



APA citation	Halse Anderson, L. (1999). <i>Speak</i> . New York, NY: The Penguin Group.
Number of pages	208
Genre	Fiction
Age range	12 and up
Brief summary	Laurie Halse Anderson brilliantly captures the usual trials and tribulations of the average high school student in the backdrop of traumatized Melinda. Melinda enters high school as an outcast, not quite fitting in with any of the factions Halse Anderson wonderfully describes. Melinda calls the cops during a party at the end of the previous school year in response to being raped by an upperclassman, unbeknownst to her peers. As a result, Melinda's reputation for her freshman year is that of a tattle-tale. She resorts to silence and self-destruction, she becomes the source of mocking and humiliation, her grades rapidly suffer, and physical symptoms surface in response to the memory she desperately tries to suppress. She finds solace in her art class and her art teacher, ultimately learning new ways to express her feelings and trust again. <i>Speak</i> wonderfully addresses the classic adolescent struggle to find a place among the crowd while sensitively handling this vicious crime and the victim's reactions to it. Melinda's silence is strategically relayed through the writing technique where one speaker's name is listed (Mr. Neck:) with his statement and Melinda's silence by (ME:) and no response.
Brief evaluation	18/18
Awards	2000 Printz Honor Book 1999 National Book Award Finalist Edgar Allan Poe Award Finalist Golden Kite Award ALA Top Ten Best Book for Young Adults ALA Quick Pick <i>Publishers Weekly</i> Best Book of the Year <i>Booklist</i> Top Ten First Novel of 1999 <i>BCCB</i> Blue Ribbon Book <i>SLJ</i> Best Book of the Year <i>Horn Book</i> Fanfare Title

Criteria for Evaluation	0 Does not meet curriculum standards	1 Acceptable but not a first choice	2 Satisfactory	3 Right on target!
Plot	The plot is not interesting.	The plot holds the reader's attention and engages the reader.	The plot is intriguing and enjoyable.	The plot is engaging and provides a story line that invites the reader to turn to the next page!
Issue/Theme	The issue/theme is not pertinent to and/or inappropriate for the intended age group.	The issue/theme is engaging but is not handled in an impressive manner and/or does not thoroughly address the issue/theme.	The book carefully and effectively addresses a critical issue/theme for the intended age group.	The book appropriately covers relevant matters and enables the reader to critically think about his/her position on the issue/theme.
Characters	The characters are undeveloped.	The reader gets a sense of the characters and is somewhat able to get inside their thoughts and motivation but character development could be stronger.	The characters are well-developed. The reader is able to understand their motivation and behavior.	The character development is strong. The reader is able to empathize with their situations, understand their actions and reactions, and critically think about how s/he would behave in the characters' situation.
Dialogue	The dialogue is not effective and does not flow.	The dialogue strengthens the story and character development but is, at times, misplaced and overused.	The use of dialogue is appropriate and effectively provides character attributes, motivation, and assists with story development.	The dialogue is strong and the author makes careful word choices, effectively telling the story while letting the story tell itself.
Writing Style	The writing style is poor, the story line unclear. It is difficult to follow the progression of events.	The writing style and fluency is acceptable. The reader may be confused on occasion as to sequence of events.	The writing style is enjoyable and the story flows in a natural, coherent progression.	The book is well-written, clearly relays critical information, and exemplifies exceptional mechanics of writing.
Reaction & Response	The book does not provide insight or provoke independent thought, opinions, or ideas.	The book causes the reader to think about the story, characters, and theme but may send conflicting messages that are too confusing for the intended age group.	The book effectively evokes a personal reaction to the text.	The book elicits some sort of a strong emotional reaction while provoking further contemplation of the theme and guiding the reader to independent thought.