

How FAR would you Go
To Go **VIRAL?**



TAMSIN WINTER

**TEACHERS RESOURCES
FOR 12+ READERS**

I DARE YOU

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The extracts, discussion questions, and activities in this pack are designed to support reading of *I Dare You* and to encourage thoughtful discussion and analysis of the book's key themes.

Themes: ✓ Social media ✓ The dangers of 'viral challenges' ✓ Peer Pressure ✓ Friendship ✓ Identity
✓ Making safe choices

ABOUT THE BOOK

Willow and Alma are best friends, sharing a love of the spotlight. All they want is fame and fortune, and Willow is determined that the best way to get it is to go viral. So they start filming dares. Okay, so getting stuck in a basketball hoop doesn't get them the sort of attention they were hoping for, but as their challenges get more extreme, their fan base grows. Duct-taping themselves to a wall? No-brainer. Eating super-hot chillis? Of course! Waxing an eyebrow off? Super funny! And if they get in a bit of trouble, it's worth it.

But if they really want to prove themselves, they have to go all-out. So they come up with the perfect idea. An idea that causes more than just a bit of trouble. An idea that might destroy not just their ambitions but their entire friendship for good.



I DARE YOU

PRE-READING ACTIVITY



Book Cover Prompts:

1. What do you think the question, 'How far would you go to go viral' means?
2. What can you infer about the main characters of the book based on the front cover?
3. The book is called 'I Dare You'. Have you ever taken part in a dare? How did you feel?
4. Why do you think people take part in dares?
5. Can you make any predictions about what will happen in the book?

I DARE YOU

FOCUS 1: GOING VIRAL

Read the extract on pages 69–71.

I spot Alma's distinctive reddish curls and massive smile heading up the High Street. I stand up and run over to her.

"Have you seen?" I ask breathlessly, grabbing her blazer sleeves in my hands. "Three THOUSAND views! It's so amazing!"

"I know!" she says, beaming her perfect smile at me. "Although easy on my arms, okay. They're aching like mad. How's your bruise?" I check no one can see then lift up my shirt to show her the massive scrape down my side.

"Oh my God!" Alma cries and I quickly pull my shirt down as every single pair of eyes at the bus stop looks over. "Does it hurt?"

"It's fine. Looks worse than it is. Is your back okay?"

Alma lifts up her shirt and shows me the huge graze on her back. It looks like someone's carved a slice out of her skin. My eyes widen in concern but Alma flaps a hand like it's no big deal.

"It's not that bad. Anyway, everyone at school loves our TikTok. We have so many new followers, and on Snap! Let's watch it again."

I put my hand on Alma's as we watch the video on her phone. I captured everything - the climb, the wobbling at the top, our legs dropping through, getting stuck, the firefighters arriving, the platform rising. It's so awesome watching hundreds of little hearts rise in appreciation.

Excitement buzzes through my body.

"We really are going viral!"

"I know!" Alma grins at me and puts her phone away as the bus arrives. She indicates for us to swap an earring. "I mean, oh my God, it was scary at the time, but it was so worth it."

"Maybe we should get stuck in basketball hoops more often." I'm joking, but as I hand Alma my plastic stud, we look at each other and I know she's thinking the same thing. We have to make more videos like this. My heart expands, like it's filling up with air. Because I have the perfect idea.

I DARE YOU

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

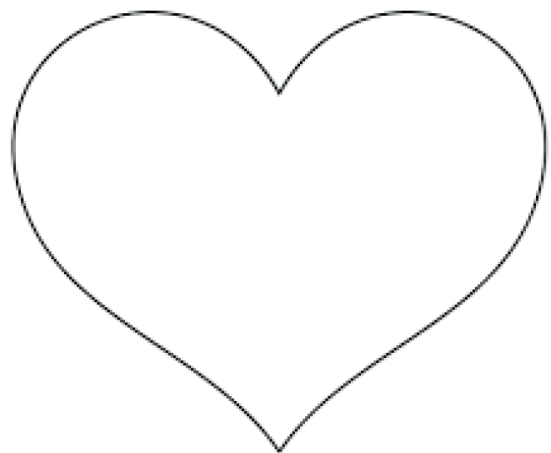
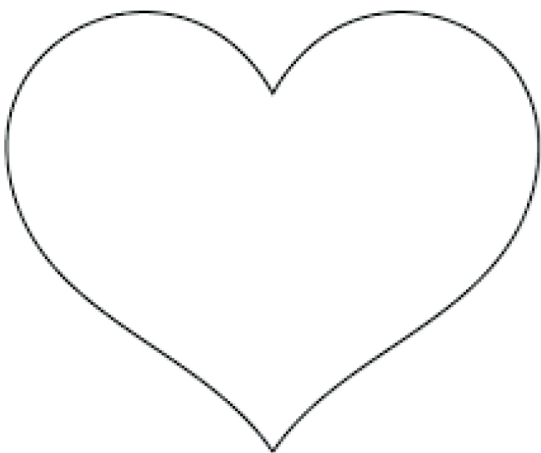
1. Why does Alma say the basketball hoop challenge was 'so worth it'? Do you agree with her?
2. What do you like about Alma and Willow's friendship? Are there any aspects of their friendship that you think could be healthier?
3. Can you predict what Willow's 'perfect idea' might be?
4. Have you heard of any viral social media challenges?
5. Can you categorise the challenges you've heard of into those you think are positive, those you think are neutral and those you think are dangerous?
6. Why do you think viral social media challenges appeal to young people?

ACTIVITY: The Lure of Likes

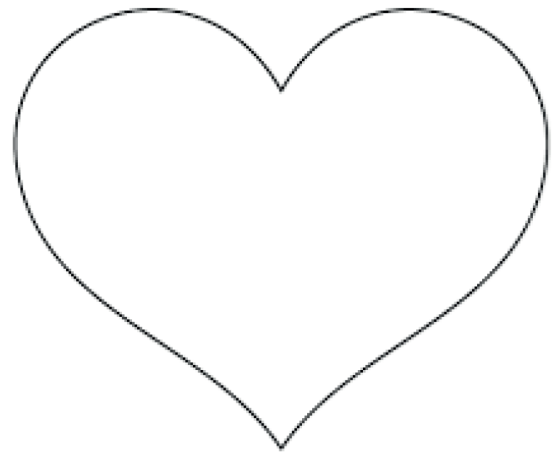
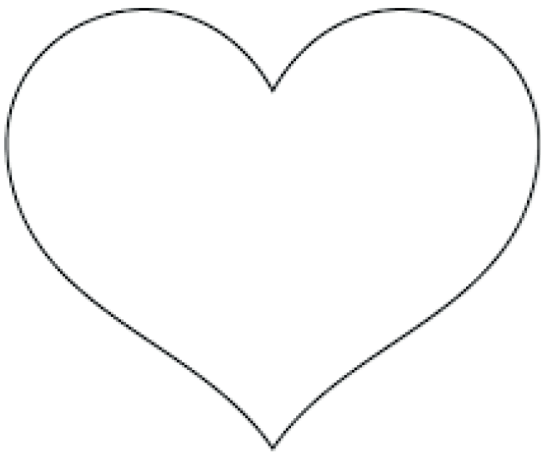
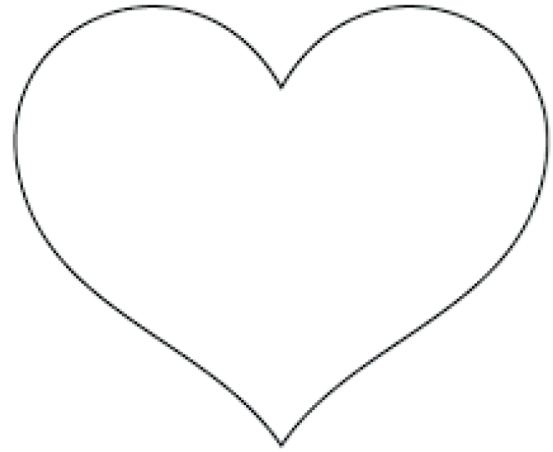
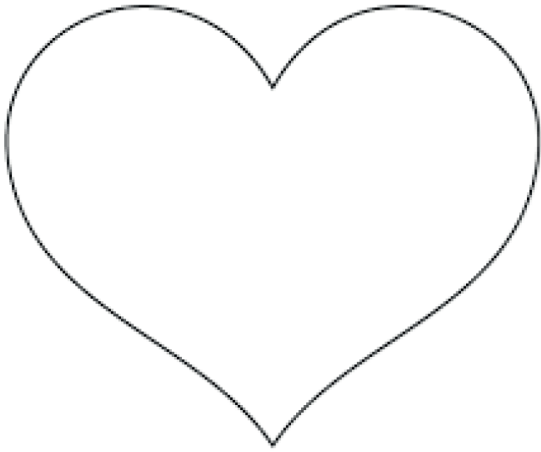
How does Willow feel when she sees 'hundreds of little hearts rise' in response to her video on TikTok?

Why do you think going viral is important to her?

Inside each of the hearts, write down something that you think Willow thinks or feels when she gets a like, follow or comment on TikTok.



I DARE YOU



- Q.** In her letter at the end of the book, Tamsin Winter describes the video-sharing industry as 'intoxicating'. What do you think she means by this?
- Q.** Do you think Willow's relationship with social media is healthy? Why or why not?
- Q.** Can you predict what might happen next in the story?

I DARE YOU

FOCUS 2: PEER PRESSURE

Read pages 229–231.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How do you feel reading this scene?
2. Why do you think Willow wants to go ahead with the challenge despite agreeing with Alma that it looks dangerous?
3. Do you think Willow should trust the instructions she finds online? Why or why not?
4. If you overheard some classmates having this conversation, what would you do?
5. Highlight the words spoken by each character in a different colour then practise acting out this scene with a partner. Use your voice and body language to convey your character's emotions. Are there any moments in this conversation when you think your character could, or should, have acted differently?
6. If you could say anything to Willow at this point in the story, what would you say?

ACTIVITY: Explore Alma's Inner Experience

- Read on to the end of page 233. Does anything surprise you about Alma's response?
- Form a group of three. Choose one person to take on the role of Alma and sit in the middle, while the other two sit on either side. One of you will act as the voice in Alma's head trying to convince her to take on the challenge. The other will act as the part of Alma that feels it is a bad idea. Take turns voicing your reasons to Alma, each trying to persuade her to follow your course of action. Once both voices have had their say, it's time for the person playing Alma to reflect on the experience. How do you feel? Which voice was most persuasive and why?
- In her letter at the end of the book, Tamsin Winter uses the phrase 'gut feeling'. Can you describe what this phrase means? Have you ever had a strong gut feeling about something? What do you think Alma's 'gut feeling' is telling her at this point in the story?
- At the end of page 233, Alma finds herself agreeing to do the challenge. Have you ever felt pressured into agreeing to do something you didn't want to do? How does it feel to be in this position? Can you think of any similes or metaphors to describe the feeling?
- As a reader, what do you think will happen next and what do you hope will happen next?

I DARE YOU

FOCUS 3: SPEAKING UP

Read the extract on page 290.

The mixture feels stingy on my skin as I take Willow's pinkie finger in mine. I smile, even though inside I'm wishing for it to be over. I focus on the bubbles catching the sunlight, tiny spheres of iridescence, and I try to channel my inner witch. I take a long breath in and imagine I'm at Shiz University, the college they go to in Wicked. I'm Glinda and Willow is Elphaba and this is all magic. It's a role I'm playing and there's no reason to be frightened. I am the good witch performing a spell. I bathe my hands in the bubbly cauldron again. I'm confident. I'm not afraid. I'm the good witch. Nothing bad can happen to me. I make sure every millimetre of my skin is covered. The magic won't work otherwise. I shove aside the panicky feeling in my chest and hold out my hands for my best friend to light. I trust her. She won't let anything bad happen to me.

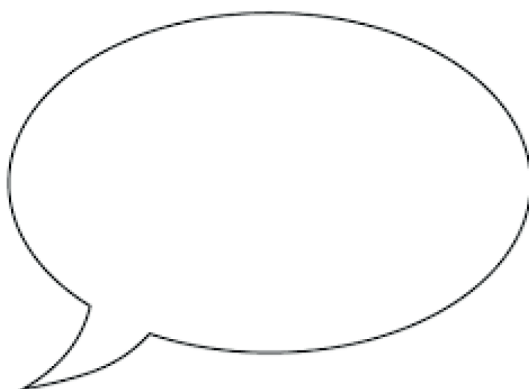
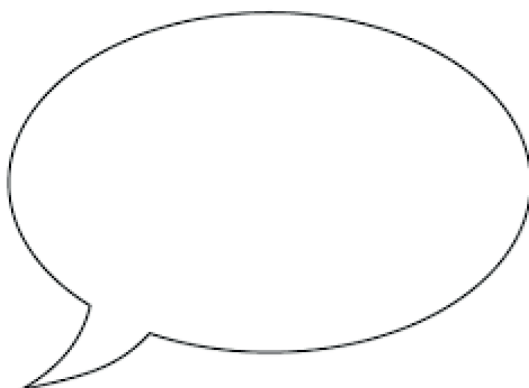
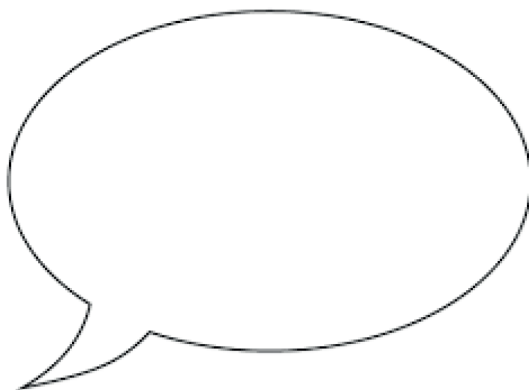
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Does anything in this extract shock or surprise you?
2. Why do you think Alma pretends she's in the imaginary world of 'Wicked'?
3. The author uses lots of short sentences. Why do you think she does this and what effect does it have on the reader?
4. Underline any sentences in which you think Alma is not being completely honest with herself. Now, re-write these sentences imagining that Alma is being truly honest about how she feels.
5. Do you think Willow knows how panicky Alma feels?
6. What do you think this extract tells us about Alma's character and about Alma and Willow's friendship?

I DARE YOU

ACTIVITY: Finding the Courage to Speak Up

In her letter at the end of the book, Tamsin Winter describes the events on page 290 as, 'the last moment she [Alma] really has to back out.' If you could speak to Alma at this point in the story, what would you say to her? Write three messages to Alma in the speech bubbles below:



Now, imagine that Alma finds the strength to back out of the challenge. What might she do or say? If Willow was a good, supportive friend, how would she react? Write a continuation of this scene in which Alma backs out and doesn't go through with the challenge. How do you think this might change the outcome of the story?

I DARE YOU

REFLECTIONS

Activity ideas for when you have finished the book!

- If Willow at the end of the book could go back and talk to Willow at the start of the book, what do you think she might say to her? Do you think younger Willow would listen to older Willow? Write a script or improvise a conversation with a partner.
- If you were Alma, could you forgive Willow? Why or why not? What about if you were Niamh or Cormac? Do you think Willow will be able to forgive herself? Discuss with your class.
- In the novel, Alma doesn't find the courage to say no. It can be really hard to say no when you feel under pressure, especially when the pressure comes from friends and peers. What advice would you give to someone who was feeling pressured by their friends or peers to do something they didn't want to?
- By the end of the book, Alma and Willow know first-hand the dangers of social media challenges but not all young people are aware of the risks. Imagine you are either Alma or Wilma. Write the script of a video for younger children about the dangers of viral social media challenges. You could:
 - describe what 'viral challenges' are and why they are popular,
 - explain the dangers,
 - share your experience and the impact the challenge had on you and others around you,
 - give advice about how to respond to peer pressure and how to be a supportive friend,
 - empower your audience to feel confident making safe choices!
- Do you think social media challenges should be banned? Why or why not? Write a list of reasons for and against and then compose a reasoned argument.
- Why do you think the author, Tamsin Winter, chose to include the 'After' section at the start of the book? What impact did it have on you as a reader and how might your experience of reading the book have been different without it?

I DARE YOU

- Read the letter from the author, Tamsin Winter, at the end of the book. How does it make you feel? Is there anything that shocks or surprises you? Tamsin writes:

You are capable of extraordinary things. But you are, of course, mortal. You are far too precious and important to risk your life, or the lives of those around you, for the temporary thrill of online fame or a passing craze. There is so much wonder in the real world for you to discover. You are the writer of your own story. Your future is unwritten and you hold the pen. Be good with this power. Stay extraordinary, stay safe, and keep your main character energy alive and kicking.

What are you excited to discover in the real world? What are your dreams and goals for your future? Create a collage to represent your hopes, dreams, and the story you want to write for yourself. Think about places you'd like to go, people you'd like to meet, goals you'd like to achieve and experiences you'd like to have!

- How far would YOU go to go viral? Write a personal response to this question. You might like to reflect upon your relationship with social media and how this may have changed over time, your dreams and ambitions, any past experiences and any thought or feelings you had reading 'I Dare You'.
- Who would you recommend 'I Dare You' to? Why do you think they might enjoy it and what do you think they might learn from it?

