

# Delirium:

## Themes, Symbols, and Beyond-the-Book Connections

<b>Summary</b>	This lesson helps clarify and anchor the themes of <i>Delirium</i> in students' minds by linking themes with symbols through book cover design. Students also engage in reading strategies by predicting how they think the novel will play out by evaluating its themes and plot thus far (up through Chapter 9). This lesson additionally draws intertextual connections between <i>Delirium</i> and music, highlighting the power of music (love songs, songs as cries for rebellion or protest) both in the novel and in our lives.
<b>Objectives</b>	Students should leave this lesson with a clear sense of the themes in <i>Delirium</i> and how those themes can be connected to other texts -- especially those beyond literature. Students should have initial ideas about what <i>Delirium</i> may be about and how it might play out.
<b>Outcomes Met</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.1 reinforce or develop new understanding from what others share during a discussion</li><li>1.2 ask questions for clarification, elaboration, to qualify, or question relevance, accuracy</li><li>4.2 read a variety of texts including fiction and literature, non-fiction, and media texts from different provinces and countries</li><li>4.3 explain how authors use text features to create meaning and achieve different purposes</li><li>4.4 use text features to construct meaning and understand the text</li><li>4.6 independently use a range of reading strategies (predicting, connecting, questioning, inferring) to make meaning from complex print and media texts</li><li>4.7 consistently identify and discuss the kinds of strategies good readers and viewers use</li><li>8.4 use various forms of note-making for different purposes and situations</li><li>9.1 continue to use a variety of forms as well as other art forms such as visual arts, music, and drama</li><li>10.4 demonstrate a commitment to crafting writing and other representations</li></ul>
<b>Materials</b>	Art supplies for book cover creation (magazines, paper, paint, markers, glitter, etc.)
<b>Pre-Work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Prepare colour symbolism sheet and font sample sheet</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Photocopy Book Cover assignment hand-out</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Choose pertinent songs for <i>Delirium</i> music tie-in</li></ul>

**Plan**

- Warm-Up**  
(1.5 classes)
1. Construct a timeline of what has happened so far in the novel (Chapters 1-5). We know Alex has asked Lena to meet him: do we think she will? What will happen? What do we think is going to happen in the next few chapters? Explain that making predictions is a reading strategy; we're always trying to figure out what's going to happen next. Encourage students to jot down their ideas or speculations on post-its as they read -- even if their guesses don't come true, they're evidence of good reading practices.
  2. Read Chapter 6 aloud, comparing what happens to our initial predictions and stopping once in awhile to ask for additional predictions. Model and encourage students to contribute.
  3. In their groups, have students read Chapters 7-9. Circulate and monitor. Students can read either silently in their groups, pausing to check in with the others and to make predictions, get clarification, or speculate on motives, or can read aloud as a group.
- Main Act**  
(2 classes)
1. Assign each group a section of the novel. Ask them to pull out the most important section that relates to *Delirium's* themes. Reconvene as a class and share. Write down the quotations on the board and discuss: do we all agree these are significant? What do they tell us? Would a person who didn't know anything about the novel get a sense of *Delirium's* big ideas?
  2. Have students choose a section from the novel and design a cover based on the section they've chosen (this is done individually). Revisit the dystopian covers we looked at initially; remind students that covers can be minimalistic and symbolic -- they don't need to depict a scene. Allow plenty of time for this, asking students to write their corresponding quotation and an explanation of their cover on the back of the page. Advise students to be thoughtful in font and colour choices (distribute sheet with font samples and colour symbolism).
  3. Once students have finished making their book covers, put them up around the room. Note similarities and differences. Has anyone done something very different from the others? Are they all very different? Can we spot any patterns? What does this information tell us?

- Conclusion** (0.5 class)
1. Music plays a huge part in this section of the novel and in Lena's transformation, highlighting the government's censorship and the power of art to take one outside of social limitations. Select a few pieces of music to bring in that relate to love or rebellion and play in class with accompanying lyrics sheets. Have students highlight any sections that make them think of Lena, Hana, or Alex -- or that remind them of *Delirium* in general.
  2. In groups, ask students about censorship: Why would the government in *Delirium* want to censor certain texts and songs? Are there any texts or songs they can think of that the government would definitely censor? Is this censorship realistic? Reconvene and discuss.
  3. Conversation journal: *Has music ever influenced how you feel or think? Have you ever listened to a song, album, or artist that just clicks with where you are in your life? Do you think music can be a form of protest or rebellion? What do you think about censorship? Does that happen today? Is it right or wrong?*

**Assessment** Formative: Students will receive feedback on cover creation as comments without grades. Conversation journal responses as usual.

**Adaptations** Students still struggling to read should receive appropriate support in terms of reading strategies and instruction. Organizational sheets may help as well.

**Extensions** Students can either continue reading *Delirium* or can, with laptops or iPads, go to 8tracks.com and create fanmixes of their own -- they could make playlists that tie in with the novel or the novel's themes (love, control, fear) or songs that changed their lives.

**Research/ Resources** Research into appropriate music that interests/engages students will need to be conducted with individual class. Possibilities include hip-hop (particularly for music meant to incite rebellion), rock ballads, folk music, etc. Any music that employs unconventional sounds would be especially powerful (see Lena's description of first hearing music that has been banned) -- perhaps a band like Radiohead or Sigur Ros or a musician like Bjork.

Research into the history of censorship of media may also be helpful for the lesson, if class interests tend that way.

## Book Cover Assignment

So far, we've figured out some big ideas a lot of dystopian fiction shares. We've also started digging into *Delirium* a little and have started to make some predictions about what the novel is about and where it might be heading.

Imagine you are a book cover designer working on a very tight deadline. You need to create a new cover for *Delirium*, but you haven't had time to read the entire novel. You've read the premise (the back cover) and one section of the book (the section your group has been assigned). Thankfully, you are also familiar with dystopian literature.

Based on your section, what are the big ideas or dystopian themes you think *Delirium* addresses? List 2 or 3.

What are some symbols that correspond to those ideas? List 2 or 3.

What kind of mood do you want the font to convey? List 2 possible moods.

What could you represent through colour? Check the colour symbolism sheet. List 2 to 3 possible symbols and colours.

Now that you've finished with your initial impressions, choose the symbol(s), font, and colour(s) you want to use and create your cover! Please explain your choices on the back of the cover you create.