

Jennifer Chan Is Not Alone
Discussion Guide
Grades 3-7

Before Reading: to activate schema, build background knowledge, and set a purpose.

- Note to educators and families: This book deals with the topic of bullying. We suggest beginning with a discussion on bullying including gossiping and cyber-bullying. Visit [Edutopia](#) for more bullying prevention resources.
- In pairs or as a whole class, create a concept map about aliens.
- Read the title, the book summary, and look at the cover art. Why do you think the title is *Jennifer Chan Is Not Alone*?
- Point out to students that this book is written in three formats: “Now,” “Then,” and notebook pages called “Jennifer’s Guide to the Universe.” Have your students make predictions about why the book is written this way.

During Reading: to engage students, check for understanding, and make connections.

- Who is Jennifer? What do you know about her in Ch. 1? (Ch. 1)
- How would you describe Reagan and Tess? Do you think they are good friends? Why or why not? (Ch. 1-2)
- How would you describe Mallory’s relationship with her mom? (Ch. 3 and 5)
- What is “Jennifer’s Guide to the Universe”? (Ch. 4)
- How does Mallory feel about spending time with Jennifer? How can you tell? (Ch. 6)
- Mallory says she “knows” why Jennifer left, what do you think she means? (Ch. 7)
- At the end of the chapter Mallory is considering going to Ingrid, but she thinks “It would mean taking a step backward, toward the person I used to be— toward the person I never wanted to be again” (p. 55). What do you think she means? (Ch. 8)
- How does Mallory become friends with Reagan? Why do you think Mallory wants to be friends with Reagan? Support your thinking with details from the text. (Ch. 9)
- Why does Mallory think Ingrid and Kath can help her find Jennifer? (Ch. 10)
- What happens in the cafeteria? Why do you think each of the characters act the way they do? (Ch. 11)
- What do Mallory, Kath, and Ingrid plan to do? (Ch. 13-14 and 16-17)
- What happens between Jennifer and Pete? Why do you think Mallory thinks Jennifer needs to “know how the world worked”? (Ch. 15)
- What do Mallory, Tess, and Reagan start to do to Jennifer? Why do you think they do this? (Ch. 18)
- Why do the girls take Jennifer’s notebooks? What do they think they will find? (Ch. 19-20)
- When the girls confront Pete, he calls Jennifer Japanese and Mallory corrects him saying, “She’s Chinese, we’re not all the same.” What does this show about Mallory? How has she changed from the beginning of the book? (Ch. 21)

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- Why do you think Pete is helping the girls? Is he sincere in trying to help? Why or why not? (Ch. 22)
- At the end of the chapter Mallory feels empty and hollow. Why do you think she feels that way? (Ch. 23)
- Why do you think Ingrid told Jennifer about the photos? (Ch. 24)
- Why do you think Mallory asks her mom if she “thinks she’s Korean”? In what ways is Mallory struggling with her identity? How did the events in the story influence this struggle? (Ch. 25)
- What do Reagan’s words and actions tell us about how she is feeling? (Ch. 26)
- Why does Mallory decide to tell Kath and Ingrid about “the Incident”? What do you think “the Incident” was? (Ch. 28)
- What was “the Incident”? How do Kath and Ingrid respond when Mallory tells them what happened (Ch. 29-31)
- Do you think Mallory is a bully? Why or why not? (Ch. 29-31)
- How do Mallory’s parents respond when she tells them about “the Incident”? (Ch. 32)
- Mallory tells Reagan she needs her help because Reagan knows how to drive. Do you think this is the only reason why Mallory asks for Reagan’s help? Why or why not? (Ch. 33)
- What happens when Reagan tries to drive? (Ch. 34)
- How does Mallory’s mom help? (Ch. 35)
- Mallory says that people now see that they didn’t do enough to welcome the new girl to the neighborhood. Why do you think she is thinking this now? (Ch. 36)
- What happens to Jennifer? (Ch. 37)
- Do you think Jennifer and Mallory will become friends? Why or why not? (Ch. 38)

After Reading: to summarize, question, and reflect.

- Read the Author’s Note. How did Tae Keller’s personal experiences with bullying influence her to write this book? Why do you think she reached out to her bullies as an adult?
- Now that you have read the book, return to the before reading question. Why do you think the title is *Jennifer Chan Is Not Alone*? How does this connect to what Tae Keller writes on the final page, “And know that you matter. Know that you are not alone” (p. 274).
- Throughout this novel, Mallory acts in various ways for different reasons. Complete the [Influences on a Character Graphic Organizer](#) to consider all the influences on Mallory’s actions.

If your students enjoyed this book...

- Check out other books by author Tae Keller such as [When You Trap a Tiger](#) or [The Science of Breakable Things](#).