

College Book 2003-04

SUGGESTED CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES, BY DISCIPLINE, FOR *Lucky* by Alice Sebold

Administration of Justice:

Discuss how modern technology has made it possible for a rapist to be identified. Using the [Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature](#), find an article on a rape case from 1960 or earlier and compare it to the account of Alice's rape.

Discuss the policeman who (pp. 108-109) chased three black students despite Alice's saying that none of them was her attacker. How widespread is this kind of behavior? What, if anything, can be done to "weed out" candidates for the police force who are like this?

Research procedures for a line-up in California.

Define *date rape*, *acquaintance rape*, *statutory rape*

African-American Studies:

Discuss racial profiling.

Find a case of a white athlete who has been accused and tried for rape. What are the similarities and differences between that case and Kobe Bryant's case?

Alice's African-American friend, Victor, hugs her after he finds out her assailant was black (page 24). Discuss his decision to do this, as well as her reaction to it, in the context of race.

Art:

Using descriptions from *Lucky*, make two drawings of the tunnel where Alice was raped, one in daytime and the other at night.

In pairs, describe a face to your partner and have him/her sketch it. Reverse roles. What kinds of challenges are there in illustrating a verbal description?

Alice is asked to identify her attacker's face using a book with pages of noses, eyes, etc. Draw five distinct noses (or eyes, etc.) including one which you would identify as your own. See if your partner can guess which one. Reverse roles.

Anthropology:

Using the Encyclopedia of World Cultures, Encyclopedia of Religion, or Encyclopedia Judaica, compare two or more cultures on their attitudes toward virginity and rape.

Asian-American Studies:

Investigate the "comfort women" from World War II. Using the Library's databases or the online catalog, find an interview with one of these women.

Biology:

Explain how DNA is used to identify a criminal.

Business:

Pick one of the health care plans available on campus or in the community. Find out whether the plan pays for psychological counseling, how many sessions are authorized (plus cost per session) and who makes that decision.

Chemistry:

Find the chemical formula for heroin.

Child Development:

How would you explain to a child that there are people who might want to harm him/her? What would you advise the child to do? Role play being in a child care setting and having to teach this to the children in your care.

How would you deal with a parent who objects to your "scaring" her child in the scenario above?

Chinese:

See activities listed under **Spanish**.

Communication:

Pretend you are Alice and you are giving a speech about rape awareness to a church group, a group at freshman (college) orientation, or another group of your choice.

Pretend you are Alice and you have an opportunity to make a victim impact statement at Gregory Madison's parole hearing. What would you say?

Imagine that a friend has been raped and is now considering suicide because remembering is so painful for her. What would you say to try to change her mind?

Computer Information Systems:

Discuss how computers have changed police work.

Discuss the problem of sexual predators finding their victims over the Internet. What can, or should, parents do to be aware of what their children are doing? Is there software that would eliminate access to chat rooms? If so, what does it cost?

Research CIPA (Children's Internet Protection Act) and explain why it is controversial.

Dance:

Choreograph a dance showing Alice's many moods from the book. Alternatively, choose one scene and show her emotions through dance.

Dental hygiene:

Discuss how dental records are used to identify murder victims. Try to find out when this started.

Economics:

Calculate the cost of keeping Gregory Madison in prison in New York State for 25 years and for 8.33 years. If you cannot find figures for the nineteen eighties, use contemporary figures.

Education:

How might respect for others be taught in elementary school? In high school?

If you were a high school teacher, would you initiate a discussion of rape if some of the students found it uncomfortable or offensive? How would you deal with a parent who objected to such a class discussion?

What would you do if you, as a female high school teacher, felt threatened by one of your male students who was much taller and bigger than you? What if it were just a "gut feeling", if he had never actually said anything threatening to you?

Education:

Should self-defense be part of the high school curriculum? Why or why not?

EMT:

Imagine that you are called to the scene of a rape. What would you do first for the victim? subsequently ?

English:

Research the different kinds of rape.

Do you think that Lila has read Lucky ? Do you think she will contact Alice ?

Was Alice Sebold truly "lucky"? Why or why not?

If you were raped and became pregnant, would you have an abortion? (for male students, would you advocate abortion for your sister if she were raped?)

Do you think that Lucky is an uncomfortable choice for the College Book? Does it make you "squeamish"? If so, is that good or bad?

Is it more difficult for the victim when the accused rapist is a celebrity or financially able to hire a high-profile attorney?

Have two students role play a situation in which a female student is suspicious of a male student and he is insulted by this. Write a short essay giving your point of view.

Should Alice 's virginity have made a difference in her rape trial? Explain.

What if the races of Alice and the rapist were reversed? What kind of effect, if any, do you think that would have had on the investigation and the trial?

Does the victim bear any responsibility in acts of sexual violence? To what degree? For example, if she walks alone in an unsafe location, if she wears provocative clothing (does that need to be defined?), if she has been promiscuous.

How would you characterize Alice 's relationship with her sister before and then after the rape?

Why did Lila's rape destroy their friendship?

Discuss the different clothing Alice wears at various points in her story. For example, why does it matter that she was wearing a cardigan and oxford-cloth shirt when she was attacked? Nude stockings (borrowed) at the grand jury hearing? Red, white, and blue at the trial? Does it seem reasonable that a jury would judge a rape victim by her attire ? *Note that one of the first things Scott Peterson's attorney did was to request (granted) that his client come into court in a suit, not the prison jumpsuit.*

On page 25, Sebold tells about doing research for the book many years after the rape. A woman, without recognizing her, says that she was the victim's best friend. Of course, Sebold didn't know her at all. Discuss why people do things like this and find examples in everyday life (slowing down in traffic to get a glimpse of an accident victim, etc.).

Remember Elizabeth Smart, the Salt Lake City 14-year old who was kidnapped by a homeless couple and kept for nine months as a second wife? Her parents allowed television interviews and a TV film, and they wrote a book about their experience. At no time did they allow specifics about what Elizabeth suffered (i.e. rape). The parents were criticized for "exploiting" their daughter. Using the Library's databases, search for articles about the publicity and the criticism. Do you think the parents were right or wrong in their decision? Why or why not?

Fire Science:

In some small communities, the volunteer fire department would transport a crime victim to the hospital. Imagine that you are in such a situation, and the victim has been raped and beaten. Role play how you would act.

French:

See activities listed under **Spanish** .

Geography:

Find maps of Syracuse and Syracuse University and locate places mentioned in the book.

Health:

Do you think Alice Sebold down-played her addiction to heroin and made it seem easy to kick the habit? Do you think that celebrities who go public with their addiction and rehabilitation help or hurt young people?

History:

Research *prima nocte* .

Italian:

See activities listed under **Spanish** .

Japanese:

See **activities** listed under **Spanish** .

Journalism:

Debate the right of the public to know about a rape as opposed to the right of the victim for anonymity. If you were the editor-in-chief of the Syracuse University newspaper, would you publish Alice 's name? Would you make a different choice if you were editor-in-chief of a big city newspaper? How about the National Enquirer, assuming that either the victim or the accused was famous?

Read accounts of the Kobe Bryant trial in various newspapers and try to discover a bias, if any.

Legal Office Professional:

Using Lexis Nexis (database), find a rape case.

Mathematics:

Research rape statistics in the United States . Compare those statistics with another country. In which country is the likelihood of rape higher? Do you think the statistics are accurate? Why or why not?

Music:

Find pieces of music that exemplify Alice 's emotions at various times in the book.

Nursing:

Read the section of the book where Alice has been brought to the hospital following the rape. Have procedures for dealing with a rape victim changed since 1981, when the story takes place?

What is included in a "rape kit"? For how long is the kit kept (in San Diego , for example)?

Personal development:

Imagine that you are interested in a career as a rape counselor or crisis counselor. Find information about it and tell whether you would like that kind of work, including your reasons.

(For student athletes): Give some examples of famous athletes who have been accused of rape. How has their celebrity contributed to the problem?

Pilipino:

See activities listed under **Spanish** .

Political science:

If you were a lawyer, would you be able to defend a man whom you believed to be guilty of rape? If you turned down the case, what reasons would you give?

Discuss Alice 's failure to identify Gregory Madison in the police lineup. Does it seem fair to you that he was able to enlist a look-like friend to intimidate and frighten Alice ? From the point of view of a defendant , does it seem fair?

If Kobe Bryant is found guilty, he could go to prison for the rest of his life. Discuss whether this is an appropriate punishment or too harsh. In your class discussion, you may want to see if gender makes a difference in responses. (*Instructors: you may want to have anonymous balloting for this.*)

Psychology:

Is Alice a classic example of Adult Children of Alcoholics? Why or why not?

Discuss Post-traumatic Stress Syndrome. Does Alice fit the definition?

Research the psychological aspects, behavior, and potential treatments for the three types of rapists discussed in the book.

Discuss the reactions of Alice's friends and classmates to her rape. In general, were the men or the women more compassionate and understanding?

Discuss hatred and the desire for revenge and how it affects a person physically and emotionally.

Real estate:

Imagine that you are an agent and anxious to sell a property in an isolated area. You are asked to show it to a single man who, frankly, makes you feel uncomfortable, although you don't know why. What would you do? Go with your instincts? Push them aside? Bring someone else along?

Religion:

Using the Encyclopedia of Religion , compare two or more religions on their attitudes toward rape and/or virginity.

Sociology:

Find statistics and/or profiles of rapists, of rape victims. What sociological factors can be attributed to each?

Alice mentions at one point that she and her sister were "raised in a house where my mother's problems were the glue of family". Discuss the Sebold household and the effect of Alice 's rape on each of its members. In what ways did the family provide the support she needed in the aftermath of the rape? Were you disturbed by any of their responses and behaviors?

How would you characterize Alice 's relationship with her sister before and then after the rape?

Spanish:

Role play for four students: A young woman (Student #1) who speaks no English is brought into the emergency room. Her injuries indicate rape. A hospital employee (Student #2) is brought in to translate for the male doctor (Student #3), but the victim becomes hysterical and wants a female doctor (Student #4).

Have one student interview (another student) author Alice Sebold about her book *Lucky* on a Spanish-language radio station.

Telemedia:

You have been asked to find two additional films for the College Book film series. What films would you choose, and why? *Note: the films already chosen are "Town without Pity", "The Accused", "A Time to Kill", and "Prince of Tides".*

Theatre Arts:

Using the dialogue given in the book, act out Alice's appearance on the witness stand.

If a play or film were to be made of *Lucky*, which well-known actors would you cast in all the parts?

Travel and Tourism:

What precautions should a single woman take when traveling alone?

What should a person do if she is raped or sexually assaulted in another country?

Women's Studies:

Research at least one culture, past or present, where women have little or no rights.

Alice is asked by jury members why she was walking alone through the park at night. To what degree, if any, is a victim responsible for sexual violence?

Discuss Alice's poem and its description of violent hatred toward her rapist. Why do you think her friend, Maria, is uncomfortable with her aggression and dismisses it as untrue?

During the rape, Alice eventually gives up the physical struggle, believing she will be killed. She also intuitively determines she must convince him that he has complete power over her. Do you think these personality traits helped save her life or did they just make her an easier victim?

Other Resources

"A Parent's Guide to Internet Safety" published by the FBI and downloadable in English or Spanish.
<http://www.fbi.gov/publications/pguide/pguide.htm>

Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network
<http://www.rainn.org>

Center for Community Solutions, the City of San Diego's only rape crisis center
<http://www.ccssd.org>
24-hour toll-free number: 1-888-272-1767

Men Can Stop Rape
<http://www.mencanstoprape.org>

The Rape Crisis Center
<http://www.rapecrisis.com>

Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape

<http://www.pcar.org>

Islamic Women under Shari'alaw

<http://sportsoutreach.org/index.asp?loc=kb&id=13120&mode=v&fto=622&>

"Traditional" Rapein Aboriginal Australia

<http://www.womensenews.org/article.cfm/dyn/aid/1126>

Burmaand the SLORC Militants

<http://www.womensenews.org/article.cfm/dyn/aid/1126>

Rape in Ancient Greece

<http://www.upenn.edu/pennnews/current/2001/011801/feature8.html>