



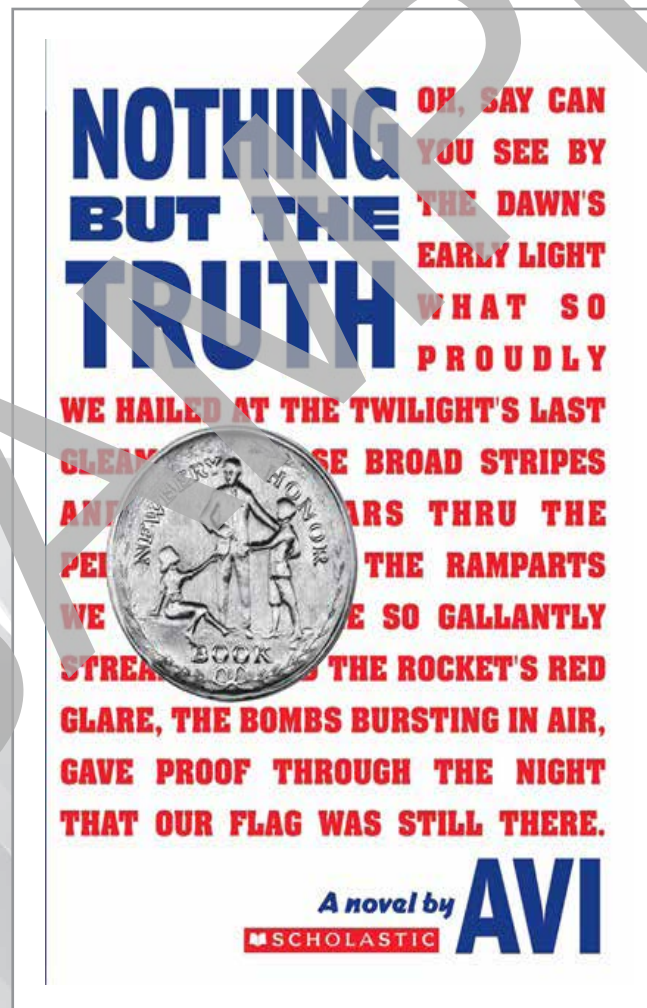
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 6-8

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

Nothing But the Truth

Avi



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

Nothing But the Truth

Avi

TEACHER GUIDE

NOTE:

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

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Skills and Strategies

Comprehension

Predicting, inference,
comparison/contrast,
cause-effect

Writing

News article, letters

Vocabulary

Prefixes/suffixes, sorting

Thinking

Synthesis, evaluation,
brainstorming

Listening/Speaking

Discussion, drama

Literary Elements

Irony, satire, story elements,
characterization, hyperbole

Summary of *Nothing But The Truth*



A ninth-grader's suspension for singing "The Star-Spangled Banner" during homeroom becomes a national news story. The story is revealed without a narrator, through school memos, diary entries, letters, dialogues, newspaper articles, and radio talk show scripts. The reader sees differing points of view about the incident and is able to root out the real problems affecting the incident. The players are Philip Malloy (the ninth grader), Margaret Narwin (the homeroom teacher), the assistant principal, the principal, the superintendent of schools, and Ted Griffen (who is running for the school board).

About the Author

Avi, whose full name is Avi Wortis, writes under the three-letter moniker. Born in 1937, in New York City, he grew up in an artistic environment. Both parents, his great-grandparents, his grandmother, a twin sister, and an aunt were writers. Within the extended family were painters, a composer, and others active in music, theater, and film. Raised in Brooklyn, his family was active politically in various liberal ideas. As a student he suffered with dysgraphia, a marginal impairment in his writing abilities that caused him to reverse letters or misspell words.

An avid reader, he considers this love to have been his first step toward writing professionally. He attended Antioch University (where he studied playwriting as a prelude to his writing career) and earned a B.A. and M.A. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In 1964, he earned an M.S.L.S. from Columbia. He worked as a librarian in Performing Arts Research of the New York Public Library from 1962-1970 and was an assistant professor and humanities librarian at Trenton State College from 1970-1986.

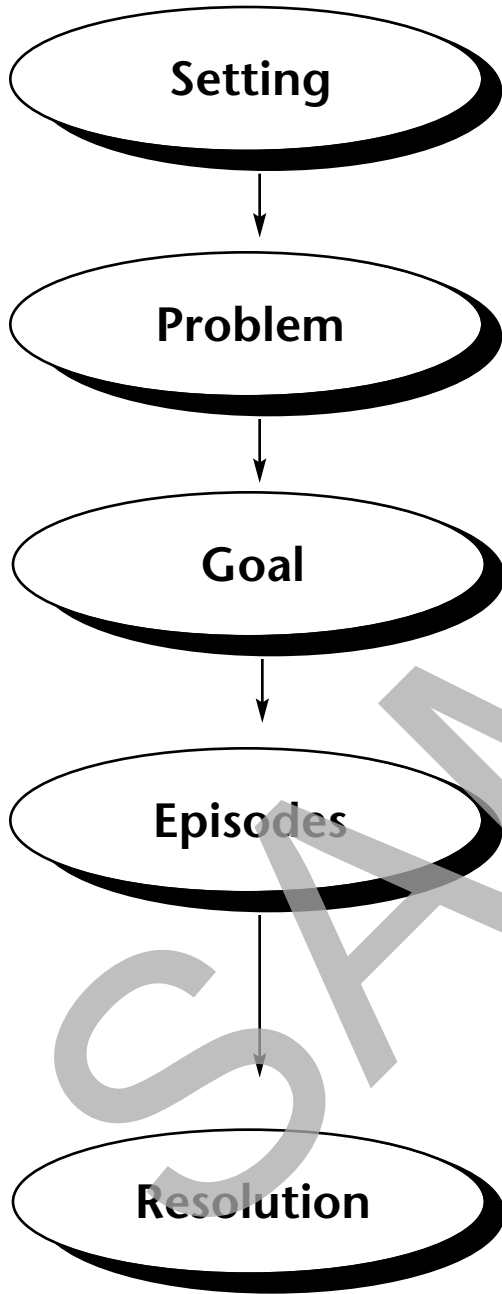
Now writing full-time, Avi interacts with children in talks at schools about his writing.

Avi married Joan Gabriner, a weaver, in 1963 (divorced) and later married Coppelia Kahn, an English professor. He has two children and a stepson.

Other Books by Avi:

The Man Who Was Poe; Punch with Judy; The Barn; The Bird, the Frog, and the Light: A Fable; Blue Heron; Bright Shadow; Captain Grey; City of Light/City of Dark: A Comic Book Novel; Devil's Race; Emily Upham's Revenge: A Massachusetts Adventure; Encounter at Easton; The Fighting Ground (Novel Units guides available); The History of Helpless Harry: To Which Is Added a Variety of Amusing and Entertaining Adventures; Man from the Sky; Night Journeys; No More Magic; A Place Called Ugly; Poppy; Romeo and Juliet, Together (and Alive) at Last; S.O.R. Losers; Smuggler's Island; Something Upstairs (Novel Units guides available); Sometimes I Think I Hear My Name; Tom, Babette &

Story Map



Characters _____

Time and Place _____

Beginning → Development → Outcome

Chapter 1: “Tuesday, March 13”—Pages 3-6

Vocabulary:

steadfast 5 middling 5

Discussion Questions and Activities:

1. Who are the main characters of the book? From what viewpoint is the book written? *(Not clear; Philip Malloy and Margaret Narwin in their own words look to figure prominently.)*
2. Why are there incomplete sentences in the book? *(Philip’s journal and Margaret’s letters are informal writing. The author strives to make them seem authentic.)*
3. What is the setting of the story? *(a middle class high school in America, not particularly distinguished)*
4. What is the basic conflict which the author is setting up? *(Pages 4-5, Philip doesn’t care for the dry traditional curriculum taught in Margaret Narwin’s class. Narwin considers him a middling student with no particular desire to learn. Philip considers his English teacher “so uptight she must have been put together with super glue.”)*

Supplementary Activities:

1. Start attribute webs for the main characters (See pages 10-11 of this guide.)
2. Look for a summary of *The Call of the Wild* by Jack London in the library. Ask the librarian for her opinion of the book.

Chapter 2: “Thursday, March 15”—Pages 7-10

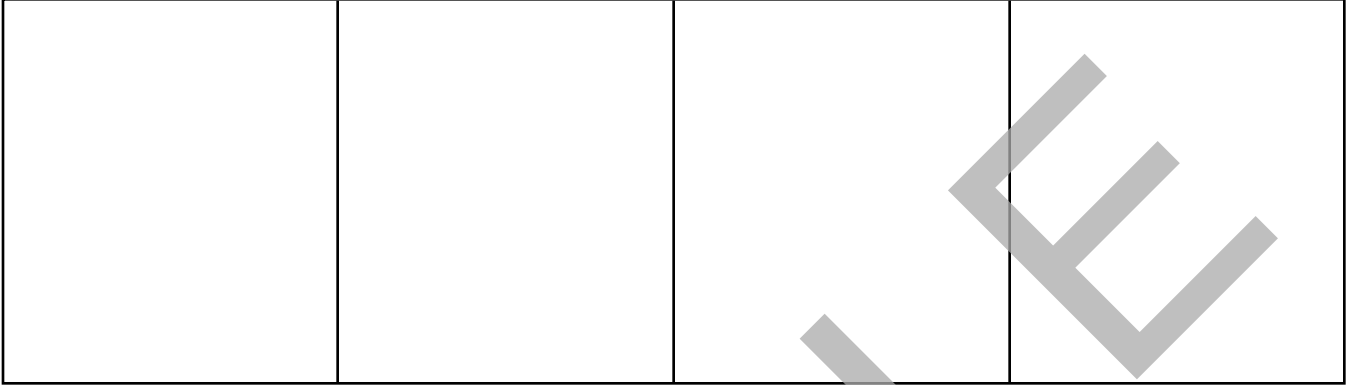
Vocabulary:

carpe diem 7 assassinated 7 ramparts 8

Discussion Questions and Activities:

1. What kind of a teacher is Mr. Lunser? Compare him to Margaret Narwin. *(Lunser jokes around, with a humorous and slightly sarcastic comment for each part of the school opening activities. Narwin is traditional, follows rules to a T, and is respectful towards the administration.)*
2. What is Philip especially interested in during March? *(He has some minor concerns about term exams but mostly he’s excited about trying out for the track team.)*

Comic Strips



Some graphics to help:

