (p23) said by Jude about the others, and then, *"We're going to know him for the rest of our lives"* (p283) said by Santangelo about Jonah Griggs. Students may benefit from making detailed character analyses and drawing comparisons.
- Part of the beauty of the characters that are developed in this story is that the author has captured the essence of teenage relationships. Too often in books written for a young adult market, relationships are won and lost over such clichéd issues as sex and romance. Melina Marchetta has written fully rounded friendships between her characters, with all the weight and complexity of real-life relationships. For example, Ben's friendship with Taylor and Raffy is developed in a purely platonic way, and shows that friends of different genders can help one another, offer support and guidance, and generally do all the things that friendships of the same sex can. Raffy's history with Chaz does not affect the depth of the friendship they have, even when a potential romantic attraction is alluded to (pp206/207). Even Taylor's relationship with Griggs shows how important it is for partners to have mutual respect and confidence in one another.
- Many of the relationships that are examined in this story are complex and multi-faceted. Consider Taylor's relationship with Hannah, for example. To Taylor, Hannah is a friend, a teacher, a mentor, a mother, and ultimately an aunt. What are some of the other relationships that are examined here, aside from the usual boy/girl, parent/child relationships? How successful are they?
- The idea of the territories war comes full circle from the time of Webb and Tate to the story of Taylor and Griggs some twenty years later. In the first instance, the friendship is what leads to the idea of forming the territories and of playing 'skirmish' (p164), yet by the time of Taylor and Griggs, the original intention of the territories war has been lost, and it has become a very different game. With Taylor, Griggs and Chaz, however, the lines are again blurred and the three opposing sides reunite and

learn again to appreciate their differences and the power of their friendships. Consider for example, the scene in the Club House, when Taylor realises the irony of the three groups standing apart, refusing the mix with each other. *“Suddenly I want to yell out to everyone, ‘It’s a game, these territory wars. They loved each other.’”* (p202) And by the end of the evening, the three groups have come together again.

- As mentioned above, this story is told in two parts, by two separate sets of characters. Initially these two stories are quite difficult to understand, to the point where it can be confusing to know how the characters relate to each other. How does that affect your initial appreciation of the story?

- How well would the novel have worked if the passages of manuscript had been longer and more detailed? On one hand it may have reduced any possible confusion, yet there was a wonderful element of suspense about the delivery of the story which added to the reading enjoyment. Discuss the structure of the novel with your students, to see how they feel about the non-linear plot. Are there other novels you have read where this has or hasn’t worked as successfully? This may be an element that your students could introduce to their own creative writing, with some guidance.

