

A *New York Times* Bestseller

every day



Featuring
Six Additional Chapters
in A's Life

david levithan

Every day a different body.
Every day a different life.
Every day in love with the same girl.



"Wise, wildly unique." —*Entertainment Weekly*

EDUCATORS' GUIDE

INCLUDES **COMMON CORE** STATE STANDARD CORRELATIONS

ABOUT *every day*

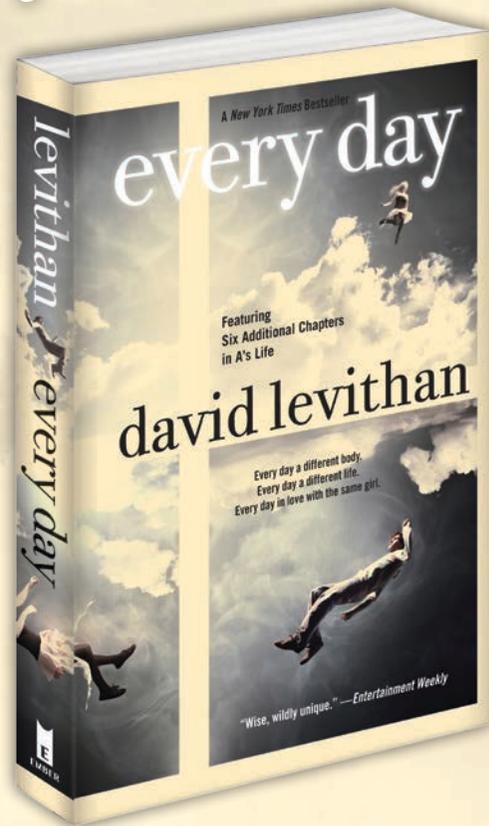
In his *New York Times* bestselling novel, David Levithan introduces readers to what *Entertainment Weekly* calls a “wise, wildly unique” love story about A, a teen who wakes up every morning in a different body, living a different life.

Every day a different body. Every day a different life. Every day in love with the same girl.

There’s never any warning about where it will be or who it will be. A has made peace with that, even established guidelines by which to live: Never get too attached. Avoid being noticed. Do not interfere.

It’s all fine until the morning that A wakes up in the body of Justin and meets Justin’s girlfriend, Rhiannon. From that moment, the rules by which A has been living no longer apply. Because finally A has found someone A wants to be with—day in, day out, day after day.

With this novel, David Levithan has pushed himself to new creative heights. He has written a captivating story that will fascinate readers as they begin to comprehend the complexities of life and love in A’s world, as A and Rhiannon seek to discover whether you can truly love someone who is destined to change every day.



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ABOUT THE Author

DAVID LEVITHAN is a children’s book editor in New York City and the author of several books for young adults, including Lambda Literary Award winner *Two Boys Kissing*; *Every Day* and its companion, *Another Day*; *Nick & Norah’s Infinite Playlist*, *Naomi and Ely’s No Kiss List*, and *Dash & Lily’s Book of Dares* (coauthored with Rachel Cohn); *Will Grayson, Will Grayson* (coauthored with John Green); and *Every You, Every Me* (with photographs by Jonathan Farmer). He lives in Hoboken, New Jersey.

Photo © Jake Hamilton



PRE-READING Activities

- Early in the novel, a character claims, “You can learn a lot about people from the stories they tell, but you can also know them from the way they sing along, whether they like the windows up or down, if they live by the map or by the world, if they feel the pull of the ocean” (p. 12).
 - Ask students to work in small groups to discuss what the items on this list might reveal about a person’s character.
 - Have them brainstorm together any indicators of personality they would put on this list and explain to the full class their rationale for including them.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.1, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.4, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.1
- Encourage students to consider examples of media-fueled stories that ignore truth for the sake of spectacle (e.g., coverage of protests, celebrity gossip, and scandals in popular magazines and on websites, etc.).
 - Why do some viewers/listeners/readers find these stories so engaging?
 - What dangers exist when media outlets are not held accountable for accuracy and unbiased reporting?
 - Is news entertainment? Should it be?

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7
- On a blank piece of paper, have students sketch a map of their childhood neighborhood. It might be the same place they live now, it might be a place they lived only briefly, or it might fall anywhere in between. Have them annotate the map with brief descriptions of key memories connected to this place. Encourage students to share their map and annotations with a partner they trust.
 - As a class, discuss the nature of memory in general. What does it mean to remember something?
 - How do you remember your neighborhood—and what does it look like in your mind’s eye?
 - What do you remember and why?
 - Do you have control over what you remember?

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.3, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.1, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.5



INTERDISCIPLINARY Connections

This novel raises questions and inspires thinking across various content areas. Consider some of these topical connections by exploring the resources provided.

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.10, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.7, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.8, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2



Fate or Free Will

This age-old debate centers on the extent to which we have control over our lives.

- In the context of the novel, why is A’s life the way that it is?
- What choices does A have as A navigates the life he has been given?
- Was he granted this life for a reason? Why him? Why now?

Additional Resources:

- Gleiser, Marcelo. (15 January 2014). The choice is yours: The fate of free will. *Cosmos and Culture*. National Public Radio. Accessed online at <http://www.npr.org/blogs/13.7/2014/01/15/261716096/the-choice-is-yours-the-fate-of-free-will>.
- Wolchover, Natalie (21 March 2012). Is free will an illusion? Scientists, philosophers forced to differ. *LiveScience*. Accessed online at <http://www.livescience.com/19213-free-fate.html>.

INTERDISCIPLINARY Connections (continued)

Religious Differences—and Similarities

A contemplates how humans are much more alike than they realize and comes to this conclusion: “And religion—whether you believe in God or Yahweh or Allah or something else, odds are that at heart you want the same things. For whatever reason, we like to focus on the 2 percent that’s different, and most of the conflict in the world comes from that” (p. 77). Ask students to research various world religions to determine whether or not they agree.

- Religions. British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). Accessed online at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/>.
- Just the facts on the world’s religions. ReligionFacts. Accessed online at <http://www.religionfacts.com/>.

The Butterfly Effect

As A thinks about the implications of A’s daily decisions while inhabiting the body of another person, A realizes, “If you think about it hard enough, if you trace potential reverberations long enough, every step can be a false step, any move can lead to an unintended consequence” (p. 195). Have students research the butterfly effect to learn more about the results of every action.

- Butterfly effect. Wikipedia. Accessed online at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Butterfly_effect.
- What is the butterfly effect? wiseGEEK. Accessed online at <http://www.wisegeek.org/what-is-the-butterfly-effect.htm>.

DISCUSSION Questions

1. What are the challenges that A faces as a result of A’s reality? What are the benefits? With these in mind, are there any circumstances under which you would wish to emulate A’s body-changing experience?

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1

2. Are you troubled when A interacts with Rhiannon without her knowledge (for example, when A poses as a gay teen in order to dance with her (pp. 73–74)? Why or why not?

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3

3. How much of an impact does (and should) A have on the bodies A inhabits? Do you agree with A’s decision to tell Nathan the truth about his seeming abduction (p. 115), for instance? Should A have intervened to help Kelsea (pp. 127–133)? Why or why not?

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3

4. Rhiannon calls A “the guest” in the lives of those whose bodies A inhabits (p. 259). Should A’s life come second? Or is A a person deserving of choice? Do you agree with A’s claim that “A life isn’t real unless someone else knows its reality” (p. 91)?

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.8, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.5

5. When Nathan compares A to the devil, A is forced to consider what keeps A from choosing to do harm. A determines that A is no different from anyone else who chooses not to commit a crime each and every day (p. 171). Why do most people choose not to commit a crime? Are humans inherently good?

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2

6. In a pivotal chapter, A wakes up in Rhiannon’s body (pp. 188ff). If you could spend a day living the life of anyone else, who would you choose, if anyone, and why?

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1

7. Consider A’s frustration in the following passage: “I have to resort to email, and email is not enough. I am starting to get tired of relying on words. They are full of meaning, yes, but they lack sensation. Writing to her is not the same as seeing her face as she listens. Hearing back from her is not the same as hearing her voice. I have always been grateful for technology, but now it feels as if there’s a little hitch of separation woven into any digital interaction” (p. 213).

- What are the benefits and challenges of conversing in digital forms?
- What is gained and lost when we interact across distances?

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2

DISCUSSION Questions (continued)

8. Near the novel’s end, A states, “If you stare at the center of the universe, there is a coldness there. A blankness. Ultimately, the universe doesn’t care about us. Time doesn’t care about us. That’s why we have to care about each other” (p. 320).

- Is this a compelling enough reason for us to care?
- Are connections with others essential for our happiness? Why or why not?

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.8

9. As you reflect upon the various people you meet through A, which person sticks with you? What writing techniques does Levithan use to create this particularly memorable portrait?

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4

10. *Every Day* deals with emotionally difficult subjects (e.g., drug addiction, depression, bullying, body image). After reading the novel and being exposed to a wide array of lived realities experienced by the people A inhabits, do you feel hopeful, hopeless, helpless, empowered, something else?

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2

Activities

1. In the opening pages of the novel, we learn that A can access “facts, not feelings” associated with the bodies he inhabits (p. 2). This identity-swap activity will allow students to examine how much/how little we can know about others based upon factual information.

- On a half-sheet of paper that contains no identifying information, have students complete the following prompts for themselves:
 - My favorite color is . . .
 - My ideal vacation destination is . . .
 - I sometimes worry about . . .

Upon completion and collection, redistribute the half-sheets to all members of the class.

- Given the following scenario, ask students to generate a piece of writing that draws upon the facts before them:
 - You are at the grocery store.
 - You turn down the aisle, and there she is, the one person you aren’t ready to face. . . .

After writing, solicit student volunteers to share their writing. At the conclusion of the sharing, have students reveal which facts belong to whom.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.3, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.6, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.1, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.2

2. When A spends the day in Rhiannon’s body, A takes her on a hike to the top of a small mountain in hopes that the view at the summit will provide a new perspective. A encourages her to remember that “when no one else is around, we open ourselves to the quieter astonishments that enormity can offer” (p. 198).

- Take students outside to a quiet spot on campus and have them sit in a circle in which all are facing outward.
- Ask them to just be present for a few moments, to notice the world around them in whatever way they desire (eyes closed or open, heads up or down, etc.). Encourage them to pay attention to things that often go unnoticed.
- Regroup for a reflective class discussion on the experience.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2

3. During their special outing at the beach, A (in Justin’s body) and Rhiannon describe some of their best days, from a mother-daughter fashion show to a journey to new heights in a tree during a game of hide-and-seek (pp. 17–22).

- Ask students to reflect upon their own memories and capture in writing a special part of their past.
- Engage in a writing workshop to bring the piece to publication.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.3, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.5, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.1, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.2



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR

every day AND *another day*

1. Both novels explore continuity and the role of tomorrow in our conception of life. Rhiannon is saddened that A has never experienced the ups and downs that come from relationships built over time, while A finds solace in the vast variety of experiences A has been able to enjoy. Consider the concept of tomorrow.

- Would you live differently if you had no continuity from day to day, if tomorrow wasn't connected to today?
- What would be gained?
- What would be lost?
- How is this idea represented in the titles of the novels?

 **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.5**

2. Both novels examine the mystery of identity—why we're born as we are in the place and time we exist. A explains to Rhiannon that, in A's view, all lives are filled with elements of the unexplained. A asks her, "Do you really know why you are the way you are? Or why you do the things you do? . . . We're all in the dark" (*Another Day*, p. 280).

- How would you respond to A's questions?
- How might your answer address the issues of inequity and privilege described during A's experiences on Day 6011 (*Every Day*, p. 180)?

 **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2**

3. The point of view of the narrator influences significantly the impressions and details we receive as readers of the two novels. This distinction is particularly salient in the portrayal of Justin as seen through the eyes of A and the eyes of Rhiannon. For example, in *Another Day*, we learn more about Justin's penchant for Girl Scout cookies (pp. 88–92) and his emotional response to the illness of his grandmother (p. 106).

- Are moments like these enough to justify Rhiannon's decision to stay with him?
- What might a version of events as seen through Justin's eyes reveal?

 **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6**

4. As A and Rhiannon work to know one another better, they turn to books as windows into their individual identities (*Every Day*, pp. 226ff; *Another Day*, pp. 221ff).

- If you had to select three books that say something about who you are, which would you pick and why?

 **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7**

5. As you contemplate the endings of both novels, consider the motivations that drive the final decisions of A and Rhiannon.

- What are they both hoping to achieve?
- Whose plan do you admire more?
- Whose is more realistic or likely to come to fruition?

 **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3**

