

Teachers' / Readers' Guide for:

Send Me a Sign

By Tiffany Schmidt

Summary:

Mia is always looking for signs. A sign that she should get serious with her soccer-captain boyfriend. A sign that she'll get the grades to make it into an Ivy-league school. One sign she *didn't* expect to look for was: "Will I survive cancer?" It's an answer her friends would never understand, prompting Mia to keep her illness a secret. The only one who knows is her lifelong best friend, Gyver, who is poised to be so much more. Mia is determined to survive, but when you have so much going your way, there is so much more to lose. A heart-wrenching and ultimately uplifting story of one girl's search for signs of life in the face of death.

Discussion topics / Writing prompts:

Aligned with CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL: Key Ideas & Details for grades 7-12

A few of Mia's "signs" could be read as coming true; were they prophetic, or did she manipulate the situations to make them so?

Gyver is very judgmental of Mia's superstitions, yet he often communicates through music. Does this make him a hypocrite? Why or why not?

Each of the people in Mia's life has a different reaction to her illness. Compare and contrast these.

How would the story have been different if Mia had ignored her mother's advice and told the Calendar Girls that she was sick on that first day at Iggy's?

Create a playlist for the book. Explain each of your song choices.

Several people in the novel feel that Mia *owed* them the truth about her illness. What is your opinion—who had a right to know about Mia's cancer?

One of Mia's main reasons for not revealing her illness was she didn't want people to see/treat her differently. Do you think this is a valid concern? Why or why not? How do people who are ill get treated differently? Is this helpful or harmful?

Write a letter as Mia-from-the-end-of-the-book to Mia-from-the-first-chapter. What sort of advice would you give yourself?

On page 243 Mia thinks: *Hope can be the most dangerous emotion, because when it's destroyed, it's deadly*. Do you agree? Why or why not? If not, what would you choose as the 'most dangerous emotion'?

Additional reading:

The Truth About Forever by Sarah Dessen

Fault in Our Stars by John Green

The Summer I Turned Pretty by Jenny Han

Drums, Girls, and Dangerous Pie by Jordan Sonnenblick

After Ever After by Jordan Sonnenblick

Some Girls Are by Courtney Summers