



Foolproof

Diane Tullson

Reading level: 3.6

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Book Summary

Daniel has no idea what he is getting into when the beautiful Cyn Hawley begins to take an interest in him. Cyn is beautiful, popular and smart, so Daniel is thrilled that they are dating. They frequently cross the border to shop, buying gas for Cyn's car and Malabar's, Cyn's favorite chocolate bar. However, the real reason they cross the border is far more sinister than candy bars and gas. Daniel soon finds out that Cyn is working for a drug ring; their trips across the border are just a façade for smuggling drugs. Even though Daniel attempts to free Cyn from the mess, someone will lose their life.

Prereading Idea

Rick Riordan, author of *The Lightning Thief*, says, "Humans see what they want to see." Ask students, "What does he mean by this statement?" And, "How can you apply this to your life or the life of someone you know?" Discuss this concept with the class. Then have students make predictions on how this quote may apply to the novel and have them return to their predictions after completing the novel.

Connecting to the World—Writing and Research Ideas

- After students complete reading *Foolproof*, ask them to write a reaction paper to the story using quotes or events from the story and personal connections they make to the characters or the situations the characters encounter. Within their paper, students should reflect on the importance of the connections and what the long term implications are for them personally in their own lives. Have students share their papers in small groups.
- Cyn tells so many lies that it is difficult for Daniel to know the truth about Cyn's life. Ask students to write a biography of Cyn's life based on the information they glean from the text. Students can choose to write from one of the following points of view: Daniel, Cyn or Dove. Ask for student volunteers to read their papers.
- Daniel is definitely fooled by Cyn, but there are red flags throughout the story that Daniel should have seen. Ask students to create a visual timeline of the signals that Daniel missed, and to write an explanation to accompany their timeline of why Daniel missed them. Post timelines and explanations in the classroom.

Connecting to the Text—Elements of the Novel

Characterization

On the surface Daniel and Cyn do not seem to have a lot in common. Have students work in groups of four to create a poster-sized Venn diagram of the individual characteristics of Daniel and Cyn. In the center of the diagram, ask students to list their common characteristics and other similarities. Have students also include differences in the appropriate places on the Venn diagram. Then get students to locate evidence from the text that supports the ideas listed in both the similarities and the differences between the two characters, and to add the evidence to the diagram. Have each group partner with another small group to share their ideas and evidence. Display posters in the classroom.

Point of View

Foolproof is written from Daniel's point-of-view. Ask students to select a scene and to rewrite the scene from another character's point-of-view. When the rewrites are complete, divide students into small groups to share their writing. After sharing within their group, ask students to reflect individually on whether or not their rewrite is more powerful than the original, and to explain why they believe that to be true.

Conflict

The characters in *Foolproof* struggle with both internal and external conflicts. After discussing conflict in small groups, have students select a character and using an 8 ½ x 11 sheet of paper (or larger) draw the character's conflict journey throughout the book. Students should include the conflicts, both internal and external, events that increased the conflicts, conflict resolutions, and lessons learned by the character. Post the conflict journey maps around the room.

Connecting to the Students—Discussion Questions

1. How does Daniel's family keep him grounded? What values does Daniel possess as a result of the influence his family has on him?
2. Why does Cyn repeatedly lie to Daniel? What is her fear of telling the truth? How does Daniel react to her lies?
3. Based on Daniel's and Maxwell's reactions to Cyn's and Mila's attentions, what kind of guys do they appear to be? Why are Cyn and Mila attracted to Daniel and Maxwell?
4. Why does Cyn feel trapped in an inescapable situation? Why does she involve Daniel in her mess? How does Daniel make Cyn's situation worse?
5. How does Dove use Cyn? What role does Dove play in Cyn's death?
6. How is Maxwell's comment to Daniel on the end of chapter 12 meant to bring Daniel comfort?
7. Why is the setting integral to the story? Could this story have taken place anywhere else?

Writer's Craft*Dialogue*

The author uses dialogue: (1) to build story background, (2) to develop character, (3) to give readers information, and (4) to move the plot forward. Ask students to locate at least five sections of dialogue and to identify the purpose of each section of dialogue. Then have students select a point in the story that they believe would benefit from dialogue for one of the above reasons. Each group should write and present dialogue for their selected portion of text.

Author Biography

After studying English literature and journalism, **Diane Tullson** has become an award-winning author. She enjoys writing novels for reluctant readers and has earned a Masters in Fine Arts with a focus on literature for reluctant readers. Mrs. Tullson lives in Delta, British Columbia with her family and their golden retriever.