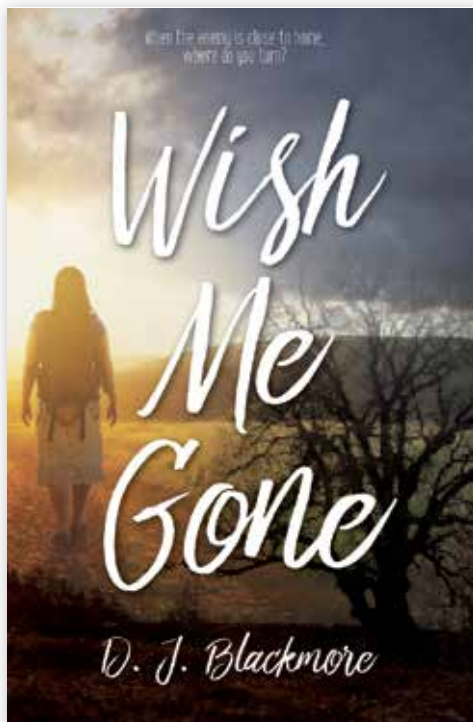




TEACHING NOTES



Wish Me Gone

By D.J. Blackmore

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Reading Level: 15+ years

Up close, the heritage listed house is nothing but a beautiful disaster, but while there are acres of orange trees to lose herself amongst, Isabella realises there's no escaping the new school. But when intolerance towards Damaska and her family—whom Isabella's family has hired to help—opens the homestead gates, the threat to both families becomes real. Four lives in Australia become intertwined by one orchard, as they all try to find a place they call home.

Themes

- Racism • Intolerance
- Love • Forgiveness

Discussion Questions & Classroom Activities:

THEMES

Racism

Racism: prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism by an individual, community, or institution against a person or people on the basis of their membership of a particular racial or ethnic group, typically one that is a minority or marginalised. (Oxford Languages)

1. As Damaska and her family ready to begin a new life in Australia, what does her grandmother say concerning her assumptions about Australians, and what are Jida's feelings towards them?
2. Why are Isabella and her mum scorned for providing employment for Damaska and her family by the fruit shop owner and Brayden's Uncle Jimmy?
3. Kai Brown overhears his teacher arguing over the phone about employing someone in the family who speaks broken English and wears head covering, because it's bad for business. Do you agree/disagree?
4. What are the three racial attacks—either directly or indirectly—against Damaska and her family?
5. Complete the following table to explore how the characters' view themselves, and how this differs from how others' see them. Which version is more accurate?

Character	How they see themselves	How others see them
Damaska		
Isabella		
Brayden		
Kai		
Megan		
Abel		

Intolerance

Intolerance: unwillingness to accept views, beliefs or behaviour that differ from one's own. (Oxford Languages)

1. How does Damaska's grandmother show her intolerance at the airport?
2. Brayden Brown and his mates target Isabella's brother, Abel. As soldier in the ADF, their intolerance towards Abel builds to what might be a fatal crescendo. What are two of the deadly sins that motivate them?
3. Kai Brown lives in a home that has intolerance at its core. At first he chooses to make Isabella his target to be bullied. The teacher uses his fear of punishment to change his ways, but how does Isabella's behaviour in the classroom make him begin to think differently?

Love

1. Megan and her friends from The Residents of The Sisters of Mercy, bake regularly for community help. They reach out to Damaska, Jida and Samaya. Similarly, Megan and the senior citizens pick oranges to help Isabella and her family in their time of need. What is their motive and what is their reward?

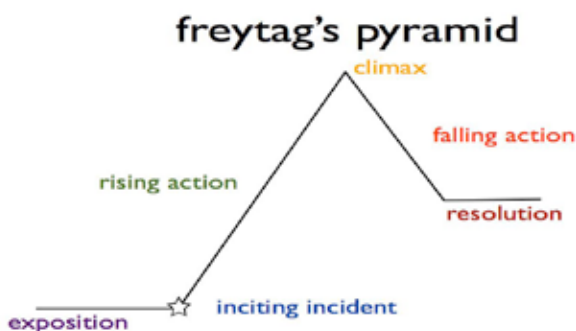
2. What is the one thing in life that Abel comes to believe is important, alone in the bush?
3. What does Damaska's father give to Isabella's family and what does this tell you about their relationship into the future?
4. Look up the symbolism of the food which is given, and explain its meaning in this context as a love offering. Explain its significance to the character of Abel.

Forgiveness

1. Isabella chooses to forgive Kai, but this is not done out of weakness. What is it about him that she comes to understand on the way home in the school bus? Give some examples of things she notices.
2. Name the two major decisions Abel makes in showing both love and forgiveness.
3. Megan takes a risk and opens her home to two individuals in the community who some at first glance might see as unworthy. Can love prove stronger than punishment as a means for change?
4. What does Isabella see in Megan that makes her want to emulate her old friend?
5. Whose character or characters would you most like to model your future self on, and why?

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE AND PLOT

1. Why do you think the author chose to narrate this story through different perspectives?
2. Fill a narrative 'gap' by writing a 500-1000-word scene from the perspective of Abel, Damaska, Brayden, Kai, Megan, or Isabella. Consider the narrator's motivations and backstory. How will these things influence their voice?
3. Identify different plot points in the narrative, using the following diagram and descriptions. Discuss differences of opinion in the class.



[Diagram Source.](#)

Exposition: Introductory information to establish the setting and provide background information about the characters.

Inciting incident: A moment or event that acts as the catalyst for the rising action in the story and causes a significant change in the protagonist's life.

Rising action: Events and choices that drive the action towards the climax. The rising action often involves making allies, friends and enemies; encountering setbacks; and finding solutions or partial-solutions to problems.

Climax: The moment of greatest tension in the story, where the protagonist is tested and the deeper truth of their identity is revealed.

Falling action: Events that follow the climax and portray its aftermath to lessen the narrative tension.

Resolution: The ending of the story, which often establishes a 'new normal' for one or more characters. Resolutions may involve various degrees of happiness or sorrow; involve a plot twist; or feature a level of ambiguity. However, resolutions usually stay true to the overall tone of the narrative and suggest how the protagonist has changed, even if they do not neatly tie up all the loose ends.

CREATIVE WRITING EXERCISES

1. Imagine a new landscape in the Journey for patients to explore and progress through. The landscape should be challenging and reflect some aspect of the natural world. Consider how to use symbolism, imagery, metaphor, and allusion to deepen the significance of the landscape and obstacles. Write 500-1000 words describing the characters' experiences of this Journey course.
2. Write an epilogue from the perspective of Paige, Denna, Nate, Lucy, or Michael that shares a positive message about dealing with depression. Consider the narrator's motivations and how the events of the narrative have changed them, as this will influence their voice. Try to write in a realistic style that will resonate with an audience of 15-30-year-olds.

KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

ACEEN004	ACEEN005	ACEEN007	ACEEN009
ACEEN011	ACEEN018	ACEEN020	ACEEN021
ACEEN022	ACEEN024	ACEEN025	ACEEN027
ACEEN028	ACEEN034	ACEEN035	ACEEN038
ACEEN039	ACEEN040	ACEEN041	ACEEN042
ACEEN043	ACEEN044	ACEEN059	ACELA1550
ACELA1551	ACELA1552	ACELA1553	ACELA1556
ACELA1557	ACELA1560	ACELA1561	ACELA1562
ACELA1566	ACELA1564	ACELA1569	ACELT1633
ACELT1635	ACELT1636	ACELT1637	ACELT1640
ACELT1641	ACELT1643	ACELT1644	ACELT1771
ACELT1772	ACELT1773	ACELY1742	ACELY1743
ACELY1744	ACELY1745	ACELT1774	ACELT1814

About the Author

D. J. Blackmore is a beekeeper, simple-living advocate and mother of five. She has reared Border collies, milked cows and made cheese, yet stories are her oldest love. A hand-spinner for over thirty years, she stills endeavours to spin straw into gold, at a spinning wheel or with the pen. As a child she spent one delicious summer in England, meeting her grandparents for the first time, visiting castles, cathedrals and ancient ruins. She has been a dreamer ever since. Life experiences, tales shared and characters met all serve as inspiration, and for D. J. Blackmore words are an expression of all the beauty we cannot see. The author writes contemporary as well as historical adult and young adult fiction, her debut novel translated into the language of the Czech Republic.

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