

## Remind Me How This Ends

By Gabrielle Tozer

### Synopsis

"Milo was a discoloured memory with blurred edges and a washed-out palette. Yet five minutes with him and everything came back to me in an instant."

Layla Montgomery's life fell apart at thirteen. After her mum died in a shock accident, Layla's grieving father packed their bags and forced her to leave behind everything she'd ever known.

Milo Dark has been stuck on pause since the Year 12 exams. His long-term girlfriend moved 300 kilometres away for uni, his mates bailed for bigger things, and he's convinced he missed the reminder to plan out the rest of his life.

As kids, Layla and Milo shared everything – their secrets, a treehouse and weekends at the river. But they haven't spoken since her mum's funeral. That is, until Layla shows up five years later in his parents' bookshop without so much as a text message.

Pretty soon they're drawn into a tangled mess that guarantees someone will get hurt. And while it's a summer they'll never forget, is it one they'll want to remember?

A boy-meets-girl-again story from the award-winning author of THE INTERN and FAKING IT.

### Themes:

Identity, change and self determination  
Coming of Age – discovery of self  
Friendship and Relationships  
Grief  
Transformational power of love

**Recommended Age:** 14+

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Notes by: Mandy Newman

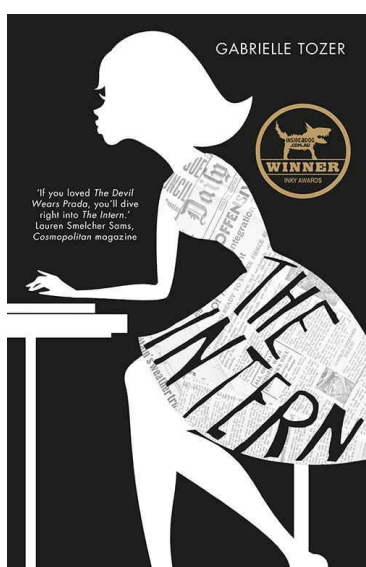
## About the Author

Gabrielle Tozer is an internationally published author with a background in journalism, editing and copywriting. Her YA novel, *THE INTERN*, won the State Library of Victoria's 2015 Gold Inky Award, and its sequel *FAKING IT* is out now. Gabrielle has shared her passion for storytelling and creativity at numerous events, including the Sydney Writers' Festival's Children's Festival of Moving Stories, Somerset Celebration of Literature, National Young Writers' Festival and the Children's Book Council of Australia's National Conference.



*"Gabby: writes with energy, passion and humour; loves a deadline – it sharpens her wit; is her own best editor and bosses herself around; has a fascination with contemporary culture, life, people – and her writing brings them to life."*

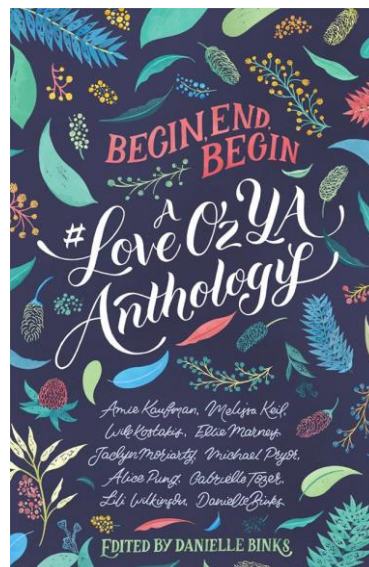
FELICITY PACKARD, *UNDERBELLY* AND *ANZAC GIRLS* SCREEN WRITER



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This novel will help teachers to initiate and facilitate discussions on a range of social issues that are very topical and students are passionate about.

This book invites students and teachers to discuss, analyse, write and think about issues such as grief, love and the passage to adulthood and the impact these experiences have on young people and friendship.

Students will enjoy having the opportunity to discuss these issues, particularly if they are encouraged to say what they truly think.

## Teaching Notes for the Australian Curriculum

Tasks and activities have an ACARA coding system that connects to the Australian Curriculum: English. It includes links to strands, modes, general capabilities and cross curriculum priorities.

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM The Australian Curriculum divides the study of English into three distinct strands, Language, Literature and Literacy and these can be found at <http://v7-.australiancurriculum.edu.au/?dnsi=1>.

These notes are divided into sections following the three strands.

### Language: (LA)

- Language variation and change
- Language for interaction
- Text structure and organisation
- Expressing and developing ideas
- Sound and letter knowledge

### Literature: (LT)

- Literature and context
- Responding to literature
- Examining literature Creating literature

### Literacy: (LY)

- Texts in context
- Interacting with others
- Interpreting, analysing and evaluating
- Creating texts

### MODES

- W** Writing
- L** Listening
- R** Reading
- S** Speaking

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## Transitioning to adulthood - friendship and relationships

This novel will help teachers to facilitate discussions with students about the passage to adulthood, friendship and what it means for peer relations, identity and self-esteem. These concepts underpin study around themes of transitions, discovery and belonging conducted in the senior years of high school.

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### Before reading

1. Ask your students to reflect to what degree friendship is about learning to accept and embrace change in our lives. What discoveries have students made about themselves and friendship in the last year? Invite students to listen to the following radio show on friendship:  
<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/rearvision/the-changing-nature-of-friendship/2981026>

Ask students to write a 500-word reflection on three things they learned from the radio program and what it made them think about their own friendships and transitions. **LW**

Ask students to use voice and language conventions to write a speech about the changing role of friendship in adolescence speaking clearly, coherently and with effect, using logic, imagery and rhetorical devices to engage a teenage audience. **(ACELY1813)**

2. Invite students to write about an unexpected friendship experience that changed over the course of a year. How did they feel before and after the experience? Ask the students to find a metaphor, which captures the change and then invite students to fictionalise that experience and compose a creative writing piece to emotionally engage a teenage audience, using the metaphor and other literary devices to show the change. **W (ACELT1815)**
  3. Ask students to research how transitioning to adulthood can impact friendships and relationships and how it can impact on how a young person sees themselves and others. Ask students to cite two research studies on the topic and then write three thesis statements based on what they discover and prepare a two-minute speech to present to the class. **S (ACELA1568)**
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### Reading

1. Invite the students to do a character analysis of Milo and Layla and map out their friendship over the course of the book. Include their relationships with Sally and Kurt. Encourage students to pinpoint the factors that lead to a changing dynamic between them. What is the impact of Milo jumping into the river? What does it symbolise? What can water be a symbol for? Why does it take so long to find out how Layla's mother died? What are the catalysts for change for Milo and Layla? **W (ACELA1567)**
  2. Invite students to think about a serious event from their own lives and what and how much they would tell their friends and family members. Why might it take a long time to tell? Invite students to write two scenes one with a character telling their inner thoughts to a stranger on a bus and another trying to tell someone they really care about to convey that idea. **W (ACELT1639)**
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3. Ask students why has the author chosen to tell the story from two perspectives? How does this create emotion and intrigue? Ask students to interview two people they know who experienced the same event and then create a podcast about it, then produce a creative writing piece from two different character's perspectives. **LSW (ACELT1815)**
4. Much of the novel is dialogue and texts between Layla and Milo. How has the author captured the 'voice' of each character? Invite students to study passages of dialogue and texts and appraise how the author uses dialogue and texts for characterisation and to draw out an emotional response from the teenage audience. **(ACELT1643)**
5. Ask students to compare the relationship between Layla and Milo with another couple of friends from a related text. Write an essay about how dialogue is used in both texts to aid characterisation and explore transitions. **(ACELT1774)**
6. Lies and Friendship – do Milo and Layla lie to Sally and Kurt? Does Sally lie to Milo and Kurt to Layla? Consider the following poem, ask students to use this poem as a related text and write two synthesised paragraphs on this poem and *Remind Me How This Ends* on the topic of the function of lies in the lives of the young.

TELLING LIES TO THE YOUNG IS WRONG  
 Telling lies to the young is wrong. Proving to them that lies are true is wrong.  
 Telling them that God's in his heaven  
 and all's well with the world is wrong.  
 The young know what you mean. The young are people.  
 Tell them the difficulties can't be counted  
 and let them see not only what will be  
 but see with clarity these present times  
 Say obstacles exist they must encounter,  
 sorrow happens, hardship happens.  
 The hell with it. Who never knew  
 the price of happiness will not be happy.  
 Forgive no error you recognize,  
 it will repeat itself, increase,  
 and afterwards our pupils  
 will not forgive in us what we forgave.  
 –Yevgeny Yevtushenko. **(ACELT1774)**

## Texts, changing identity and the teenage audience

This novel covers many issues such as the nature of relationships between young men and women, drugs in country towns, boredom and finding meaning, purpose and direction in life.

1. Evaluate the social, moral and ethical positions represented in the text. **(ACELT1812)**  
 Look at the characters of Kurt and Sally – what set of ideas do they represent and what moral challenges do they present? Invite students to create a radio play of these two characters and the social and moral challenges they present to both Milo and Layla as well as a teenage audience. **WS**
2. What life lessons can be drawn from studying *Remind Me How This Ends*? What makes the text

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universal, valuable and transcendent?

Host a class debate on one of the following questions:

Should texts reflect the lives of students?

What kinds of texts should be studied in school?

What is the purpose of fiction?

Why should some issues not be discussed in schools? What does this say about the power of fiction?

Are fictional books relevant to teenagers in this day and age? **WS (ACELT1812).**

3. Ask students to read aloud, annotate, analyse and evaluate the following famous poem from the ninth century.

### **Pangur Bán**

(from the Irish by [Robin Flower](#))

I and Pangur Ban my cat,  
'Tis a like task we are at:  
Hunting mice is his delight,  
Hunting words I sit all night.  
Better far than praise of men  
'Tis to sit with book and pen;  
Pangur bears me no ill-will,  
He too plies his simple skill.  
'Tis a merry task to see  
At our tasks how glad are we,  
When at home we sit and find  
Entertainment to our mind.  
Oftentimes a mouse will stray  
In the hero Pangur's way;  
Oftentimes my keen thought set  
Takes a meaning in its net.  
'Gainst the wall he sets his eye  
Full and fierce and sharp and sly;  
'Gainst the wall of knowledge I  
All my little wisdom try.  
When a mouse darts from its den,  
O how glad is Pangur then!  
O what gladness do I prove  
When I solve the doubts I love!  
So in peace our task we ply,  
Pangur Ban, my cat, and I;  
In our arts we find our bliss,  
I have mine and he has his.  
Practice every day has made  
Pangur perfect in his trade;  
I get wisdom day and night  
Turning darkness into light.

4. Ask students to use this poem as a related text and write a synthesised essay, considering purpose, context and audience of this poem and *Remind Me How This Ends* on the topic of the function of fiction and poetry to provide moral insights and guidance. **(ACELT1774)**

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5. Ask students to create an imaginative vlog on a challenging lesson they have learned that they would like to share with a teenage audience. **(ACELY1756)**  
Students must establish a sustained 'voice', select and adapt appropriate text structures, literary devices, language, auditory and visual structures and features to appeal to their intended audience **(ACELT1815)**
6. Ask students to form groups and then plan, rehearse and deliver a presentation selecting and sequencing appropriate content from the text on the issue of who and what criterion should determine what are appropriate texts to study in the later years of high school **WS (ACELY1751)**.

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## Grief and Loss

There are many different examples of grief and loss in *Remind Me How this Ends*. Layla has lost her mother and she has become isolated from her father and stepmother. Milo has become distanced from his girlfriend Sally and his parents and both Milo and Layla have lost a sense of purpose and direction.

1. Ask students to find examples of how loss has impacted on Milo and Layla. Ask the students to write a poem for an adult audience that conveys their own experience of loss. Use literary devices, language, auditory and visual structures and features that will appeal to their intended audience **RW (ACELT1815)**
2. Ask students to find evidence of the changing relationship Layla has with her stepmother Shirin. What does Shirin bring to her life? How did she see Shirin at the beginning of the novel and at the end? What is the connection between her growing relationship with Shirin and her ability to go and visit her mother's grave and acknowledge her mother's death?
3. Ask students to research the impact on adolescents of losing a parent. Ask students to develop three thesis statements on this issue and to then write a detailed paragraph, citing two references, and drawing on evidence from the text on why relationships with adults and peers are important for the emotional growth and wellbeing of young people. **(ACELA1568)**  
What are the implicit and explicit values, beliefs and assumptions demonstrated by the author? **(ACELY1752)**  
**W**
4. Invite students to create a teenage character, male or female, and to then write a diary entry for that character who has lost a parent and wishes to have nothing to do with a new step-parent. Write another scene with the character encountering the step-parent and wanting to have nothing to do with him or her. Write a final scene of the step-parent making a kind gesture to the character, bringing over food, paying for driving lessons, which surprises the character and makes him or her start to see the step-parent in a different light. How different is fiction to what happens in real life? Why? Would students like to see texts that are more reflective of real life?  
Is the current context reshaping young adult fiction? Should it? Organise a class discussion on this topic. **(ACELT1812) WS**