

SLEEPING IN MY JEANS

TEACHING
GUIDE

CONNIE KING LEONARD



ONLINE TEACHING UNIT

What follows is an outline of what teachers can expect to find in the online teaching unit. The unit is organized for easy use in the classroom. Teachers should pick and choose the right assessments and activities for their unique students and classroom dynamic.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ONLINE TEACHING UNIT	3
ACTIVITY-BASED LEARNING	5
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS	10
POST-READING ACTIVITY-BASED LEARNING	36



INSTRUCTOR'S NOTES

ACTIVITY – BASED LEARNING

These activities offer students an opportunity to learn and explore the lessons and themes of *Sleeping In My Jeans* through various activities that are designed to engage all types of learners. These activities are best suited to either help students prepare for reading the book or engage in discussion while reading.

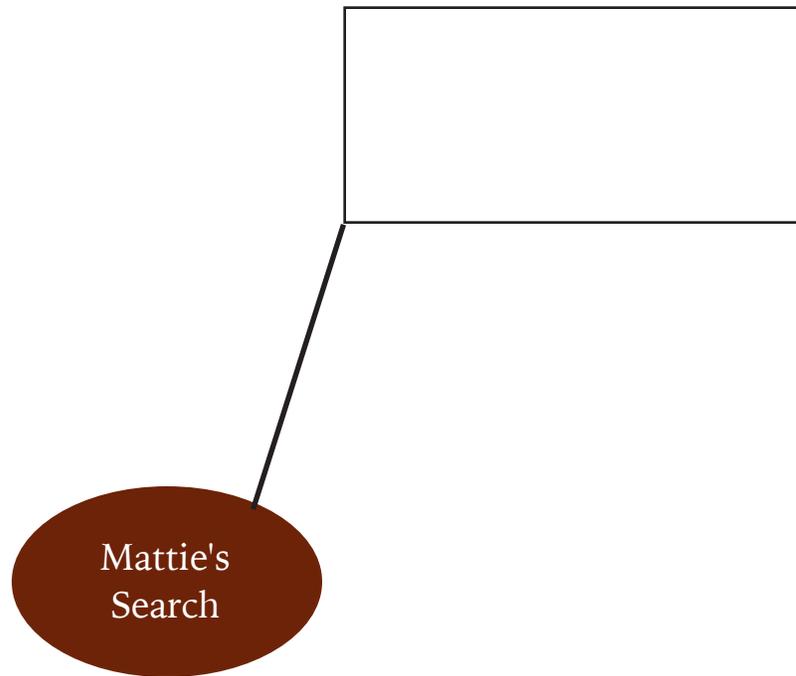
ACTIVITY 1: RESEARCH AND GRAPH

1. The number of students in your state who do not have a safe place to call home. Use statistics from the last five to ten years.
2. The homeless population in your city or state compared to others.
3. The rise in the homeless population in your city or state over the last five to ten years.
4. The rise in the cost of two-bedroom apartments over the last five to ten years.



ACTIVITY 2: MIND MAP

Write “Mattie’s Search” in the middle of a sheet of paper. Starting in the upper right corner and working clockwise, map Sunday’s events as Mattie searches for her mom. At each point on the mind map, critique Mattie’s choices. Did she make the right decisions? Why or why not?



ACTIVITY 3: RESEARCH AND WRITE

1. What does it cost to rent an average two-bedroom apartment in your area? Include first and last month's rent as well as a cleaning deposit. What other costs might need to be paid? Are there restrictions on any of the units?
2. What is the minimum wage in your area? How much of that income needs to be used for an apartment? In your area, is it possible to work for minimum wage and afford housing?
3. Many people feel we should use the word "houseless" instead of "homeless" to describe people who don't have an adequate living situation. What is the reasoning for this change? What do you think about the new terminology?

Rent Costs and Income	
Monthly Income (120 hrs X \$ ___) – Tax (___ %) =	
Rent	
Deposit	
Utilities	
Other Costs	
Total	

ACTIVITY 4: SURVEY

Ask a cross section of people, such as students, parents, and other adults, the following questions:

- Who are the homeless?
- How did they end up without a place to live?
- What can we do to help?

Compare your answers with other students' findings.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

CHAPTER 1

1. Describe Mattie and her family. What are Mattie's goals? What are her mom's?
2. Are they being realistic?
3. What problems do you think would make it difficult for Mattie and her mom to reach their goals?

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

CHAPTER 2

1. Mattie's mom has had fights with Darren before, but this time she leaves him even though the fight happens in the middle of the night? Why?
2. How does Mattie feel about sleeping in the car? How would you feel in the same situation?

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

CHAPTER 3

1. Mattie worries that people can tell she spent the night sleeping in her jeans. Are clothes as important in high school as Mattie seems to think?
2. Why isn't Mattie interested in Jack even though he is very handsome?

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

CHAPTER 4

1. Why does Mattie's mom take Meg and Mattie to the Eugene City Library after school?
2. If you were in a similar situation, where would be a safe place for you to stay while your parent worked?

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

CHAPTER 5

Explain the English assignment Mattie is given and why she is so worried about it.

- What kind of technology do you need in order to do your homework?
- What would you do if you didn't have access to the tools you needed?

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

CHAPTER 6

Mattie is angry with her mom for not finding them an apartment. What are some reasons it is hard to find housing?

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

CHAPTER 7

1. Does your city or state have a large homeless population? Why or why not?
2. What do you think the police should do when they find people living in their car?
 - What about when people sleep on the sidewalk or pitch a tent in the park?
 - What if your home was next to the park where people were camping?

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

CHAPTER 8

Explain why Mattie is worried about falling for Jack. How do you think Jack feels when she keeps pushing him away?

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

CHAPTER 9

Mattie doesn't want anyone to notice that she and Meg spend every night in the library, but she also wants her mom to park Ruby in the same place every night. Can you explain her reasons?

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

CHAPTER 10

People don't want Mattie and her family parking in their neighborhood. Where should they go? What should they do?

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

CHAPTER 11

1. What scares Mattie about the young man she meets in the magazine section of the library?
2. Do you think she was smart to pack up and leave so quickly, or was she being paranoid? Why?

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

CHAPTER 12

Mattie continues to fear a relationship with Jack. What are some of the issues faced in high school relationships? How will those issues change as she and Jack get older?

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

CHAPTER 13

Mattie and her family go through a terrifying experience in the office parking lot. Compare the problems with parking Ruby in a neighborhood with those of parking in a deserted parking lot.

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

CHAPTER 14

1. Mattie and Meg are sad at the shopping mall. What does Mattie do to help chase away their depression?
2. Explain what people mean when they talk about the “haves” and the “have nots.”

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

CHAPTER 15

1. What does the word "feral" mean? Why does Mattie use it to describe the teenagers?
2. Do you think Mattie should call Jack or the police or try finding her mom by herself? Justify your answer.

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

CHAPTER 16

Do you admire Mattie for trying to find her mom on her own? Why or why not?

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

CHAPTER 17

Mattie is easily noticed in Eugene because of her race. Would she be spotted so quickly if she were in another city in Oregon? What about in a different state? Explain.

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

CHAPTER 18

What does "panhandling" mean? Have you seen adults panhandle? Teens? How do you feel about people who panhandle?

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

CHAPTER 19

1. Hunger drives Mattie to grab a half-eaten Whopper out of a garbage can. Do you think this is a realistic scene? Have you ever seen people dig in garbage cans?
2. Do we have a problem with hunger in Oregon? How can we help people who do not have enough to eat?

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

CHAPTER 20

1. How do you think Jack feels about Mattie being homeless? What makes you think that?
2. How would you feel if your friend was homeless? What would you do for them?

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

CHAPTER 21

1. Considering all you know about Mattie, what is it about Jack's family that she envies?
2. Do you think it is possible to envy someone else's family situation yet love your own parents and siblings? Explain.

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

CHAPTER 22

1. Mattie takes a terrible risk by going to the garage. Compare and contrast how the mechanic's appearance differs from her stereotype of him.
2. Have you ever been fooled by a first impression, either positively or negatively? Explain if you feel comfortable.

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

CHAPTER 23

(For older students)

1. Explain the difference between a “pimp” and a “human trafficker.” How does it relate to modern-day slavery?
2. The mechanic describes himself as a businessman. What does he mean by that? Do you agree?

(For younger students)

As Mattie fights for her life, she clings to a ray of hope. Describe the safety precautions she puts in place.

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

CHAPTER 24

1. What does it mean to be a hero/heroine? What does it mean to be brave?
2. Would you describe Mattie's quest to find her mom as heroic or brave? Why or why not?

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

CHAPTER 25

Why do real-world issues seem scarier than the bad things that happen in a fantasy story? List real-world issues that scare or threaten you or other kids your age.

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

CHAPTER 26

Mattie insists on keeping her independence from Jack and won't take his offers of money or help. Is she too stubborn? Is keeping her independence the right thing to do? Explain.

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

POST-READING ACTIVITY-BASED LEARNING

These activities offer students the opportunity to continue learning about and exploring the lessons and themes in *Sleeping In My Jeans* through various activities after completing the book. These activities can be used to engage in further discussion and comprehension of *Sleeping In My Jeans* as well as reading and writing in general.

ACTIVITY 1: STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Compare Jack's strengths and weaknesses. Do the same for Mattie.

Jack	
Strengths	Weaknesses

Mattie

Strengths

Weaknesses

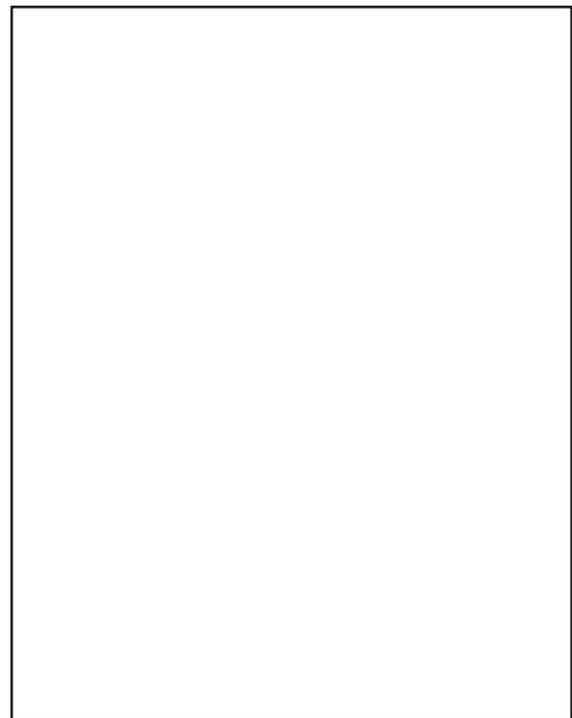
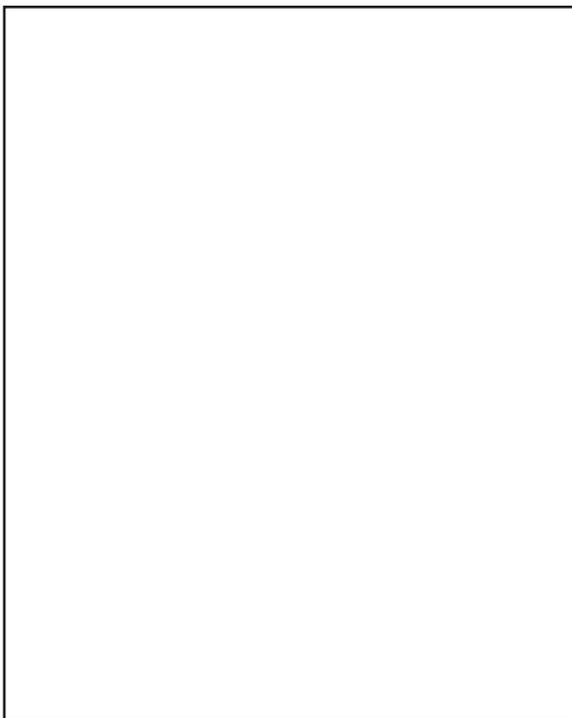
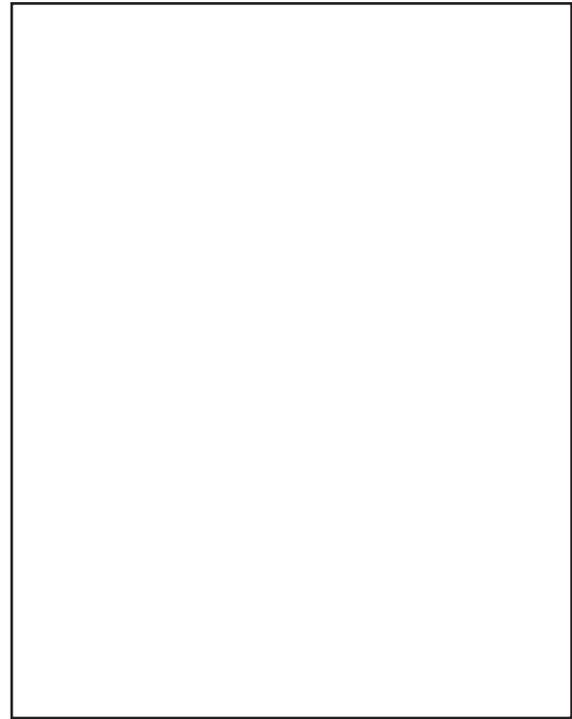
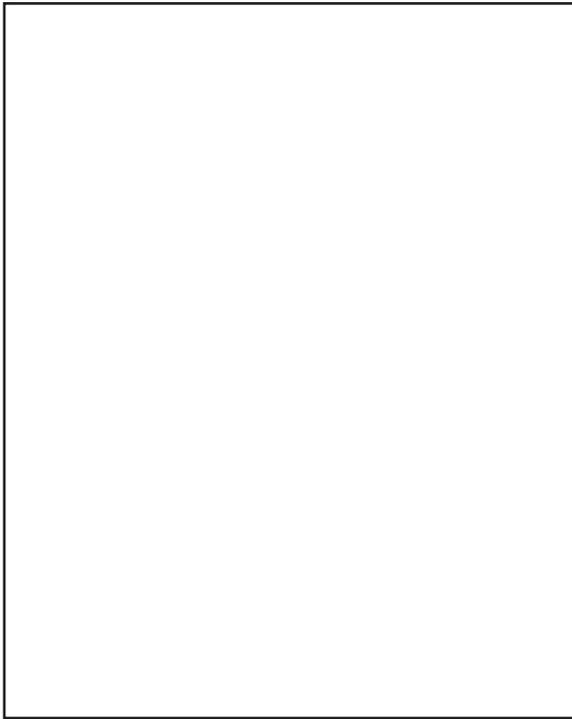
ACTIVITY 2: LOOKING BACK

Looking back on the story, which incident was the scariest? What were you afraid was going to happen?

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

ACTIVITY 3: JUDGING A BOOK COVER

The cover of a book should give us an idea of the story. What do you like about the cover of *Sleeping In My Jeans*? Design a new cover for the novel that hints at the story and includes colors you think will be noticeable on a bookstore shelf.



ACTIVITY 4: FAMILY TREE

Family is an important theme in this story. Draw and label your family members. What is the biggest difference between your family and Mattie's?

ACTIVITY 5: CHANGE THE ENDING

Do you like the ending of *Sleeping In My Jeans*? Why or why not? Write a new ending for the story.

WHAT'S YOUR ENDING?



ACTIVITY 6: POV CHAPTER

Pretend you are Jack, Meg, or Mom and rewrite a chapter from their point of view.

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?



ACTIVITY 7: WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What do you think will happen to Mattie at the end of the story? Why?
What about Jack, Mom, and Meg?

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

ACTIVITY 8: BELIEVABILITY

Could this story really have happened? Why or why not?

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS BELOW

ACTIVITY 9: DRAW A SCENE

Draw a scene from one of the events in *Sleeping In My Jeans*.

ACTIVITY 10: WRITE A LETTER

Write a letter to Mattie using all of the conventions for a personal letter.

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO SAY TO MATTIE?



ACTIVITY 11: WRITE YOUR OWN STORY

Do you have a story in your head that you would like to turn into a novel? Write a synopsis of your book idea.

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

