



Jaya and Rasa: A Love Story

written by Sonia Patel

About the Book

Genre: Fiction

Format: Paperback
224 pages, 6 x 9

ISBN: 9781941026878

Reading Level: Grade 9–College

Interest Level: Grades 9–College

Guided Reading Level: Z+

Accelerated Reader® Level/Points:
N/A

Lexile™ Measure: N/A

*Reading level based on the ATOS Readability Formula

Themes: Asian/Asian American Interest, Biracial/Multiracial Interest, Families, Fiction, Identity/Self Esteem/Confidence, India, LGBTQ, Overcoming Obstacles, Realistic Fiction, Teen Interest, YA interest

Resources on the web:

leeandlow.com/books/jaya-and-rasa-a-love-story

SYNOPSIS

Seventeen-year-old Jaya Mehta detests wealth, secrets, and privilege, though he has them all. His family is Indian, originally from Gujarat. Rasa Santos, like many in Hawaii, is of mixed ethnicity. All she has are siblings, three of them, plus a mother who controls men like a black widow spider and leaves her children whenever she wants to. Neither Jaya nor Rasa have ever known real love or close family--not until their chance meeting one sunny day on a mountain in Hau'ula.

The unlikely love that blooms between them must survive the stranglehold their respective pasts have on them. Each of their present identities has been shaped by years of extreme family struggles. By the time they cross paths, Jaya is a transgender outsider with depressive tendencies and the stunningly beautiful Rasa thinks sex is her only power until a violent pimp takes over her life. Will their love transcend and pull them forward, or will they remain stuck and separate in the chaos of their pasts?

All guided reading level placements may vary and are subject to revision. Teachers may adjust the assigned levels in accordance with their own evaluations.

BACKGROUND

A Note Prior to Reading

It is important to note that *Jaya and Rasa: A Love Story* is a novel rich in cross-cultural exchange. One important theme woven throughout the novel is identity, which reveals complex cultural tensions and family dynamics. It is imperative for teachers to consider the demographics of their classroom (and school district at-large) when predicting how such themes might impact the readers. As such, we suggest this critical theme is taught with deep sensitivity and open-mindedness. Set the example of what culturally responsive teaching looks like:

1. **Collaborate** with students to establish guidelines early on. This will serve as a reminder for discussion etiquette as thought-provoking topics are developed.
2. **Anticipate** how your students will respond to controversial topics presented in the novel.
3. While teachers should **encourage** students to share their views without fear of judgment, teachers should consider how to **respond** to emotion, and use this to guide instruction and for future instructional planning.
4. Aim to **include and discuss** outside materials that align with the text and essentially address underrepresented groups' experiences in ways that do not marginalize their experiences.

Note About Alcoholism

The story mentions that Jaya's dad, Sanjay, suffers from alcoholism. You will want to treat this part of the story with sensitivity as alcoholism is a painful issue for some families and the disease may have personally touched the lives of some of your students.

Note About School Violence

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), school violence (<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/youthviolence/schoolviolence/fastfact.html>) is a subgroup of youth violence (https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/school_violence_fact_sheet-a.pdf), and typically occurs between the ages of 10 and 24. Bullying, fighting, weapon use, electronic aggression, and gang violence are all examples of violent behavior that can also occur as school violence.

The themes in this story must be addressed and handled with deep sensitivity and open mindedness. Below are resources for those who may be affected or who wish to support someone through mental health issues.

Crisis Text Line:

Text HOME to 741741 or visit www.crisistextline.org

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: Call 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or visit www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

National Human Trafficking Hotline
1-888-373-7888

<https://humantraffickinghotline.org/en>

The Trevor Project:

Text START to 678-678 for Trevor Text or call TrevorLifeline at 1-866-488-7386 or visit

www.thetrevorproject.org

If you'd like to help those who may be experiencing a mental health challenge, consider becoming trained in Mental Health First Aid.

Mental Health First Aid:

Visit www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org

BEFORE READING

Prereading Focus Questions

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 5 and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

Before introducing this book to students, you may wish to develop background knowledge and promote anticipation by posing questions such as the following:

Teachers must be aware and prepared that by teaching this novel (and the corresponding topics addressed in it) they may be addressing a legacy of harm and violence, specifically within largely minority and underrepresented socioeconomic groups.

- Have you ever been in a difficult situation where you didn't know what to do? Who did you go to for help? What plan did you come up with to tackle the situation? How did this situation make you feel?
- What do you know about Hawai'i? How and when did it become a state in the United States? Who are the people native to Hawai'i? What is Hawai'i known for? What are the different islands in Hawai'i?
- Ask students to think about their family and what family means to them. How is family important to you? How do you interact with your family members? How do you help and support them? How do they help and support you? What do you do when there is difficulty with your family?
- As a hook for readers, consider having students explore the Sonia Patel's website: <https://soniapatel.net/>

Exploring the Book

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strand 1; Craft & Structure, Strand 5; and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

- Talk about the title of the book and the book cover image. Ask students what they think this book will most likely be about and whom the book might be about. What do they think might

happen? What information do they think they might learn? What makes them think that?

- Encourage students to stop and jot in their notebooks when they: Learn new information, have an emotional reaction or an idea, have a question, or see new words.

Setting a Purpose for Reading

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)

Have students read to find out:

- the difficulties and pressures of being the oldest sibling
- the difficulties of dealing with troubling family dynamics
- the impact of gender-based violence and sex trafficking
- why it's important to advocate for yourself and stand up for who you are, your beliefs, identity, culture, and values

Encourage students to consider why the author, Sonia Patel, would want to share this story with young people.

VOCABULARY

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 4)

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

The story contains several content-specific and academic words and phrases that may be unfamiliar to students. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary below.

Encourage a variety of strategies to support students' vocabulary acquisition: look up and record word definitions from a dictionary, write the meaning of the word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, create a specific action for each word, list synonyms and antonyms, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word.

Content Specific

chunni, salwar kameez, Gujarat, taffeta, sitar, opium, ti leaf, tiffin, haole, opihi, haole, leiomano, aubergine, argan, bezerk, lichen, nympho, cajoled, opihis, shaka, tritiya prakriti, elusive, imbued, incision, labyrinth, haute couture, yuzu, sandalwood, bergamot, denizen, compunction, defibrillator, pidgin, hydraulic, thorax, lechery, globules, saffron, covetous, okole, manacles, palatial, arachnid

Academic

corrugated, tangible, intoxicating, morsel, tousled, escapades, pristine, guile, percolated, ambled, waned, gaudy, kneading, gorging, coaxed, sheathed, melancholy, despair, haughtiness, executioner, repertoire, convictions, foilage, tormentors, derision, wiry, sublime, entitlement, exquisite, quintessential, decree, zeal, dank, nirvana, cavorted, intolerant, lewd, vigilant, wiry, sublime, scantily, cacophonous, precarious, cahoots, ethereal, contemptuous, debauchery, olfactory, entitlement, elusive, euphoria, pretentious, pompous, innuendos, chivalrous, infatuation, elixir, conceit, dogma, jovial, fervor, reticence, intercept, impassive, bayonets, subjugation, cascaded, eradicated, ambient, invigorated, façade, fiending, egregious, ruse, nonchalance, aptitude, abjection, innate, aphrodisia, derriere, ignite, befuddlement, convoluted, euphemisms,

incandescent, petulant, reticent, forlornness, bespoke serrated, dreary, tirade, oscillated, torrent, serenade

AFTER READING

Discussion Questions

After students have read the book, use these or similar questions to generate discussion, enhance comprehension, and develop appreciation for the content. Encourage students to refer to passages and/or illustrations in the book to support their responses. **To build skills in close reading of a text, students should cite textual evidence with their answers.**

Literal Comprehension

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

1. What character traits do you learn about Rasa in the first chapter? What is your first impression of her?
2. What character traits do you learn about Jaya in the second chapter? What is your first impression of him?
3. Where does the story take place? Over what period of time?
4. What are Rasa's siblings' names and their birth order?
5. Who is Kalindi? What do you learn about her in the first few chapters?
6. Why did Kalindi change her name? What does her name mean?
7. Why does Rasa want to learn how to free dive?
8. When does Jaya come into his boyhood?
9. When is Rasa's first sexual experience? With whom? What does she learn from this encounter?
10. How does Rasa earn money?
11. How was Jaya's life different in Niu Valley from the life he has in Kahala?
12. How does Jaya's mom, Jayshree, deal with her emotions?
13. Who is Millie? How is she meaningful to Jaya?
14. What is Jaya's relationship to music? When does he first start listening to Nirvana?
15. How do Rasa and her siblings feel when they think Kalindi will spend the day with them?
16. Where does Jaya go to school?
17. What is the biggest issue in Jaya's parents' marriage?
18. What does Sanjay do for a living? How does it impact Hawaiian communities?
19. Why does Rasa start to see herself as a baby black widow? How is Kalindi a black widow?

20. What happens on Rasa's thirteenth birthday? How does Rasa feel?
21. What is kama?
22. What is a svairini? Why does Kalindi call Rasa this?
23. Why does Jaya's mom take the gun?
24. How does Jaya feel about guns? Why doesn't he toss out the gun when he first has the chance?
25. What are Sanjay's opinions about native Hawaiians? How does Jaya respond to his father's views?
26. Where does Jaya volunteer and why?
27. What does Jaya name his acoustic guitar?
28. What are the images that Rasa finds in Ach's sketchbook? Why is she concerned?
29. What does Jaya see when he brings the tiffin to his father at work? Why doesn't he say anything?
30. Who is Alika? How do Jaya and Alika become friends?
31. Why is Jaya not out as trans at school? How is he treated by most of his classmates?
32. Why does Ach get bullied?
33. Who is Sharon?
34. What does Rasa know about Kalindi's past?
35. Why does Jaya get into a fight at Samuel's house party?
36. What does being a gentleman mean to Jaya?
37. Describe the last conversation between Rasa and Kalindi before Kalindi disappears for good.
38. Why does Jaya decide to go on his first hike? How does he feel afterwards?
39. How do Rasa and her siblings end up in foster care? Where do they all go?
40. Who is Alastar? What is his relationship to Rasa?
41. Why does Xander cut Rasa with the letter "X"?
42. Who is Nohea?
43. What was California Prop 6?
44. What tattoo does Jaya get and why?
45. What does Rasa miss about Hau'ula?
46. Where does Rasa go looking for her mother?
47. How do Jaya and Rasa meet? What is their first impression of each other?

48. What tattoo does Rasa have and what does it represent?
49. Why is Rasa scared to run away from Xander or seek help?
50. What drug does Xander introduce to Rasa?
51. What does Jaya appreciate about his name? What does it mean?
52. How does Rasa react when Jaya tells her he is trans?
53. What is the relationship between Sam, Ann, and Xander?
54. What is Denizen X? What does it mean?
55. What do Jaya and Rasa do on their first date?
56. Why does Rasa feel lonely?
57. What are Jaya's three reasons for changing himself for the better?
58. What song does Jaya play for Rasa in his guitar room?
59. How does Rasa know she is in love?
60. Who sees Jaya and Rasa making out in Jaya's guitar room?
61. What different feelings come up for Jaya when he masturbates?
62. How does Jayshree's relationship to food impact Jaya?
63. Who is Tom Franz? How do things change for Rasa after she meets him?
64. When does Jaya run into Xander? What is Jaya's impression of Xander?
65. What does Rasa's name mean?
66. When do Jaya and Rasa first say "I love you" to each other?
67. Why does Jaya choose to go slowly with Rasa physically? How does she react?
68. Why does Jaya think Rasa is cheating on him?
69. How does Alika feel about meeting Rasa?
70. Why does Rasa start to feel emotionally naked?
71. What happens when Jaya sees Rasa kissing Tom Franz?
72. How does Jaya's depression impact the end of the story? What does he try to do with his dad's gun?
73. How do Jaya and Rasa both feel when the gun doesn't go off?
74. Describe the feelings that emerge for both Jaya and Rasa when the truth about their lives is revealed.
75. What do Jaya and Rasa vow to each other at the end of the story?

Extension/Higher Level Thinking

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 2 and 3 and Craft & Structure, Strands 4 and 6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

1. How is Jaya the narrator different from Rasa the narrator? What do you think accounts for these differences? Are there similarities? If so, what are they?
2. There are many relationship dynamics in the novel. Choose a character (i.e. Jaya, Rasa, Ach, Jayshree, etc). Analyze that character's relationships with other characters in the book.
3. What role does Hawai'i play in the story? What is the different characters' relationship to the island? What do you learn about Native Hawaiians and land rights from the story?
4. What antagonisms does Jaya have to deal with because he is trans? How do people love and support Jaya in moments when others are harmful towards him?
5. What does the band Nirvana represent for Jaya and Rasa throughout the story? Individually and in their relationship?
6. Describe Rasa's relationship to sex work throughout the story. How is sex work a tool for her and her family's survival? What makes her different than her mother? Are there similarities between Rasa and her mother?
7. What is the significance of names in the story? What does your name mean? Have you ever wanted to choose a different name for yourself? Why or why not?
8. Describe the relationship between Rasa and Ach. How does their relationship change over time?
9. How does Jaya's family dynamic impact his mental health? How does he feel about each parent? Why is heard for him to open up to Rasa about his struggles?
10. A chosen family is made of people who are not necessarily related biologically, but have intentionally chosen to embrace, support, love and nurture one another. How does the idea of a chosen family show up in this story? Do you have chosen family? How do you all love and support each other?
11. How do classism, prejudice, and transphobia intersect in this story? Connect this to real-world current events and community issues, nationally or locally.
12. Different kinds of mothers are featured in this story. How are they different? How are they similar Do any of these mothers change over the course of the book? If so, how?
13. How is foster care depicted in this story?
14. How can music play an important role towards healing?
15. How do you think it made Jaya feel to communicate his emotions through music? How do his cultural and gender identities impact his ability to be himself openly?
16. What do you learn about love from this story? What different kinds of loves are represented?
17. What do you learn about trauma from this story? What different kinds of traumas are represented?

18. What makes the friendship between Jaya and Alika so strong?
19. What is Rasa's relationship to the ocean throughout the story?
20. Why do you think Jaya's mother, Jayshree, does not leave Sanjay? What are some reasons people stay in relationships that may not be healthy for them?
21. Both Jaya and Rasa have tattoos. What do the tattoos signify for each of them? Why are tattoos significant for some people?
22. Read aloud this quote: "Pain is pain, it doesn't matter what causes it" (p188). When Rasa says this to Jaya what does she mean? Do you agree or disagree?
23. What details would you use to support Rasa's reasons for not telling Jaya the truth?
24. How would you define bullying? What are some examples of bullying? What effect does bullying have on the person being bullied? On others? What should you do if you're being bullied? How might others help when a person is being bullied?
25. How did you feel about the way *Jaya and Rasa: A Love Story* ended? Were you satisfied with the ending? Why or why not?

Reader's Response

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4–6)

Use the following questions and writing activities to help students practice active reading and personalize their responses to the book. **Suggest that students respond in reader's response journals, essays, or oral discussion.** You may also want to set aside time for students to share and discuss their written work.

1. What do you think the author's message to the reader is? Think about Sonia Patel's author's biography. What do you think she wanted to tell young readers?
2. Have students make a text-to-self connection. What kind of connections did you make from this book to your own life? What is your role in your own family? What are ways you express yourself after an emotional event?
3. Have students make a text-to-text connection. Did you think of any other books while you read *Jaya and Rasa: A Love Story*? Why did you make those connections?
4. Have students make a text-to-world connection. What kind of connections did you make from this book to what you have seen in the world or on the news? Why did *Jaya and Rasa: A Love Story* make you think of that?
5. What is one big thought that you have after reading this book? Think about different character changes, the setting, and the relationships. What did you learn from reading *Jaya and Rasa: A Love Story*?
6. Prejudice results in the mistreatment and isolation of people based preconceived ideas and beliefs. Have you or someone you know ever been treated differently based on something they had no control over? How did you feel experiencing this or witnessing it? How did you react? What can we do to confront this kind of prejudice?
7. Rasa learns that many adults in her life will not protect her. What does safety mean to you?

Think of the people in your life who you look to for support and care. How do these people support and make you feel safe? How have you helped yourself overcome obstacles and challenges?

ELL Teaching Activities

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 4–6)

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

These strategies might be helpful to use with students who are English Language Learners.

1. Assign ELL students to partner-read the story with strong English readers/speakers. Students can alternate reading between pages, repeat passages after one another, or listen to the more fluent reader.
2. Have each student write three questions about the story. Then let students pair up and discuss the answers to the questions.
3. Have students give a short talk about one of the characters in the book. Have them discuss what characteristics they admire about the person they chose.
4. Have students illustrate or discuss a loss and/or major change they have experienced and had to deal with.
5. What real-life people or events are you reminded of by characters or events in the story? Prepare a short essay, citing examples from the book and your chosen character/event to justify the similarities.

Social and Emotional Learning

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1-3 and Craft & Structure, Strands 4-6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–2 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4–6)

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 6)

Social and emotional learning involves being aware of and regulating emotions for healthy development. In addition to understanding one's own feelings, strong socio-emotional development allows individuals to develop empathy for others and to establish and maintain relationships.

Use the following prompts to help students study the socio-emotional aspects of this book.

1. Have students examine Jaya's and Rasa's characters in terms of helpful and harmful traits. According to The Reading Strategies Book (<http://www.heinemann.com/products/e07433.aspx>), students can think about them in terms of traits that are helpful, or traits that keep her stressed and anxious. Consider providing students with a sentence starter to get them thinking about her character, "Often my character seems to _____, but sometimes _____." How do these character traits influence the story?
2. Rasa is abandoned by her mother. Have you ever been abandoned or lost someone you love? What is the difference between abandonment and loss? Why do some people become reserved and emotionally closed off during times of sadness or trauma? What causes this retreat?

3. It is often difficult for Jaya and Rasa to feel trusting of others. What does it take to trust someone and feel secure with them? Cite evidence from the text as well as personal experience.
4. What are some things you feel responsible for in your household? How do these responsibilities make you feel? Write a journal entry explaining these feelings.
5. How can we affirm the people we love, how they love themselves, and who they love? Why is affirmation and support important?
6. Coping mechanisms are the strategies people often use in the face of stress and/or trauma to help manage painful or difficult emotions. Coping mechanisms can help people adjust to stressful events while helping them maintain their emotional well-being. What coping mechanism do Jaya, Rasa and other characters in the text use to manage their difficult feelings and circumstances? What are your coping mechanisms?

INTERDISCIPLINARY ACTIVITIES

(Introduction to the Standards, page 7: Students who are college and career ready must be able to build strong content knowledge, value evidence, and use technology and digital media strategically and capably)

Use some of the following activities to help students integrate their reading experiences with other curriculum areas. These can also be used for extension activities, for advanced readers, and for building a home-school connection.

English/Language Arts

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **What real-life people or events are you reminded of by characters or events in the story?** Prepare a critical essay, citing examples from the novel and your chosen event to justify the similarities.
- **Examine the different literary elements that author Sonia Patel uses throughout *Jaya and Rasa: A Love Story*.** Have students come up with a list and select portions of the text that showcase a specific literary device (i.e. foreshadowing, flashback, metaphor, etc). Afterward, students can select one literary device and write about how that was impactful when reading *Jaya and Rasa: A Love Story*. How do literary devices make the story engaging, and how do they contribute to the story overall? See PBS's Literary Elements and Techniques video for more information about how to teach about literary devices (<https://ny.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/litel18-fig/literary-elements-and-techniques-figurative-language/>).
- **Prepare a defensive essay that explains your views on which character changed the most throughout the course of the novel.** Defend your views by citing specific examples.

- **Select a scene in which you disagreed how a character handled a situation, person, or event.** In the voice of that character, rewrite the scene as you think it should have happened.
- **Assign students different characters from *Jaya and Rasa: A Love Story* and have them brainstorm about a guiding question: what and how can this character teach us?** Students can think about different characters to examine as a whole class and then break into smaller, specific character groups. Encourage students to think about how characters have shown resilience in the face of adversity and ultimately what they learned from that character. Have students share their findings: How is this character important to the book, and what lessons did they teach us over the course of the story? How did their actions develop the narrative, and why are they crucial to understanding the meaning of the book?
- **Pretend you are creating a movie based on *Jaya and Rasa: A Love Story*.** Who would you cast as each main character and what would you want the sets to look like? Make notes about these items and then describe the scenes you would be most excited to film.
- **Rasa's mother has been gone for many years by the end of the story.** Write a scene that depicts what Rasa would say to her mother if she were to see Kalinda again.

Social Studies & Geography

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3; Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6; Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9; and Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3; Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6; Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9; and Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, and Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **Design a lesson or unit on Hawai'i. Detail the history of Hawai'i and its different islands.** Include the history of Hawai'i becoming a state.
- ***Jaya and Rasa: A Love Story* touches upon the displacement of Native Hawaiians. Conduct and present research detailing the effects of the westernization of land in Hawai'i.** Include scientific, historical, and sociopolitical facts. Some resources include NPR (<https://www.npr.org/2021/06/21/1008773601/local-spotlight-returning-ancestral-land-to-native-hawaiians>), Harvard Law Review (<https://harvardlawreview.org/print/vol-133/aloha-aina-native-hawaiian-land-restitution/>), and Stanford University (https://med.stanford.edu/content/dam/sm/schoolhealtheval/documents/Noah_Policy-Brief.pdf).
- **Design a lesson or unit on Gujarat and Gujarati people** (<https://www.britannica.com/place/Gujarat>). Where is Gujarat? What languages do Gujarati people speak? Who are Gujaratis descended from? What do you learn from Jaya's narration of being Gujarati?

Arts/Performing Arts

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, and Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **Listen to some of the Nirvana songs that Jaya and Rasa enjoy in the story (About**

a Girl, In Bloom, etc). Discuss which songs (if any) that you enjoy and why? What emotions are present when you listen to Nirvana? What themes stand out?

- **Create a playlist for someone you care deeply for (i.e family member, friend, partner, loved one).** Have students share playlists with each other. Additionally, play some of the songs in class.

School-Home Connection

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 7 and 9)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7-9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1-3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4-6)

- **In *Jaya and Rasa: A Love Story* Rasa reads *White Oleander* by Janet Fitch.** Read *White Oleander* as well and compare and contrast it to *Jaya and Rasa: A Love Story*.
- **List some ways to help a loved one who is hurting.** What are some ways to ask for help for yourself or a loved one?
- **Jaya enjoys writing his own music in addition to covering songs from others.** Write your own lyrics about a time that was emotionally difficult. What do you want to say about that time? How do you want to make others feel with your lyrics?



Ordering Information

General Order Information:

leeandlow.com/contact/ordering

Secure Online Ordering:

leeandlow.com/books/jaya-and-rasa-a-love-story

By Phone: 212-779-4400 ext. 25

By Fax: 212-683-1894

By Mail:

Lee & Low Books, 95 Madison Avenue,
New York, NY 10016

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sonia Patel knows teenagers inside and out. As a child and adolescent psychiatrist, trained at Stanford University and the University of Hawaii, she has spent over fifteen years listening to and understanding the psyche of teenagers from all walks of life. She's also been a teenage girl herself, growing up on Moloka'i as a first generation Gujarati-American. As a writer, Sonia is passionate about giving voice to the underrepresented youth she treats. Her YA debut featuring a Gujarati-Indian American teen, *Rani Patel In Full Effect*, was a finalist for the Morris Award and was listed on YALSA's Best Fiction for Young Adults and *Kirkus' Reviews* Best Teen Books of 2016. Her second YA novel, with a Gujarati-Indian trans boy and a mixed ethnicity girl, *Jaya and Rasa: A Love Story*, was selected for the 2019 In the Margins Book Award Recommended Fiction Book List. She chose South Korea as the setting for her third YA novel, *Bloody Seoul*, because of her extensive treatment experience with Korean and Korean American teens on Oahu (and her love for the Korean gangster film genre).

ABOUT LEE & LOW BOOKS

LEE & LOW BOOKS is the largest children's book publisher specializing in diversity and multiculturalism. Our motto, "about everyone, for everyone," is as urgent today as it was when we started in 1991. It is the company's goal to meet the need for stories that children of color can identify with and that all children can enjoy. The right book can foster empathy, dispel stereotypes, prompt discussion about race and ethnicity, and inspire children to imagine not only a world that includes them, but also a world where they are the heroes of their own stories. Discover more at leeandlow.com.