



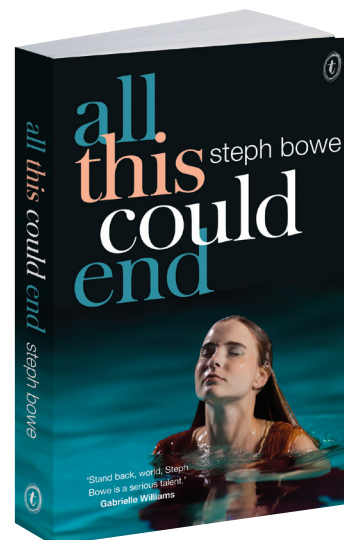
ALL THIS COULD END

STEPH BOWE

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Fiction, B paperback

RECOMMENDED AGE:
YEARS 9–10

Text's Teaching Notes for the Australian Curriculum

- ▶ Text's teaching notes are designed for teachers to explore the novel in line with the *Australian Curriculum: English*.
- ▶ Questions are divided into stages: from pre-reading to post-reading and include suggested tasks for assessment.
- ▶ An ACARA coding system connects each task to the *Australian Curriculum: English*. It includes links to strands, modes, general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities.
- ▶ Refer to the legend below and the accompanying [Australian Curriculum: English Scope and Sequence reference chart](#) to decipher these codes.
- ▶ Students can record their responses in writing through reading journals, online discussions or verbally in classroom discussions.

Strands	LA – Language LT – Literature LY – Literacy
Modes	W – Writing L – Listening R – Reading
General capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Literacy  Ethical behaviour  Intercultural understanding  Personal and social capability  Critical and creative thinking  Numeracy  Information and communication technology
Cross-curriculum priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Sustainability  Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia  Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures

SYNOPSIS

Nina doesn't like secrets but some secrets are not hers to keep, or to tell. She can't wait to escape her family and start a new life. The family business, robbing banks, is not her choice of careers. When Nina holds a gun to her best friend's head, the truth must come out.

All This Could End is a tale about dysfunctional families, trust and the importance of love. When the Pretty family arrive in a new town, awaiting their next bank job, Nina is prepared for her life to be just as it always has been – anonymous, friendless and temporary. Then she meets Spencer. He and Nina have something in common. He imagines himself as invisible, 'space junk'. However Spencer is content to live his life with no adventure, or change.

But events begin to spiral out of control, his family is in crisis, his best friend Nina has disappeared and now he's being held hostage at the bank.

Bowe's use of dual character narrative brings Nina and Spencer to the point of no return. How they arrive at gun point in the bank is as intriguing a story as what unfolds after.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Steph Bowe wrote her first novel, *Girl Saves Boy*, at the age of 16. Two years on her writing reflects an understanding of an audience not much younger than herself. Bowe explores the problems facing many teenagers by placing her characters in challenging environments or circumstances. Born in Melbourne and now residing in Queensland, Bowe also maintains a blog for teenagers, 'Hey! Teenager of the Year' (www.stephbowe.com), and comments on youth issues in the media.



BEFORE READING

1. How much are we influenced by our parents' or guardian's views and values? (ACELT1812) R, L, LT

As a group, decide on a definition of views and values. What does the dictionary say? Can you define it in your own words?

Draw up a table with three columns.

In the first column make a list of your parents' views and values on topics such as family, wealth, career, freedom of choice. You might think of a few more topics.

- You could do this by making your own judgement OR
- by interviewing your parents or someone at home OR
- by getting your parents or someone at home to complete a survey you create.

In the second column, list your own views and values.

In the last column, list the views and values that you share with your parents or guardian.

2. Do we always have the same views and values as our parents? Under what circumstances might they be different? (ACELT1812) R, L, LT

Extension: Compare your own values with those of your class mates. How might views and values change as a result of where or when we grew up? (ACELT1812) R, L, LT

WHILE READING

1. Keep a reading journal. As you read, write down observations about characters, events, interesting or unfamiliar words. (ACELT1771) R, W, LT
2. Having read the opening chapter, make a list of the unanswered questions and consider why the author has decided to establish the story in this way. (ACELA1553) (ACELT1771) R, LT, LA
3. Keep a list of reasons why the Pretty family rob banks and how it is justified. (ACELT1812) R, LT
4. Highlight any phrases or sentences that indicate how Nina is different from her family, or the same. Use different colour highlights for each. (ACELA1561) R, LA
5. Choose a scene from the novel and turn it into a cartoon strip.
OR
Imagine you are turning this novel into a film. Choose one scene and rewrite it as a film script. Draw the story board to accompany the script. (ACELT1773) (ACELA1567) R, W, LT, LA

AFTER READING

Character

1. Compare the Pretty family to the Jack family. In what ways are they similar and how are they different. (ACELY1744) R, LY
 2. List the strengths and weakness of the characters in the novel. What do you admire in each character? What advice would you give them about their weaknesses? What do their strength and weaknesses tell us about the characters? (ACELY1744) R, LY
 3. Spencer's fascination with words is not necessarily random. Make a list of all the words he lists and connect them with the events at that moment. Create a list of other words that would fit his predicament or feelings. (ACELA1561) R, W, LA
 4. Each of the characters struggles with their place in life. How do they attempt to cope with that feeling? Find specific examples in the novel. (ACELT1635) R, LT
 5. Explore the way that the parents in the novel challenge the stereotype of good, normal parents. What reasons can you find for their behaviour? (ACELT1620) R, LT
 6. In what way are Nina and Spencer alike? Consider their characteristics, circumstances, attitudes to others and school. (ACELY1744) R, LY
 7. 'Nina, on the other hand, wanted stability, and to be loved and to love unselfishly.' P.38 Nina makes several references to love. In what ways do different characters show love in the novel? Do we need more than love alone? (ACELT1642) R, LT
 8. 'The spotlight is not where he wants to be.' P.52 What measures does Spencer take to ensure this happens? Why is this ironic? Compare Spencer to other people in his life. (ACELT1635) R, LT
 9. 'Spencer is wondering how Nina will fit into his vision of their school as a galaxy, with each big-personality-person as a planet and their group of friends orbiting around them as moons. Bridie is a planet without any moons – she just randomly pulls people in. And Spencer is Pluto. Spencer is more far-flung than Pluto. Spencer is space junk. Nobody wants to orbit space junk. New people like Nina are moons that have not yet started orbiting anybody.' P.56 What does Spencer's analogy say about each character? What does it tell us about his personality? (ACELT1642) R, LT
- ### Style and Structure
10. Given the story is told in third person, what is the purpose of using Nina and Spencer as chapter headings? (ACELT1643) R, LT
 11. The novel opens at the climax of the story. Use a line graph to map the events in the novel. In what ways is it different from the traditional narrative



structure? Why do you think the writer has chosen to do this? (ACELT1641) R, LT ✨

12. What indicators are there that Nina's life goes on beyond the bank robbery? (ACELT1767) R, LT
13. Why are Nina's childhood memories important? (ACELT1622) R, LT
14. Spencer likes to run though lists of words. He attempts to find a word that describes Nina— 'lilting, lissom, lithe, fetching, comely, ethereal, effervescent, ebullient, efflorescent, redolent – but nothing fits' P.110 Make lists of your own words that you believe describe different characters. Find 5 for each. (ACELA1564) (ACELA1547) R, W, LA ✨

Themes

Family

1. For each of the characters in the novel, family holds different meanings. List the challenges each family has and what you believe might be the cause. (ACELT1635) R, LT ✨
2. Nina struggles with the conflict between loyalty to family and her own needs. Which do you think is more important? (ACELT1635) R, LT ✨
3. Family dynamics are inherited. Do you agree? List arguments for or against this idea. You could use this as the basis for a persuasive essay or a class debate. Use evidence from the novel to support your argument. (ACELT1635) R, W, L, LT
4. '...this isn't a love story; it's a story about family.' P.65 Can the two things be separated? (ACELT1812) R, LT

Control

5. What are the personal goals of each character? In what way do they put their own interests first? (ACELT1635) R, LT
6. Which characters have control of their lives and which do not? In what way does a sense of control or lack of control influence the behaviour of individuals in the novel? (ACELT1812) R, LT ✨
7. Nina sees her 18th birthday as her escape to freedom. 'If she had a choice...she would choose another life.' P.32 Does she have a choice or is she really prisoner? Argue your case either verbally or in writing. (ACELY1756) (ACELT1812) R, W, L, LY, LT ✨

Right and wrong

8. Which characters are most to blame for their circumstances? Is Nina completely blameless? You could use this question as the basis for a debate in class. (ACELT1635) R, W, L, LT ✨
9. Sophia justifies her behaviour by saying that no one gets hurt as banks are insured. Is she correct? Is it a victimless crime? Give evidence for your position. (ACELT1812) R, W, L, LT ✨
10. The Pretty family are not the only ones to commit wrong deeds in the novel. Which other characters do

you believe are wrong in their actions or attitudes? Justify your answer using evidence from the novel.

(ACELT1807) R, LT ✨

Secrets and trust

11. Secrets 'weigh you down' P.97 What are the things that weigh down the characters in the novel? (ACELT1635) R, LT ✨
12. What secrets does each of the characters hold? While they may all believe their secret to be something important, whose do you believe to be the biggest? (ACELT1635) R, LT ✨
13. How do characters in the story establish trust? How is trust broken? (ACELT1812) R, LT

RESPONDING

1. All of the characters in the novel are focused on themselves and not the interests of others. Do you agree?
2. It is the teenagers in this story who show the most strength rather than the adults. Do you agree?
3. While Nina despises what her family does, she does little to alter their lives. Discuss.
4. 'But Nina always wondered: was Sophia's destiny from birth to become a criminal? Or was she a monster created by circumstance, fed by a sense of indestructibility?' P.68 Are our values something we are born with or some we acquire?
5. Nina's father tells her, 'Things aren't black and white.' P.113. Is he correct? Discuss using evidence from the novel.
6. It is one year after the robbery. Nina is 18. Imagine one of the following events and write what happens using the style of the novel.
 - Nina returns to visit Spencer and Bridie.
 - Nina meets with her parents.
 - Nina gives evidence in court.
7. Write a newspaper report about the last hold up, which begins the novel. You could do this by and or use a computer to give it an appropriate layout, including a suitable headline. You should include quotes from different people who knew Nina and Spencer. 📄