

Tea Party Pre-Reading Strategy:
What do you think *Speak* is about, based on the quotations below?

1. It is my first morning of high school. I have seven new notebooks, a skirt I hate, and a stomachache.
2. There is no point looking for my ex-friends.
3. The First Ten Lies They Tell You In High School
4. I plunge my hand into the bottom of the globe and fish out my paper. "Tree." Tree? It's too easy. I learned how to draw a tree in second grade.
5. My family has a good system. We communicate with notes on the kitchen counter. I write when I need school supplies or a ride to the mall. They write what time they'll be home from work and if I should thaw anything. What else is there to say?
6. Gym should be illegal. It is humiliating.
7. I haven't stumbled into a classroom; it is an old janitor's closet that smells like sour sponges.
8. This closet is abandoned - it has no purpose, no name. It is the perfect place for me.
9. I have worked so hard to forget every second of that stupid party.
10. The Parents are making threatening noises, turning dinner into performance art, with Dad doing his Arnold Schwarzenegger imitation and Mom playing Glenn Close in one of her psycho roles. I am the Victim.

11. He has the potential to be cute when the braces come off.

12. Heather has found a clan - the Marthas.

13. I see IT in the hallway.

14. I bet they'd be divorced by now if I hadn't been born. I'm sure I was a huge disappointment.

15. I don't remember passing out.

16. "Freshmeat." That's what IT whispers.

17. They keep asking questions like "What is wrong with you?" and "Do you think this is cute?"

18. The first hour of blowing off school is great.

19. I should probably tell someone, just tell someone. Get it over with. Let it out, blurt it out.

20. I want to be in fifth grade again.

21. Nothing good ever happens at lunch. The cafeteria is a giant sound stage where they film daily segments of Teenage Humiliation Rituals.

22. We were never really, really friends, were we?

23. You have a reputation.

24. Don't be so hard on yourself. Art is about making mistakes and learning from them.

25. This is my mistake, thinking I belong.

26. A lady answered the phone, "Police, state your emergency."

27. My Report Card: Social Life F Social Studies F Clothes F

28. Is he asking me out? I don't think so. But he kind of is. I guess I'll answer if he calls.

29. The art room is one of the places I feel safe.

30. The tears dissolve the last block of ice in my throat.

Example Tea Party Discussion

Student One: My card reads, "gym should be illegal. It is humiliating". This must be a story about someone in school who hates gym.

Student Two: Mine says, "I am Outcast".

Student Three: Like the band Outcast? Maybe she's in the band!

Student One: No, quit joking around. It goes back to school. This person's in school and they feel like an outcast.

Student Two: Right! This person really feels like an outcast though. They are using the word "outcast" with a capital letter so it's more like a name.

Student Four: They must not be very popular. Mine is "Maya Angelou watches me, two fingers on the side of her face. It is an intelligent pose. Maya wants me to tell Rachel". I think Rachel is a friend and Maya must be a teacher. This person must have a secret.

Student Three: Nope, Maya Angelou is a poet. Remember, we read one of her poems last semester. This person must like to read poems. That's cool.

Student Five: Mine says "Rachel/Rachelle has lost her mind. She has flipped. She went to the movies with Andy Beast and her exchange friends and now she follows after him like a bichon frise". What's a bichon frise?

Student One: My aunt has one of those. It's a white, fluffy dog. He's always following me around.

Student Two: No way! This person is calling Rachel a dog. She must be jealous! I'd be mad if someone called me something like that.

Student Three: Or envious, there is a difference between envy and jealousy.

Student Four: Beast is an odd last name. I think the person's making fun of him. He must have done something to make him a beast.