



# Educator Guide

## THE QUEEN OF JUNK ISLAND

by Alexandra Mae Jones

**GENRE:** Young Adult Fiction

**THEMES:** LGBT; ghost stories; self-esteem & self-reliance; diversity; socio-economic status; tradition; family; identity; self-expression; friendship; hope; coming of age; environment; preservation of environment; love; loneliness; judgment; suffering

**SUITABLE FOR:** Grades 10–12, Ages 16–18

**GUIDED READING LEVEL:** Fountas and Pinnell Z

**LEXILE:** HL800L

**COMMON CORE STANDARDS:** RL.8.1,2,3,4,5,6,9

W.8.1,1a,1b,1c,1d,1e,3,3a,3b,3c,3d,3e,4,5,6,7,8,9,9a,10

SL.8.1,1a,1b,1c,1d,2,3,4,5,6

L.8.1,1a,1b,1c,1d,2,2a,2b,2c,3,3a,4,4a,4b,4c,4d,5,5a,5b,5c,6

### SUMMARY:

Still reeling from a recent trauma, sixteen-year-old Dell is relieved when her mom suggests a stay at the family cabin. But the much-needed escape quickly turns into a disaster. The lake and woods are awash in trash left by a previous tenant. And worse, Dell's mom has invited her boyfriend's daughter to stay with them. Confident, irreverent Ivy presses all of Dell's buttons—somehow making Dell's shame and self-consciousness feel even more acute. Yet Dell is drawn to Ivy in a way she doesn't fully understand. As Dell uncovers secrets in the wreckage of her family's past—secrets hinted at through troubling dreams and strange apparitions—Ivy leads her toward thrilling, if confusing, revelations about her sexuality and identity.

Set during a humid summer in the mid-2000s, *The Queen of Junk Island* simmers with the intensity of a teenage girl navigating the suffocating expectations of everyone around her.

Please remember that the suggested questions and activities within this educator guide are meant to serve as a starting point. Educators are encouraged to select items from each part of the guided inquiry process that work best for their style of teaching and will help them meet their goals when covering the topics in this book. Activities and prompts should be tweaked and/or reformatted to best fit your students, context, and community to ensure equity and inclusion.

## Before Reading the Book

These activities build the context, introduce the topic of the book, and establish prior knowledge and interest.

### ACTIVITY # 1: Environmental & Emotional Dig

1. Have students engage in a cleanup mission of a local area (examples: a local park, the school playground or yard, a playground or park around their neighborhood, etc.) in which they investigate the “trash” and “junk” in their area. When going through the “trash” or “junk,” tell students to take their phones, as well as paper and something to write with, on their excursion.
2. As students go through the “trash” and “junk” tell them to record the following:
  - Which items stand out to you, and why?
  - Why do you think these items were left behind?
  - Do you ever throw out items like these? Why or why not?
3. Have students write a blog post, journal entry, or record a podcast in which they share their findings. Tell students to include how investigating trash and litter (“junk”) in their environment is important. Tell them to discuss what leaving these items behind does to their local environment. Finally, have them engage in group discussions about their final products.

### ACTIVITY # 2: Speed Chatting

This activity is based on the idea of speed dating. Students will work with each other (either as a whole group or small groups) to chat about the book they are about to read based on the summary, what they know about the author, the book cover, and any other context they have learned.

After the instructor introduces the book and students read the summary, ask them to do some research on the author. Then, students will go on a speed chat (30 seconds to one minute) in pairs with classmates and discuss the following:

- Share what you have learned so far about the book and/or the author.
- What do you know about Indigenous Peoples in Canada?
- What do you think you will gain from reading this text?

- What questions do you have about the book?
- What kind of characters do you think you will be engaged with as you read this text?
- What do you think the book’s main plot will be?
- What do you think the book’s main themes will be?
- What are you hoping to get from this book?

**ACTIVITY # 3: We Think & We Wonder Chart**

Ask students to use the following chart to make predictions about the text using the book title, cover, summary on the book jacket, author information, and reviews of the book. They can use the following websites for research:

<https://www.goodreads.com/en/book/show/58855148-the-queen-of-junk-island>

<https://www.annickpress.com/Books/T/The-Queen-of-Junk-Island>

<https://www.amazon.com/Queen-Junk-Island-Alexandra-Jones/dp/1773216341>

We Think . . .	We Wonder . . .

# While Reading the Book

These activities check on comprehension, stimulate interest, involve readers in reflection as they read, and encourage consideration of other readers' reactions.

## Part I: The Cottage & Christopher (Chapters 1–3)

### ACTIVITY # 1: Mapping the Impact of Setting & Characters on Plot

Ask students to create a Story Map for this book (many elements WILL NOT be completed at this time. They will revisit this Story Map again during and after reading).

Students can use any outlet for their Story Maps; however, Google Slides, PowerPoint, or Prezi may be good tools to help them add more information. The Story Map should include the following elements:

**Book Title**

**Author**

**Publication Year**

**Main Characters & Cultural Information** (important characteristics about the main characters. Include their interests, what they want to be in the future, how they identify, etc.)

- **Protagonist (hero)**
- **Antagonist (villain)**
- **Other Characters** (including short descriptions of each character—be as specific as possible regarding culture & physical characteristics):

**Setting** (make sure to include time and locations with descriptive details that are significant to the story)

**Point of View/Perspective** (is the story told from first or third person POV?)

**Plot Diagram** (include a plot diagram—you can complete it once you finish the entire novel)  
Your plot diagram should show the various rising actions, climax, falling actions, and resolution.

**Theme(s)** What themes did you find in the book?

**Symbolism** What symbols, metaphors, similes, etc. did you come across in the novel?

**Favorite Quotes and Page Numbers** Pick your favorite quotes from the book that support your thoughts and ideas.

### ACTIVITY # 2: Understanding Your Rights

#### Part A

It quickly becomes clear what Dell endures from her classmate and “friend” Christopher. He betrayed her trust by sharing her intimate photographs with others. Using the sources below, as well as any other research, in groups of no more than four people, ask students to create a Public Service Announcement (PSA) about the importance of understanding your rights when it comes to sharing intimate images. They can use any medium for their PSA, including video, podcast, or a webpage.

<https://owjn.org/2019/05/sexting-and-the-law-about-sharing-intimate-images/>

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents/big-issues/sending-nudes-sexting>

<https://vimeo.com/595727241>

<https://vimeo.com/343587737> (Case Studies)

## Part B

Using the discussion prompts and questions below, ask students to talk about how they might avoid a situation like the one Dell endures. Additionally, students can consider how they can respond to this situation if it cannot be avoided.

- What does “consensual” mean? How do you know if you are engaging in something consensual?
- Who can you talk to if you become a victim of someone sharing intimate photos of you without your consent?
- When does this become an illegal act and how can you handle this situation?
- How can you respond if someone asks you to take intimate photographs and you do not want to participate?
- What should you do if someone sends you an intimate image of them that you did not ask for? How should you respond and what should you do with the image?
- What are some ways to show affection to your partner (or someone you like) instead of soliciting intimate images?

## Part II: The Island & Ivy (Chapters 4–9)

### Activity # 1: Recreating a Scene (comic strip, movie trailer, or song/poem)

On the island, Dell struggles to find her place working alongside Ivy and her mom. She feels like she’s often in Ivy’s shadow and also that she can’t connect with her mom. Trouble also seems to come in when she discovers her mom has been keeping secrets about her family’s past. Ask students to choose a scene about one of the conflicts the Dell is dealing with (Dell vs. Ivy, or Dell vs. Mom, Dell vs. the memory of what Christopher has done to her, etc.) and recreate that scene using an alternative method.

Students can create either a comic strip, a movie trailer, a song, (one verse and the chorus) or a poem.

They should be prepared to share their recreation with the class or a small group and answer the questions below.

1. Why did you choose this particular scene from the book?
2. What conflict does it represent for Dell?
3. Why do you think Dell is struggling with this individual?
4. What do you think Dell could have done or said to express herself to this individual in a different manner? Do you think that might have changed the outcome of the conflict?

## Activity # 2: Uncovering Secrets & Creating Your Own Story

Ask students to consider the secrets that began to be uncovered as Dell learns more about her mother's (Anne's) family and upbringing at the cottage. Also, ask students to think about what Dell is learning about her mother and Joe's relationship (as well as about Joe & Ivy) as Joe comes to spend time with Dell and Anne. What does Dell learn about herself, her mother, and her family? What does she discover about Joe, Ivy, and their family? What is Dell beginning to discover about her own sexuality in relationship to the time she is spending with Ivy? Ask students to write their own story related to the themes and secrets that began to be revealed. The story should be at least one to two pages. It does not have to include the same characters but should include some of the same themes that are occurring in these chapters.

## Part III: The Apparition & Anne (Chapters 10–20)

### Activity # 1: Blog Post for Busting Stereotypes & Developing Understanding

Ivy endures a classmate stating that she and her family “eats raw meat or something.” Additionally, when she has friends over the cottage for an impromptu party, the same student jokes that Dell couldn't be her sister because Dell is “missing your permanent sunburn.”

These are samples of the stereotypical and biased remarks that Ivy most likely experiences on a daily basis in her small town. Ask students to consider these remarks, and other stereotypes, biases, and prejudices. They can use the following websites (as well as their own research) to create a blog post that includes ten tips to avoiding stereotypes and racist behavior. Students should include images and creative insight in their blog posts.

<https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/examples-racial-discrimination-fact-sheet>

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/multiculturalism-anti-racism>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/anti-racism-engagement/anti-racism-strategy.html>

### Activity # 2: Different Strokes for Different Folks

Ivy and Dell realize they have had vastly different experiences when they share their upbringings and homelives with one another. Ivy shares that kids in her small rural town can get tractor licenses and use the bathroom in cornfields, while Dell discusses growing up near a strip club in the city. The differences might seem all consuming; however, these differences are what make Ivy and Dell become closer during their summer together at the cottage. Ask students to consider what they learned about Dell and Ivy, how they grew up, their personalities, and answer the following discussion questions as a whole class, in small groups, or in a literature journal:

1. While Dell and Ivy come from completely different towns, what similarities can you find about their lives and why do you think they are somewhat similar?
2. What do you think Dell finds attractive about Ivy? What do you think Ivy finds attractive about Dell?

3. How might Dell try to learn more about Ivy's heritage or background? What do you think Dell needs to understand about Ivy's identity as an Indigenous person?
4. How might Dell and Ivy's differences in race/ethnicities impact their relationship?
5. How do you think Ivy's setting or environment shaped her personality?
6. How do you think Dell's setting or environment shaped her personality?
7. What part does the cottage and the setting play in Dell and Ivy's relationship?
8. How do you think these two characters would have been shaped or impacted if they had not come to the cottage that summer?

### **ACTIVITY # 3: Self-Realization—Create A Social Media Page for Dell**

Ask students to consider the moments that Dell begins to discover some aspects of her identity, such as when she and Ivy have a moment in their bedroom in the cottage with the big kiss or the even bigger moment at the drive-in movie theater. Also, think about when Dell and her mom have their big conversation about the secret her mom has been keeping involving her Aunt Julie and a teenage pregnancy. Finally, consider when Dell stands up for someone who speaks about her intimate images making their way around the Internet. How do these moments help to change and shape Dell? Ask students to consider these scenes and moments as they create a social media page for Dell.

#### **Part A: Self-Realization Social Media Page for Dell**

1. Students should decide whether they want to use an Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, or Twitter account template. Alternatively, they can create their own social media template.
2. Students should include the following elements to demonstrate the changes and revelations that occur with Dell.
  - **Nickname**
  - **Age**
  - **Best Friend**
  - **Sexual Orientation**
  - **Relationship Status**
  - **What My Best Friend Says About Me**
  - **Something I Discovered About Myself Recently** (this should be a few sentences that denote what the character has learned or gained from going through their obstacles. What have they come away with?)
  - **My Favorite Moment This Summer**
  - **My Favorite Place**
  - **Hobbies & Interests**
  - **Images** (include at least 3–4 images that depict the climax, falling action, and resolution that occurred here in Part 3 of the text) Your images can be hand drawn or taken from the Internet
  - **Most Important Thing to Know About Me**

# After Reading the Book

These activities inspire continued reflection and response to the text, bring conclusion to the experience of reading this particular text, and stimulate further extensions.

## ACTIVITY # 1: Mapping the Impact of Setting & Character on Plot

Ask students to revisit the Story Map that they started when they began reading this book. Make sure everything is completed at this point.

Students can use any outlet for their Story Map; however, Google Slides, PowerPoint, or Prezi, may be good tools to help add more information. The Story Map should include the following elements:

**Book Title**

**Author**

**Publication Year**

**Main Characters & Cultural Information** (important characteristics about the main characters. Include their interests, what they want to be in the future, how they identify, etc.)

- **Protagonist (hero)**
- **Antagonist (villain)**
- **Other Characters** (including short descriptions of each character—be as specific as possible regarding culture & physical characteristics):

**Setting** (make sure to include time and locations with descriptive details that are significant to the story)

**Point of View/Perspective** (is the story told from first or third person POV?)

**Plot Diagram** (include a plot diagram—you can complete it once you finish the entire novel) Your plot diagram should show the various rising actions, climax, falling actions, and resolution.

**Theme(s)** What themes did you find in the book?

**Symbolism** What symbols, metaphors, similes, etc. did you come across in the novel?

**Favorite Quotes and Page Numbers** Pick your favorite quotes from the book that support your thoughts and ideas.

## ACTIVITY # 2: Making Connections

Ask students to make connections with what they gained from the book as you read. They can use the following outline to help make connections:

- **Text to Text:** *The Queen of Junk Island* reminds me of another book that I read. That book was (title of book) \_\_\_\_\_. *The Queen of Junk Island* reminds me of that book because:
- **Text to Self:** *The Queen of Junk Island* reminds me of myself because:
- **Text to World:** *The Queen of Junk Island* reminds me of a time when I experienced, saw, or did:



### Activity # 3: We Think, We Wonder, Confirmed, Misconceptions, New Insights Chart

Ask students to revisit the chart they made before reading and fill in information that was confirmed, information that was not confirmed (any misconceptions), and any new insights or new information that they received as they read the book. What did students learn about the characters, the setting, the author, or the plot? They can add this information to complete the chart.

- **We Think** (include the same information you had before)
- **We Wonder** (again, what information did you have before)
- **Confirmed** (what information has been proven/confirmed that you thought or wondered about)?
- **Misconceptions** (what information has been disproven)?
- **New Insights** (what did you learn that you were not expecting)?

Discussion Questions:

1. Do any of the characters in *The Queen of Junk Island* remind you of people that you know? If yes, who? If no, why not?
2. How are the characters, settings, plots/conflicts like those that you have read before? How are they different?
3. What were your initial reactions and thoughts after reading the book?
4. What was the major conflict and how was it resolved?
5. Which character did you feel like you related to the most and why?
6. Which character did you feel like you connected with the least and why?
7. What did you think the overall theme was and did you connect with this theme?
8. Do you think the author was effective in conveying this theme to the reader?
9. Why do you think the author wanted to tell this particular story?
10. How does the author use setting and symbolism to tell the story? Did you connect to this method of storytelling? Why or why not?

## Extension Activities

These activities are only a start. They are designed to support the goal of helping students explore the story and their own creativity.

### ACTIVITY # 1: Poverty & Education

Ask students to watch this TED Talk about poverty and education in the United States: <https://youtu.be/7O7BMa9XGXE>

After watching the video, ask students about their thoughts on the education system and how class and socioeconomic status impact students' experiences.

What are the choices that these students have and what supports can be provided to them?

How can the adults in these students' lives help them succeed despite their socioeconomic status?

## ACTIVITY # 2: LGBTQ+ Roundtable

<https://www.nsb.com/lgbtq-speakers/>

Invite speakers from the LGBTQ+ community into the classroom. Websites such as the one included above are a good resource for inviting individuals to come into the class, share their experiences, and answer questions from students.

## ACTIVITY # 3: First Peoples Hall: Canadian Museum of History

<https://www.historymuseum.ca/event/first-peoples-hall/>

Either have students visit the First Peoples Hall in person or virtually. What questions do students have about Indigenous knowledges, cultures, and practices? What information does the museum provide about Indigenous cultures and knowledges and the ongoing impacts of colonialism? Finally, ask students about the potential limitations of museums and how they display information. What might be some alternative ways to learn from Indigenous Peoples in Canada? Ask students to learn about Indigenous nations in their local area and gather more information about Indigenous ways of knowing and cultural norms and practices. A site that lists all of the First Nations in Canada is: <https://fnp-ppn.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/fnp/Main/Search/SearchFN.aspx?lang=eng>

## ACTIVITY # 4: Letter to the Author

Ask students to write from the perspective of either themselves or one of the characters in the book to the author. Students can ask questions about the book related to their own experiences. Share what they gained from reading the book and what they would like to know more about. If they are writing from the perspective of one of the characters, ask the author questions related to that character's storyline. What do they want to know about that character's motivations and storyline, etc.?

