



# Telling Tales

## EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

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# TELL ME WHEN YOU FEEL SOMETHING

## BY VICKI GRANT

**Ages:** 14-18 | June 2021, Penguin Teen Canada | **ISBN:** 9780735270091

Vicki Grant is the author of seventeen books. Her books have consistently garnered her recognition from the American Library Association, the Canadian Library Association and the Canadian Children's Book Centre.

***Vicki explains that her book is told from the perspectives of several characters who witnessed this traumatic event. The story asks the question "can we trust what we see?"***

### **Q./Discussion:** **Social Media vs Reality**

This video makes the argument that social media posts distort reality. Do you agree with this point of view? Why or why not?

**Activity:** Create a social media post.

As a class, decide on an event, place or activity to document on social media. Working individually, take a series of photos, and then use only one to create a social media post. Share the post with your class. As you look at each post, answer the following questions together:

- Who is the intended audience for each post?
- What message is the photographer trying to send?
- How do you feel viewing each post?
- How do the photos differ from each other?
- Even if the photos are similar, are they used in different ways as social media posts?
- What things have been included or excluded from the different photos?
- How does what is included affect the message that is being conveyed?

**Reflection:** Were you surprised at the different ways people used photos to post about the same event? Did your class respond to your post the way you imagined they would?

### **BONUS ACTIVITY:**

Use your classmates' responses to your social media post to develop a fictitious story or character outline.

**Teacher's Note:** Extend the discussion by checking out this free resource:

**Ditch The Label-Fake News Lesson Plan**

Sometimes it's okay to march to the beat of your own triangle.

# TREMENDOUS THINGS

*A Novel*



# TREMENDOUS THINGS

## BY SUSIN NIELSEN

**Ages:** 12-18 | 2021, Penguin Teen Canada | **ISBN:** 9780735271203

Susin Nielsen got her start feeding cast and crew on the popular television series *Degrassi Junior High*. They hated her food, but they saw a spark in her writing. Since then, her books have garnered a raft of prestigious awards, including the Governor General's Literary Award, the CLA's Children's Book of the Year, and the Vicky Metcalf Award for her body of work. Susin lives in Vancouver with her family and two extremely destructive cats.

***We all have moments that define us. When Wilbur starts high school, he struggles with how to shake his embarrassing past and get the girl of his dreams to notice him.***

**Q./Discussion:** In her video, Susin explains that Wilbur's friends join forces to stage a "Queer Eye" intervention, meant to help him develop a new image in time for his trip to Paris.

Do you believe changing your appearance is the most important strategy for building self-confidence and a new personal image? Why or why not? What other strategies might you use? Share your ideas with your classmates and keep a list of your favourite ideas.

**Activity:** Character study: Build a character using vision boards.

- Create a list of things someone could do to boost their confidence and change their image.
- Collect images (you can cut-and-paste from magazines or create a virtual collage) that represent the attributes needed to build a new image. For example, what does your character's room look like? What do they wear? What are their hobbies? What do they eat?
- Write a description of your character explaining how the pictures you chose illustrate their likes, dislikes, aspirations and the image they hope to project.

### **BONUS ACTIVITY:**

Imagine that your character is trying to get their crush to notice them. Create a promotional video for your character to use to persuade their crush to date them.

**Reflection:** Did thinking about how you would represent your character's image through visual media help you develop additional details about who they really are? How else might you use vision or storyboards? Is worrying about our exterior image superficial—or is it a necessary part of showing who we are?



# CHARMING AS A VERB

## BY BEN PHILIPPE

**Ages:** 14-18 | 2020, HarperCollins / Balzer + Bray | **ISBN:** 9780062824141

Ben Philippe describes himself as a “Black French-Canadian writer. Basically, the guy across the hall if your life was a sitcom.” His short stories have appeared in *Five Quarterly*, *Louisiana Literature*, *Bookanista*, and a couple of other places. Ben also has a very cute dog named Blue.

**When Henri's less-than-honest dog-walking scheme is uncovered by his classmate Corinne, Henri agrees to help her change her image at school, seeing a potential upside for himself.**

Read **this extract** from *Charming as a Verb*. Focus on the description of Henri's dog walking business.

**Q.** Henri has found that having a consistent “brand” for his dog-walking business gives him a competitive edge. What does it mean to have a “brand”?

**Activity:** To Logo or Not To Logo?

Do a quick internet search of businesses in your community that offer personalized services at people's homes. Examples could include dog walking, gardening, snow removal, house cleaning, childcare, personal support care, general maintenance and repair.

Identify one or two businesses that you would be most likely to hire, based only on what your internet search revealed. Explain why you would be persuaded to hire these businesses over the others.

**Discussion/Reflection:** Did their branding influence your perception of how reliable these businesses are? How so? Based on the excerpt you read, do you think Henri's dog walking business is dishonest or an example of clever branding and marketing? Explain your answer.

**Follow-up Question:** What does it mean when a person refers to themselves as having a “personal brand”? Can a person have a brand or even BE a brand? Can you think of any “social media personalities” who have created their own brand on YouTube, Instagram or TikTok? What is it that makes them so successful?

# ACTIVITY SHEET





This is a decorative worksheet template. It features a border of stylized leaves and flowers. At the top left, the words "ACTIVITY SHEET" are written in a bold, sans-serif font. Below the title is a large rectangular area outlined with a dotted line, intended for a drawing. Underneath this dotted box are ten horizontal solid lines for writing. In the bottom left corner, there is a small illustration of a flower with a bee flying towards it.

# ACTIVITY SHEET

