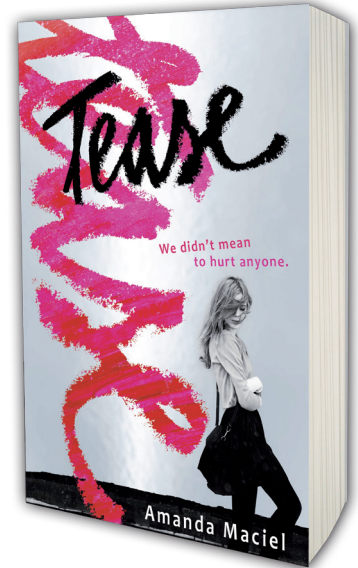




ABOUT THE BOOK

Emma Putnam is dead, and it's all Sara Wharton's fault. At least, that's what everyone seems to think. Sara, along with her best friend and three other classmates, has been criminally charged for the bullying and harassment that led to Emma's shocking suicide. Now Sara is the one who's ostracised, already guilty according to her peers, the community, and the media. In the summer before her senior year, in between meetings with lawyers and a court-recommended therapist, Sara is forced to reflect on the events that brought her to this moment—and ultimately consider her own role in an undeniable tragedy. And she'll have to find a way to move forward, even when it feels like her own life is over.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is your first impression of Sara? How does that opinion change in chapter two, the first flashback chapter?
2. How does the way Sara and Brielle speak to each other affect the way they speak to others? How does their nonchalant use of harsh language come across?
3. When does Sara first seem wary of Brielle's scheming behaviour?
4. How often does Sara comment on the looks and style of the people around her? How important is appearance to the characters?
5. In Teresa's office Sara says, "I mean, it's high school. You say stuff, people say stuff" (p. 36). What does this statement illustrate about Sara's attitude towards the situation? Does it make her seem more or less guilty?
6. Describe Sara and Brielle's friendship. How is their relationship different from their friendships with Jacob, Tyler, Dylan, Noelle, etc.?
7. Why does Sara break down after confronting Emma in the locker room? Why does she tone down what happened, even though she remembers it, when she tells the story?
8. What does Brielle's breakdown in the mall parking lot reveal about her own life? Why does this rare display of raw emotion startle Sara?
9. Sara's repeated justification for her behaviour is, "Everyone was saying it." Why does Sara use this defence? Is it true?
10. What role does social media play in the lives of the characters?
11. How does Sara's relationship with her mother and brothers compare to Brielle's relationship with her own family? What about Sara's relationship with her father, or lack thereof?
12. Brielle and Sara are accused of bullying Emma, but what other instances of bullying occur in *Tease*?
13. When Sara argues with her father, she retorts, "Maybe I am a child, Dad" (p. 298). Why is it important to remember that she is still just a teenager? Why does her father tell her to stop acting like a child if she technically still is one?
14. After their dinner date, Sara opens up to Carmichael about the entire case. Why is this scene important? What does Sara realise?
15. In court, Sara notes that she and Brielle are "both here to admit that we've lost. We give up" (p. 331). Why does she view the plea bargain as giving up? Do you agree? Does her opinion change by the end of the novel?
16. Right before Sara makes her statement she realises, "I'm the only one who's actually sorry about all this" (p. 333). Why does she feel this way? Do you agree?
17. Amanda Maciel notes that while the characters and events in *Tease* are fictional, they were heavily influenced by true stories. What instances of bullying have you encountered? Why is it important to talk about this issue?