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**TO ALL THE BOYS I’VE LOVED BEFORE**

by Jenny Han

**Louisiana Teen Reader’s Choice Nominee 2017**

**Grade 9-12**

*Submitted by Brittany Russell, Student,*

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**Title:** *To All the Boys I’ve Loved Before*

**Author:** Jenny Han

**Publisher:** Simon & Schuster

**Pages:** 355

**SUMMARY**

This is a story about a Korean American girl who, like many teenagers, is trying to make the best of the dating world. With her mom gone and her sister at college in another country, it is up to Lara Jean to figure out how to navigate the boys in her life on her own, and she has a unique method for doing so. When she wants to get over a crush on a boy, she writes a goodbye letter to him to express her feelings and is then able to move on with her life. The letters are meant to be kept and never mailed, but one day they disappear and somehow reach their addressees. One of the boys who receives a letter and confronts her about it is Josh, the ex-boyfriend of her sister, but, not wanting him or her sister to get the wrong idea, Lara Jean agrees to a pretend relationship with another boy to show that she is over her crush on Josh for good (though she is not entirely sure about that). The situation leads to confusion and unexpected feelings in this is a story of love triangles, breakups, fake relationships, and true love.

**AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY**

Though Jenny Han was born in Richmond, VA, both of her parents were originally from South Korea, and the pride in her heritage is reflected in the Song sisters of *To All the Boys I’ve Loved Before* and its sequels. She has written two trilogies, one in collaboration with fellow author Siobhan Vivian, as well as four standalone books and is a best-selling author.

**AWARDS**

The New York Times Young Adult Best Seller

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Author website <http://www.dearjennyhan.com>

**OTHER TITLES BY AUTHOR**

*Shug* (2006)

*The Summer I Turned Pretty* (2009)

*Burn for Burn* (2012)

*P.S. I Still Love You* (2015)

**RELATED TITLES**

*The Book of Broken Hearts* by Sarah Ockler

*Isla and the Happily Ever After* by Stephanie Perkins

*Catch a Falling Star* by Kim Culbertson

*Love and Other Foreign Words* by Erin McCahan

**CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS**

**Language Arts:**

Lara Jean writes letters to her former crushes explaining her feelings for each of the boys and how she managed to rid herself of those feelings. Have students think of an issue about which their feelings have changed with time (a food they no longer like, a band whose music they no longer listen to, etc.) and write a letter on that subject, detailing why they formerly felt one way or held one opinion but no longer do.

**Social Studies:**

* Lara Jean was born in America, but her parents are Korean, just as Jenny Han has parents who are from South Korea. Have students research the differences and similarities between North Korea and South Korea and create a Venn Diagram to organize their findings.
* Lara Jean mentions her dad’s bo ssäm, a traditional Korean dish. Have each student write recipes for a dish based on their own heritage (after first speaking with family members or otherwise researching the subject if necessary) and create a class cookbook.

**Art:**

Margot and Lara Jean have trouble finding costumes for Halloween, prompting Margot to dress as an abstract concept. Have students create an abstract idea that could be used as a Halloween costume and, with a partner and art supplies, create that costume or an essential part of it.

**Technology**

Lara Jean writes her letters by hand, but how might the book have been different if she had composed email drafts instead? Would the unsent letters have been more or less secure in this medium than on paper? Ask students to create a tutorial for increasing the security of a personal email account (how to create a secure password, make the most of built-in security features, safely access an account from multiple devices, etc.).

**Vocabulary:**

Conviction

Exorcise

Hatbox

Hostel

Grit

Manga

Parfumerie

Vindicated

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Does reading the actual content of Lara Jean’s letters add to the story? How? How would it be different if the letters were not included but only referenced?
2. How do the lies that are told throughout the story affect the characters? List at least three different lies told, and explain what consequence they have had for both the person telling the lie and the person led to believe it.
3. The Song girls have lost their mother, leading Margot to take a motherly role with her sisters. In what ways is Margot still responsible for her sisters, even miles away at college? Cite evidence from the text.
4. Lara Jean does not tell her sister about her feelings for Josh. If she had, how might the story have been different? Would they have reacted the way she imagined? Give another possible outcome and support your theory with examples from the book.
5. What are some of the ways in which Lara Jean’s family tries to honor their Korean roots? How do these traditions impact the characters? How might the story have been different if Lara Jean had different heritage?

**RELATED WEB SITES**

**Korean Customs and Beliefs**

<http://www.brighthubeducation.com/social-studies-help/121158-korean-customs-and-beliefs>

Insight into aspects of Korean culture, including the importance of families and religious beliefs.

**Is Birth Order Destiny? Why You Shouldn’t Let Stereotypes Dictate Your Fate**

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/fulfillment-any-age/201305/is-birth-order-destiny>

Information on birth order as tied to personality traits.

***Cyrano de Bergerac* Summary**

<http://www.shmoop.com/cyrano-de-bergerac/summary.html>

A summary of Edmond Rostand’s *Cyrano de Bergerac*, in which the main character expresses love and romance through letters, just as Lara Jean does in *To All the Boys I’ve Loved Before*.

**Emotional and Physical Health Benefits of Expressive Writing**

[http://apt.rcpsych.org/content/11/5/338.full.pdf+html](http://apt.rcpsych.org/content/11/5/338.full.pdf%2Bhtml)

An article from the journal *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment* on the effects of therapeutic writing exercises.