

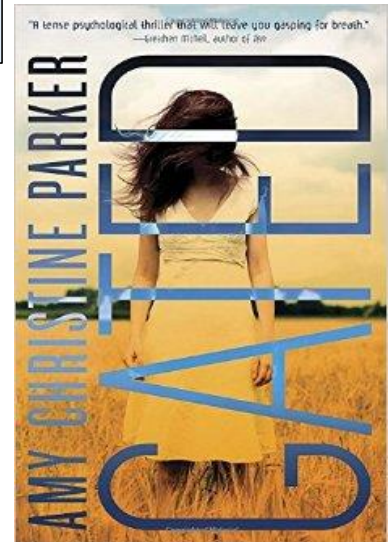
# TEACHER'S GUIDE: GRADES 7-12



Random House Children's  
A Division of Penguin Random House

# GATED

By Amy Christine Parker



## SYNOPSIS

### Appearances can be deceiving.

After her sister disappears from outside her family's brownstone and the Twin Towers fall in New York City within the same few weeks, Lyla and her parents are broken and afraid. Life seems more dangerous than they ever imagined. So when a charismatic man named Pioneer befriends the family, he is able to convince them to move to the middle of the United States—far away from any cities and towns—where they will help him start a utopia-like community. For ten years they, in addition to many other families, isolate themselves and begin preparing for the end of days (as predicted by Pioneer) by building an elaborate underground doomsday shelter.

Pioneer has provided compelling evidence for the apocalypse and to question it is something the community and Lyla have never considered. But when Cody, the son of the local sheriff, shows up with his father one day, Lyla becomes curious about the outside world. Once she gets to know Cody, she begins to wonder whether or not Pioneer's right about the impending apocalypse. As the days run out and the community prepares to seal themselves underground, Lyla realizes that she isn't ready. But the more she begins to raise concerns about the end of days and Pioneer, the more he goes to great lengths to keep her obedient. Can she be strong enough to stand up to Pioneer even if it means standing alone?

## PRAISE FOR GATED

2014 YALSA 2014 Quick Pick for Reluctant Readers

Amazon Best Teen Books of the Month  
Spotlight Pick, July 2013

Foreign rights sold to Germany, Turkey, and Denmark

“After the last page is turned, the question will linger: ‘Could I ever be deceived like this?’” —  
**School Library Journal**

“A complex, intriguing tale rooted in real-world events.”—**Publisher's Weekly**

“Compelling.”—**Kirkus, starred review**

“Mysterious, entrancing and dark.” —  
**TeenReads.com**

“Entertaining throughout.” —**Examiner.com**

“This one has a bit of everything—mystery, intense action, real life issues, and romance.”—  
**My Book Addiction**

“A tense psychological thriller that will leave you gasping for breath as you race to the very last page.” —**Gretchen McNeil, author of TEN**

## PRE-READING ACTIVITY #1

In GATED, Lyla is under extreme psychological pressure to conform to the belief system of Pioneer and her community. Understanding why people go along with ideas/situations that to an outsider can seem preposterous can be difficult for readers. In order to help them understand how humans react under social pressure to conform, carry out a mini version of the [Asch Conformity Experiment](#) with your students.

Decide in advance which students will be the controls and which will be the subject of the test. You need one subject and three to five controls (or more—the more controls, the more intense the peer pressure will be).

Create cards with lines on them: One card with one line, a second card with three lines—one that matches the length of the line on the first card and two that obviously do not—labeled 1,2,3. Make four rounds of cards. (see example below).

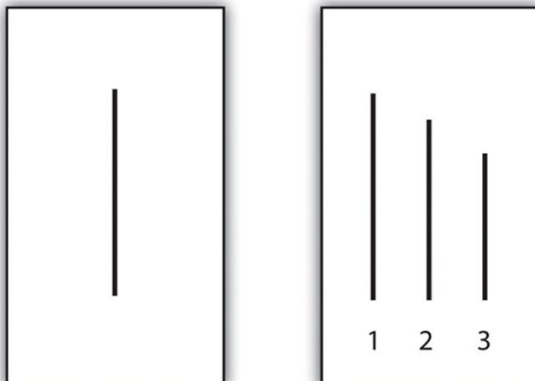
Without the test subject hearing, inform the students chosen as controls to give the same wrong answers for which line matches the line on the first card in each round. At no time during the rounds should the controls give away what they are doing.

Bring in the test subject and inform the group as a whole that they are going to take part in a cognitive thinking test. Show them the cards. Have the controls answer first and the test subject answer last.

While the test subject might not change his/her answer to the wrong one, they will feel increasing alarm that they aren't answering the same way as their peers.

Have the test subject describe how they felt during the experiment. Have students discuss peer pressure and how they have experienced it in their own lives.

\*\*\*this can also be done as a post-reading activity



## PRE-READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think people make predictions about when the world will end?
2. Do you believe there will be an apocalypse? Why or why not?
3. Do you think being prepared for the end of the world is something everyone should be doing? Why or why not?
4. What do you know about doomsday shelters?
5. What is conformity?
6. Was there ever a time when you did something you didn't want to because you felt pressured by someone else to do it. How did it make you feel?
7. How do you stand up for something you believe strongly if no one else around you believes you're right?
8. If your parents were preparing for the end of the world and were preparing to move to a safer location, build an underground bunker, and isolate the family from the rest of the world how would you feel? How might your age change how you would feel about this?

## LITERARY TERMS TO KNOW

Common Core:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.7.4

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.8.4

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.9-10.4

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.11-12.4

Have students define these terms ahead of time. As they read have them give an example for each from GATED.

- Foreshadowing
- Symbolism
- Metaphor
- Simile
- Flashback
- Anagram

## TERMS TO FAMILIARIZE STUDENTS WITH

- Apocalypse
- Doomsday Shelter
- Bug Out Bag
- Cult
- Brain Washing
- Prophecy
- Mayan Apocalypse

## EXPOSITORY ESSAY: MAYA APOCALYPSE

Common Core:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.2	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.4
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.2	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.4
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.2	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.4
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.4

Not too long ago, many people began to believe that the ancient Mayan calendar accurately predicted that the end of the world would occur on December 21, 2012. The author of GATED used the panic surrounding this theory as inspiration for the book. Research the Mayan Apocalypse and then write an expository essay about it using facts from your research.

### Useful Links:

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/12/19/mayan-calendar-end-of-the-world\\_n\\_2330018.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/12/19/mayan-calendar-end-of-the-world_n_2330018.html)

<http://www.travelchannel.com/shows/expedition-unknown/video/mayan-apocalypse>



## DOOMSDAY ACTIVITIES

Common Core:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W7.7	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W8.7
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W9-10.7	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W11-12.7

Lyla's community is very concerned with surviving the end of the world, so much so that they build an elaborate underground shelter and stock supplies. Building a shelter like theirs can be a complicated process and so can adequately preparing for a world-ending event. Research different kinds of doomsday shelters—from backyard versions to large apartment building style structures meant to house hundreds of people—and how people prepare for an apocalyptic disaster to do one of the following activities:

1. Describe some of the common elements every shelter needs and why they are important? Draw your own floor plans for the kind of shelter you would build.
2. Create your own Bug Out Bag. Write an essay describing the items you think you would have to have to survive and the items you'd take that would have nothing to do with survival. Explain the importance of each item and why you choose it.
3. Pick a doomsday scenario (contagion, zombies, massive computer failure, natural disaster), research it, and then create a written plan for how it can be survived.

## DEBUNK GATED

Common Core:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.1	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.1
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.1	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.1
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.3	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.3
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.3	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.3
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.8	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.8
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.8	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.8

Pioneer uses half-truths and pseudo-science to convince his community that the world is going to end. After reading the book, go back and find the current events/scientific theories he uses to support his doomsday predictions (specifically how it might happen) and explain why each are false.

Use this article on the Mayan Apocalypse to help you.

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/nasa-crushes-2012-mayan-apocalypse-claims/>

## DYSTOPIAN COMPARE/CONTRAST ACTIVITY

### Common Core:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.6

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.6

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.6

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.6

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.9

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.9

One of the reasons the author wrote GATED was to suggest that dystopian societies like those found in many other futuristic novels can and do exist in our world today (North Korea and China are two examples). Have a discussion with students about what a dystopia is, citing examples from books and movies that contain dystopian societies (Delirium by Lauren Oliver, Divergent by Veronica Roth, The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins, 1984 by George Orwell, The Giver by Lois Lowry). Brainstorm a list of things these types of societies have in common: rigid rules, a people heavily governed by one person or group of people, restricted information, an atmosphere that discourages individual thought, etc.

Have students pick one of the movies, books, modern day societies discussed and complete a Venn Diagram or create a PowerPoint comparing how it is similar to the community in GATED and how it is different.

## STAGES OF REVISION (USE WITH SHORT STORY ACTIVITY)

**Step One:** Revise the rough draft for CONTENT only. Ask yourself these questions:

Does the story make sense?

Does it have a clear beginning, middle, and end?

Are the characters and setting well developed?

Does the main character change in some way from the beginning of the story to the end? (They should)

Is there a main conflict in this story that will be very difficult for the main character to resolve?

**Step Two:** Swap stories with two or three critique partners and get feedback on the above from them. Do not worry about grammar and spelling yet!

**Step Three:** Revise the story using the feedback received. Rule of thumb: If more than one person mentions the same issue, it definitely needs to be addressed.

**Step Four:** Go back and revise for grammar and spelling.

## CURRENT EVENT SHORT STORY

### Common Core:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.3

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.3

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.3

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.5

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.5

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.5

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.5

The author gets all of her story inspiration from documentaries and current events that peak her curiosity and get her asking one vital question: What if? For GATED, Amy was inspired by the three things: the impending (at the time she was writing) Mayan Apocalypse, a documentary on doomsday shelters, and the times she watched Scientologists walking the streets of Clearwater en masse (all wearing the exact same clothes) as she took her daughter to story time at the Clearwater library. Her “what if” for GATED was: What would it be like to grow up with parents who strongly believed in an impending apocalypse?

Have students scour current news (could be from a show, magazine, newspaper, etc.) for real stories they find interesting.

Have students brainstorm ways that they might be able to use their real life story to brainstorm their own fictional short story. It can be from any genre: fantasy, science fiction, horror, romance, or mystery.

Using the story board techniques shown here:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pMhLvMJ\\_r0Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pMhLvMJ_r0Y)

And here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BiWQHlJHOs8>

Once they have brainstormed what scenes they will need, have them draft a rough draft of their story then follow the process most writers use to revise their work (before they send it to their agents/editors for even more revisions).

\*\*\*\*The author offers a special in person presentation on storyboarding that is perfect for jump-starting this activity. To invite her to visit your school, please visit her website: [www.amychristineparker.com](http://www.amychristineparker.com)

