



The Cell Phone Lot

Reading Guide

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A Language Arts and Theme-based Approach to Reading *The Cell Phone Lot*
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The Cell Phone Lot

I. Before you read: Using Chapter One to Predict

After you read Chapter One think about these questions:

- Why does Jessica think her life is over?
- Why is she sitting in her car?
- What happened first?
- What will happen next?

Ask a classmate what he or she thinks. Compare your answers.

II. As you read: Plot-Lessons Learned

As you read, say a few things to summarize each chapter. What does what Jessica learn? How does Jessica change? Who helps her? Who does she help? What challenges her?

Chapter Two	Chapter Nine
Chapter Three	Chapter Ten
Chapter Four	Chapter Eleven
Chapter Five	Chapter Twelve
Chapter Six	Chapter Thirteen
Chapter Seven	Chapter Fourteen
Chapter Eight	Chapter Fifteen

II. As you read: Themes (Money)

Different characters have different opinions about money. Choose 3 characters and compare how each one feels about money. Where in the book do you find this idea? There may be more than one place?

Jessica:	_____:	_____:
Where in the book?	Where in the book?	Where in the book?

II. As you read: Themes (Sadness)

In Chapter Eleven, Hank says that “everyone has a little sadness.” What does the cell phone lot mean for Hank? How does it help him with his sadness?

Ask a classmate what he or she thinks. Compare your answers.

What do you do that has helped you through a sad time or out of a difficult situation? Share if you feel comfortable.

Do you think María and Nur Ali have a little sadness? What do you think it is?

Ask a classmate what he or she thinks. Compare your answers.

II. As you read: Themes (Control)

Make two lists: One for things Jessica can control and one for things she can't control.

Things Jessica can control.	Things Jessica can't control

What do you think of this statement: "Jessica has almost no control over her situation, yet she is very active in the story." Do you agree or disagree? Why? You can use information from the table above to think and talk about your answer.

Ask a classmate what he or she thinks. Compare your answers.

II. As you read: Themes (Healing)

Working for Ryde Driving Service helped Jessica through a very difficult period of her life. You could say she was healed by her time at Ryde Driving Service. What do you think? Was she healed? Why do you think so?

Did Jessica's time as a driver heal anyone else? For instance, what about Jessica's father, Juan?

Ask a classmate what he or she thinks. Compare your answers.

II. As you read: Themes (Your Turn)

Can you think of another theme in the book? What is it? Where in the book do you see this theme?

III. As you read: Inferences

An inference is a conclusion you can make using evidence and ideas from the book, and from your own ideas and experience. Any inference you make is fine, as long as you have evidence.

III. As you read: Inferences (Point of View)

Chapter Four changes the point of view in the story, or who the story is more about. Who does the chapter follow? Why do you think the point of view changed away from Jessica to another person? What does it show about her relationship with that person?

Ask a classmate what he or she thinks. Compare your answers.

III. As you read: Inferences (Race and Culture)

Do you think *The Cell Phone Lot* is about racism? What is racism, in your mind? In *The Cell Phone Lot* we can infer (“read between the lines”) that Jessica is in a minority racial group. This affects her interactions with her world. How does the author show a character’s race without mentioning the color of their skin? Find three examples in the story.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Do any of your answers involve Jessica’s family members? How so?

III. As you read: Inferences (Setting)

The first paragraph of Chapter Eight describes the airport. Given these clues in the story, what do you think about the town Jessica lives in?

Ask a classmate what he or she thinks. Compare your answers.

III. As you read: Inferences (Feeling Different)

On p. 69, this text appears: “*That’s sad*, thought Jessica, *she just wants everything to look like it’s perfect*. Jessica wondered whether she would ever make any friends at the apartment building.” Perhaps Jessica is different from her neighbors. What do you think? Using what you know about Jessica, describe Jessica’s neighbors and the place where she lives. How does your description compare with what you know about Jessica?

Ask a classmate what he or she thinks. Compare your answers.

IV. After you read

Jessica gets her old life back in the end of the story. But the book is titled *The Cell Phone Lot*. Why do you think this is the title?

Can you think of a different title for the book? Why that title?

How will Jessica take the cell phone lot with her to Albuquerque?

Ask a classmate what he or she thinks. Compare your answers.

IV: After you read: Monolog (A monolog is where only character speaks.)

Imagine that on Jessica's last day a Ryde Driving service driver, she meets a new driver named Hamad. Hamad is new to the USA. He was a medical doctor in his country but he needs to get his degree changed for the USA. What do you think he and Jessica talk about. If Jessica were to give Hamad advice, what would she say? Write a short speech with three pieces of advice for Hamad.

Ask a classmate what he or she thinks. Compare your answers.