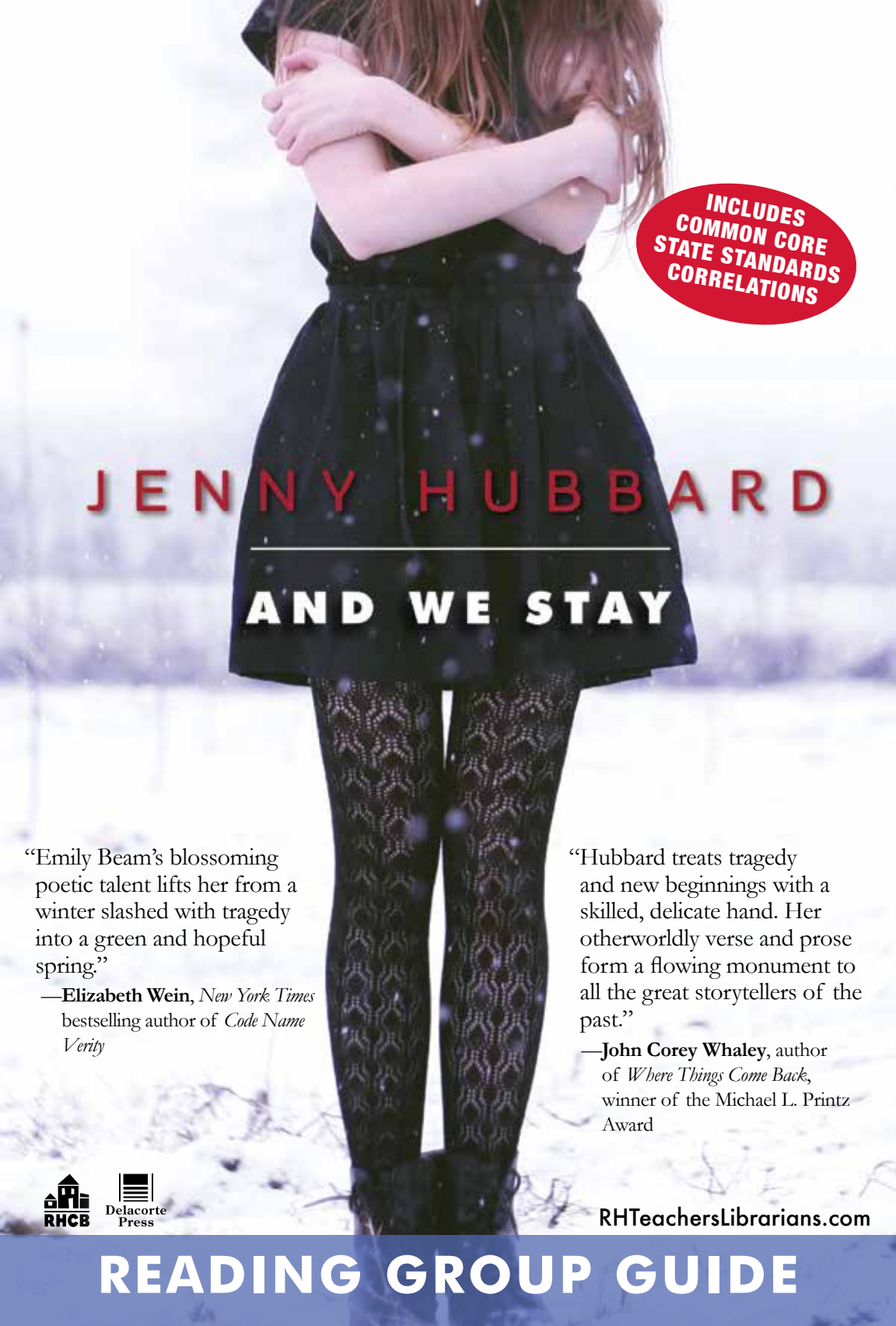




**INCLUDES
COMMON CORE
STATE STANDARDS
CORRELATIONS**

JENNY HUBBARD

AND WE STAY

“Emily Beam’s blossoming poetic talent lifts her from a winter slashed with tragedy into a green and hopeful spring.”

—**Elizabeth Wein**, *New York Times*
bestselling author of *Code Name Verity*

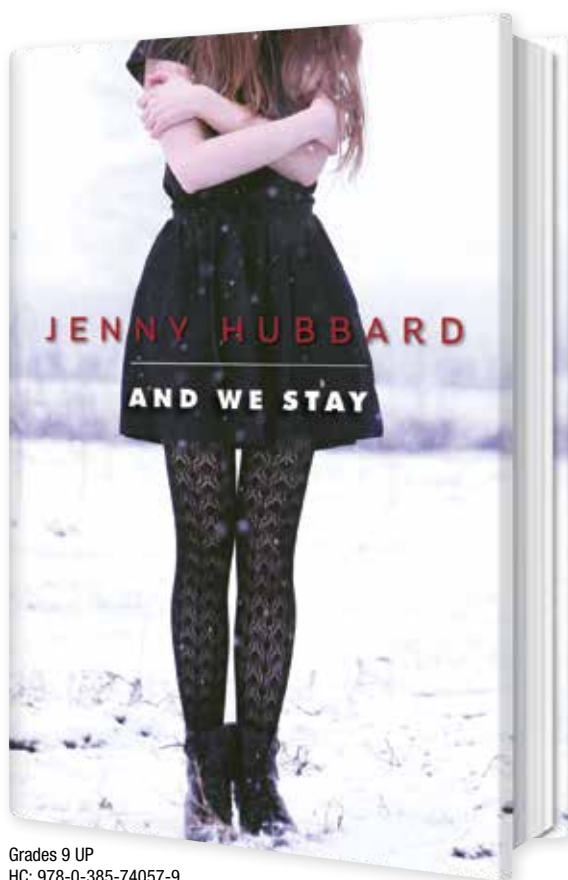
“Hubbard treats tragedy and new beginnings with a skilled, delicate hand. Her otherworldly verse and prose form a flowing monument to all the great storytellers of the past.”

—**John Corey Whaley**, author
of *Where Things Come Back*,
winner of the Michael L. Printz
Award



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READING GROUP GUIDE



Grades 9 UP

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ABOUT THE BOOK

When high school senior Paul Wagoner walks into his school library with a stolen gun, he threatens his girlfriend Emily Beam, and then takes his own life. In the wake of the tragedy, an angry and guilt-ridden Emily is shipped off to boarding school in Amherst, Massachusetts, where she encounters a ghostly presence who shares her name. The spirit of Emily Dickinson and two quirky girls offer helping hands, but it is up to Emily to heal her own damaged self.

This inventive story, told in verse and in prose, paints the aftermath of tragedy as a landscape where there is good behind the bad, hope inside the despair, and springtime under the snow.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

And We Stay is Jenny Hubbard's second novel. Her first, *Paper Covers Rock*, was a finalist for the William C. Morris Debut Award. A former English teacher, Jenny writes books and plays in her hometown of Salisbury, North Carolina, where she lives with her husband, a high school math teacher, and their rescue dog, Oliver. You can find Jenny on Facebook and follow her (and Oliver) on Twitter at @HubbardWrites.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide was created in alignment with the Common Core State Standards and fits into the curricula for grades 9–12. Discussion questions and activities are thoughtfully text based, and challenge students to think critically about the craft and impact of the work. Teachers may wish to adapt questions and activities to best suit the grade and skill level of their students. In an effort to support educators, reference is made to specific anchor standards and grade standards where appropriate.

EXPLORING AND WE STAY THROUGH WRITING AND RESEARCH

The following questions may be utilized throughout the novel study as reflective writing prompts or, alternatively, they can be used as targeted questions for class discussion and reflection.

- At the beginning of *And We Stay*, readers learn that Emily Beam has just arrived at Amherst School for Girls “halfway through her junior year. She doesn’t look like the other girls . . . she doesn’t sound like them, either, and she wears different shoes.” (p. 1) How does this introduction to Emily shape your early perception of her?
- Consider Emily Beam’s connection with the writing of Emily Dickinson. What is it about Dickinson’s poetry that she feels so connected to? How does her bond with Dickinson change over the course of the novel?
- Upon her arrival to school, K.T., Emily’s roommate, offers Emily a pair of shoes to wear and states, “They’ll be a size too big which will make it tough to walk on those little pebbles out there, but at least no one will talk shit about you.” (p. 1) What are your earliest impressions of K.T.? Do you find her to ultimately be a supportive friend to Emily? Why or why not?
- *And We Stay* is told in third person; how would the story be different if it were told by Emily Beam? Do you think changing the point of view would make the story better or worse? Why?
- Describe Emily Beam. What makes her a dynamic character? Is she the type of person you’d want to befriend? Why or why not?
- Consider the relationship between Emily and K.T. How would you define the relationship between the two? In what ways does their friendship change throughout the course of the novel?
- Based on what you learn about him from the novel, how would you describe Paul, Emily’s boyfriend? Given the difficult issues he faced, are there any other options you believe he could have chosen?
- How would you describe Amber? Is she a likeable character? Why or why not? Though she doesn’t approve or understand Amber’s motivation to steal, why does Emily still find herself drawn to her?
- In your opinion, why does Emily hide her poetry from most people? Do you think her decision is the right one? Why or why not? What can be inferred by her choice to share her work and experiences with K.T.?
- If you could select one character in the novel to learn more about, who would it be? What is it about this particular character you found interesting or intriguing?
- Consider the novel’s title; in what ways does it capture the themes of the book?
- In what ways does poetry connect Emily Beam to Emily Dickinson? Through her example, Emily Beam learns to use language to deal with her loss. Besides grieving her boyfriend’s death, what role does writing poetry serve for Emily? In what ways does this artistic expression connect/isolate her from others?
- Consider the novel’s cover. In what ways is the image portrayed there symbolic of the events that transpire throughout the course of the book?
- Consider the variety of settings for *And We Stay* and name the three places you believe to be most important to the story. Using textual evidence from the book, explain why you find them to be significant to the overall story structure.
- Considering Emily Beam’s perspective, in what ways is *And We Stay* a story about things that have been lost? What does she find along the way?
- Using the phrase, “In this story, grief means . . .” discuss the issue of dealing with loss for the characters in *And We Stay*. Explain your choices.

CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS: READING, WRITING, AND RESEARCHING

Considering *And We Stay* Through Literary Elements Analysis

Use the following activities to allow students to show their understanding of various literary elements in the novel.

Figurative Language Scavenger Hunt

Throughout *And We Stay*, Hubbard infuses her story with rich, figurative language. To take figurative language to the analytical level, students must be given the opportunity to determine the reason for an author's choice of figurative language and its effect on the audience. Begin by having students practice discovering and identifying figurative language. Model the following lesson.

- Give students a variety of magazines from which to choose so that they may explore advertisements and cut them out.
- Explain to students that figurative language is not just used in fictional text. In fact, it is used frequently in the copy of advertisements. Have students find a predetermined number of examples of figurative language in the copy of advertising text.
- In order to fully analyze the figurative language, students must **LIST** them.

L – Label (What type of figurative language did you find?)

I – Identify (Quote the actual figurative language written in the text.)

S – So what? (So what's the big deal with this language?)

- What makes this language effective in this ad?
- Why not choose a different type of figurative language?/ Why wouldn't something else work better?
- Who is the intended audience?
- What effect would this figurative language have on the audience?
- Is this an appropriate effect?
- What is the author's overall purpose of this ad?
- How does using the device help or hurt the author's overall purpose?

T – Talk (Share your analysis with the others in the class in to model analytical thinking.)

Finally, place students in small groups and assign each group a specific chapter, *And We Stay* to analyze for examples of figurative language (similes, metaphors, hyperbole, and personification). Allow them to creatively display their findings.

 **Correlates to Common Core Standard English Language Arts: Literacy L. 7.5, L.8.5, L. 9-10.5**

Host a Literary Banquet

In the spirit of Emily Beam's cathartic poetry writing and her nod to Dickinson's work as a poet, begin by having students write a poem from a character's perspective. The poem may focus on the character's personality and role in the story, a major theme, or a major conflict experienced. It must demonstrate the changes the character made throughout the story. While composing the poem, consider:

- Its poetic device, form, and diction
- Its textual accuracy
- Poem must have a clearly defined voice
- Whether its spelling and grammar are correct
- Its length – most, if not all, of the poem must be memorized

After students have crafted their poems, plan a literary banquet where each dresses in a costume that enhances his poem. At the banquet, each student will perform his poem. Also, the food and drink needs a strong connection to the *And We Stay*.

 **Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details R.L. 7.1, R.L.8.1., R.L. 9-10.1, Craft and Structure R. L. 7.4., R.L. 8.4, R.L. 9-10.4, R.L.7.6., R.L. 8.6, R.L. 9-10.6 and Language Arts: Literacy L. 7.5, L.8.5, L. 9-10.5**

Character To-Do List: Remind students that like us, literary characters have tasks they need to complete. Selecting a character of their choice from *And We Stay*, students are to create a list of the most important tasks at hand for that character, with explanations as to why those tasks are so necessary.

 **Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details R.L. 7.1, R.L.8.1., R.L. 9-10.1 and Craft and Structure R. L. 7.5., R.L. 8.5, R.L. 9-10.5, R.L.7.6., R.L. 8.6, R.L. 9-10.6**

CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS: READING, WRITING, AND RESEARCHING continued

Advice Column: Ask students to describe one of the problems faced by a character and write advice to him/her. Students may choose to be serious or humorous. Use the letter format common to newspaper advice columns, where the person with the problem writes for advice and the adviser writes back. Often the person seeking advice “disguises” his or her name with a descriptive name associated with the problem.

 **Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details** R.L. 7.1, R.L.8.1., R.L. 9-10.1 and **Craft and Structure** R. L. 7.5., R.L. 8.5, R.L. 9-10.5, R.L.7.6., R.L. 8.6, R.L. 9-10.6

Fortune Cookies: Have students imagine they are dining with three characters from *And We Stay*. Have them create fortune cookie statements for each character, making sure they tell you which character received the fortune and why it is fitting.

 **Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details** R.L. 7.1, R.L.8.1., R.L. 9-10.1 and **Craft and Structure** R. L. 7.5., R.L. 8.5, R.L. 9-10.5, R.L.7.6., R.L. 8.6, R.L. 9-10.6

Gift Giving: Have students select five or more gifts that would be perfect to give to one of the main characters. While these gifts can be tangible or intangible, they should be things that he/she would really want or need. Be sure to attach an explanation for why each gift is appropriate.

 **Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details** R.L. 7.1, R.L.8.1., R.L. 9-10.1 and **Craft and Structure** R. L. 7.5., R.L. 8.5, R.L. 9-10.5, R.L.7.6., R.L. 8.6, R.L. 9-10.6

If These Walls Could Talk: Ask students to create a conversation between one of the main characters and some intangible thing (justice, love, goodness, greed, etc.) or his/her conscience. Have them script the conversation into dialogue, making sure they use appropriate punctuation.

 **Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details** R.L. 7.1, R.L.8.1., R.L. 9-10.1 and **Craft and Structure** R. L. 7.5., R.L. 8.5, R.L. 9-10.5, R.L.7.6., R.L. 8.6, R.L. 9-10.6

Essential Quotes Analysis

The language that an author uses in his/her work is essential to conveying the intended meaning. Select four quotes from *And We Stay* that seem to signify key ideas that the author hopes that readers take from the text. These might be quotes spoken by characters or they might be from the narration, and page numbers should be included with the quotes. Have students develop a chart with the following four columns:

- Quote
- Page number
- Relevance to the novel
- Intended meaning for readers

The intended meaning should have relevance not only to the characters in the text, but to the lives of anyone who reads the book.

 **Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details** R.L. 7.1, R.L.8.1., R.L. 9-10.1 and **Craft and Structure** R. L. 7.5., R.L. 8.5, R.L. 9-10.5, R.L.7.6., R.L. 8.6, R.L. 9-10.6

And We Stay Character Report Card

Considering the novel, ask students to examine the ethical nature of a character's actions and choices in *And We Stay*. Have them set up a “report card” using a chart and include the following eight categories: respect, responsibility, cooperation, caring, integrity, self-control, honesty, and effort. Using evidence from the novel, have them assign a grade for each category. In addition, have them cite the specific incident from the book that they graded in one column, and also provide feedback to the character under a “comments” section.

 **Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details** R.L. 7.1, R.L.8.1., R.L. 9-10.1 and **Craft and Structure** R. L. 7.5., R.L. 8.5, R.L. 9-10.5, R.L.7.6., R.L. 8.6, R.L. 9-10.6

EXPLORING AND WE STAY THROUGH RESEARCH

Through Emily Beam's connection to Emily Dickinson and their shared passion for poetry, readers get a brief introduction to this important literary figure. Using information from library resources and the Internet, have students research Emily Dickinson and prepare a Glogster poster (www.glogster.com) that details the following:

- Biographical information about the poet
- Specific information regarding the inspiration for her work and what work she is most known for
- A student-selected favorite poem from Dickinson's work to share with the class

- Why they believe this Dickinson's work has withstood the test of time

 **Correlates to Common Core Standard Writing: Research to Build and Present Knowledge** W. 7.4., W. 8.4., W.9-10.4.

EXPLORING AND WE STAY THROUGH WRITING

In *And We Stay*, the complexities of the characters, their relationships, and the situations in which they find themselves provides students opportunity to dig deep in the text as they examine and answer one of the following prompts:

- Throughout the course of the novel, readers are offered great insight about Emily Bean's experiences from the events of *And We Stay*. Assume the role of one of the secondary characters in *And We Stay* and draft a diary entry detailing what you experienced and witnessed. To prepare, create an outline using the five Ws (who, what, when, where, and why). Remember to write in first person and give special attention to sensory imagery (what you saw, smelled, heard, etc.)

 **Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details R.L. 7.1., R.L. 8.1, R.L. 9-10.1 and Writing: Text Types and Purposes W. 7.1., W. 8.1., W. 9-10.1., W. 7.2., W. 8.2., W. 9-10.2., W. 7.3., W. 8.3., W. 9-10.3.**

- Journal Response: Throughout *And We Stay*, many characters exhibit acts of subtle bravery. Consider the individual actions of these characters. Who do

you believe to be the most courageous? Write a letter to that character explaining why you believe his/her actions are so brave?

 **Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details R.L. 7.1., R.L. 8.1, R.L. 9-10.1 and Writing: Text Types and Purposes W. 7.1., W. 8.1., W. 9-10.1., W. 7.2., W. 8.2., W. 9-10.2., W. 7.3., W. 8.3., W. 9-10.3.**

- Select a character of your choice and create a faux Facebook page for that character, being sure to complete all the pertinent information, like education, relationships, groups to follow, pages to like, as well as 2 to 3 status updates.

 **Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details R.L. 7.1., R.L. 8.1, R.L. 9-10.1 and Writing: Text Types and Purposes W. 7.1., W. 8.1., W. 9-10.1., W. 7.2., W. 8.2., W. 9-10.2., W. 7.3., W. 8.3., W. 9-10.3.**

CREATE ORIGINAL INSPIRED ART FROM AND WE STAY

Previews of coming attractions in the movie industry are known as trailers. Design an original book trailer for *And We Stay*. Begin by creating a storyboard, detailing which scenes you intend to incorporate in your trailer. Use a moviemaking program of choice such as www.animoto.com.

Post your finished trailers to www.youtube.com.

Music is often used to connect people to each other and the world at large. Select a favorite character from *And We Stay* and create a CD with an original playlist that is representative of the experiences that character undergoes throughout the novel. Create original art for the jewel case and on the interior, and after including appropriate artist information, offer an explanation for the selection of each song.

INTERNET RESOURCES FOR GRIEF:

The Healing Place: A Center for Loss and Change: TheHealingPlaceInfo.org

Teens Health: Kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind/emotions/someone_died.html

The Dougy Center: The National Center for Grieving Children and Families: Dougy.org

The Center for Grieving Children, Teens, and Families: GrievingChildren.org

INTERNET RESOURCES FOR POETRY AND WRITING:

Academy of American Poets: Poetry Resources for Teens:

Poets.org/page.php/prmID/394

Pongo Teen Writing:

Pongotewriting.org

Creative Writing Resources for Teens from Chicago Public Library:

Chipublib.org/forteens/teenspoptopics/creatwriting.php

Teen Ink:

Teenink.com