

Thought Log #2 - More Structured.

The Break by Katherine Vermette

Why I chose it → book choice - ECA teachers' 1st pick.

Cover → I wonder who the woman is. She looks Aboriginal. I'm still not sure →

Title: I'm not sure of the significance yet.

Author → Metis writer (read the back bio)

→ 1st page "The break is a piece of land..." (3)
it's an area of town. Rough area
⇒ It's where the attack happens.

This is a: vacation, just-right, challenge

PLOT

CHARACTERS

SETTING

THEMES

PLOT

- Divided into four parts.
- Story told from different peoples' perspectives

Plot

Reread your novel's first lines and copy them down in your notebook. What impact did they have on you?

1st Line of narrated text (Stella) Stella sits at her kitchen table with two police officers, and for one long moment, no one says a thing." (7).

This line drew me in because it is inferred that something has happened (a crime?) and that's why the police are there. I can picture the scene in Stella's kitchen and want to find out what's happened

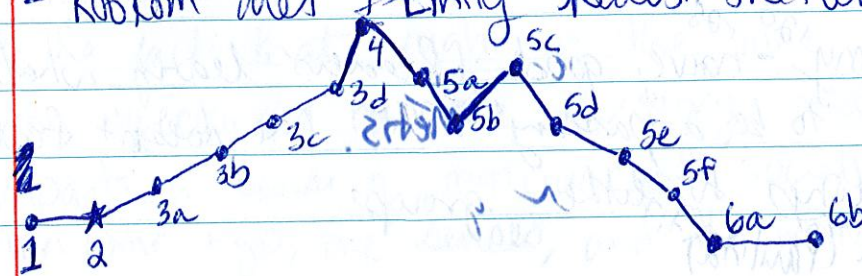
Plot

What conflicts emerge in the novel you are reading? Keep track of all the main conflicts in the story as you read (number them). When you've finished reading your novel choose the key conflicts and label them. Note that not ALL of the plot points need to be included. Just the main ones. Your plot diagram might look a lot more like several mountains than the one that is visible below.



Conflict developing

- 1. Takes place in Winnipeg, MB, but 1 picture 20th St. area, Saskatoon. Current time.
- 2. Stella reports attack.
- 3a - Emily "never kissed a boy" likes Clayton. He invites her to a party. *old racist seasoned*
- 3b - Tension between officer Christie + Tommy (Met's) *young naive*
- 3c - Phoenix escapes from "The Center". Goes to uncle's house *(Bishop)*
- 3d - Party at Bishops. Phoenix sees Em + Clayton *(et)* - get Bangry
- 4 - Paulina told Em at emerg. Em's been raped. *Really tense*
- 5a - Officer's learn Em's victim but she won't rat out *any* she
- 5b - Stella realizes the victim is her cousin's kid, Em.
- 5c - Stella flashes back to her best friend Elsie + a memory of her being gang-raped(?) or was *an initiation? (204)*
- 5d - Police interview Bishop w Phoenix there.
- 5e - Phoenix is Elsie's daughter. Taken by social services
- 5f - Rain died because she was beaten by a white guy. The nurse made her wait - thought she *was* drunk
- 6a - Phoenix is incarcerated - will be tried as a woman. She's pregnant with Clayton's child. - Rita will take her kids back to rez
- 6b - Kookom dies + Emily 'heals'. She remembers it all



CHARACTERS' PERSPECTIVES

~~Divided into four parts.~~
Told from different character's perspectives.

(1) Stella⁺⁸ - I relate to her as a mom who has two kids (^{being a} ~~one~~ baby).

(2) Emily⁺²⁰ - young, innocent. So sweet. Forever scarred.

(3) Phoenix^{+14 +21 +27} - tough. The cycle of poverty + its effects

(4) Lou (Louisa)^{+10 +24} - good, educated, tough.

(5) Cheryl^{+11 +22 +29} - weathered. Alcoholic

(6) Zaynab^{+13 +19} - loyal, friends

(7) Tommy^{+12 +20 +25} - naive, good. Readers learn what it's like to be a "passing" ^{Metis}. One doesn't feel one belongs to either group.

(9) Paul (Paulina)⁺¹⁷

Mostly the book is written in 3rd-person-limited. Readers see events unfold from nine different people's perspectives.

As a result, the plot untangles bit by bit. Each person's story overlaps slightly with the next person's and that, combined with flashbacks, helps the

the pieces together. → readers connect

This creates an intimacy between the reader + all of the characters. Even

around Phoenix - we can not lead understand part of who she is & how she became this way

Point-of-view
Creative writing: rewrite a key scene from your novel from another person's perspective. If it is written in 3rd person you can write in 1st person if it is written in 1st person, you can write it from another character's 1st person perspective or from a 3rd person perspective.

- Clayton's perspective would be interesting

"Hey Emily," Clayton said.
"Hi," Emily replied, blushing slightly.
Suddenly Phoenix appeared in the doorway of the house. Uh oh, Clayton thought.
"Who the hell is this chick?" Phoenix snarled.
"Uh, just a friend," Clayton responded, his eyes averted.
Emily looked back and forth between them.

↓ The fact that eight of the nine characters who effectively narrate the story ~~are~~ are women imparts a sense of matriarchal society on the reader. Men come + go, one senses, and the women weave the families together

only right cycles put I, II, III, IV. I think it's Kookom's wife. Peaceful.

Point-of-view
From whose point-of-view is the story told? Is it first person, third person limited or third person omniscient? From one person's perspective or several? How does this affect the plot?

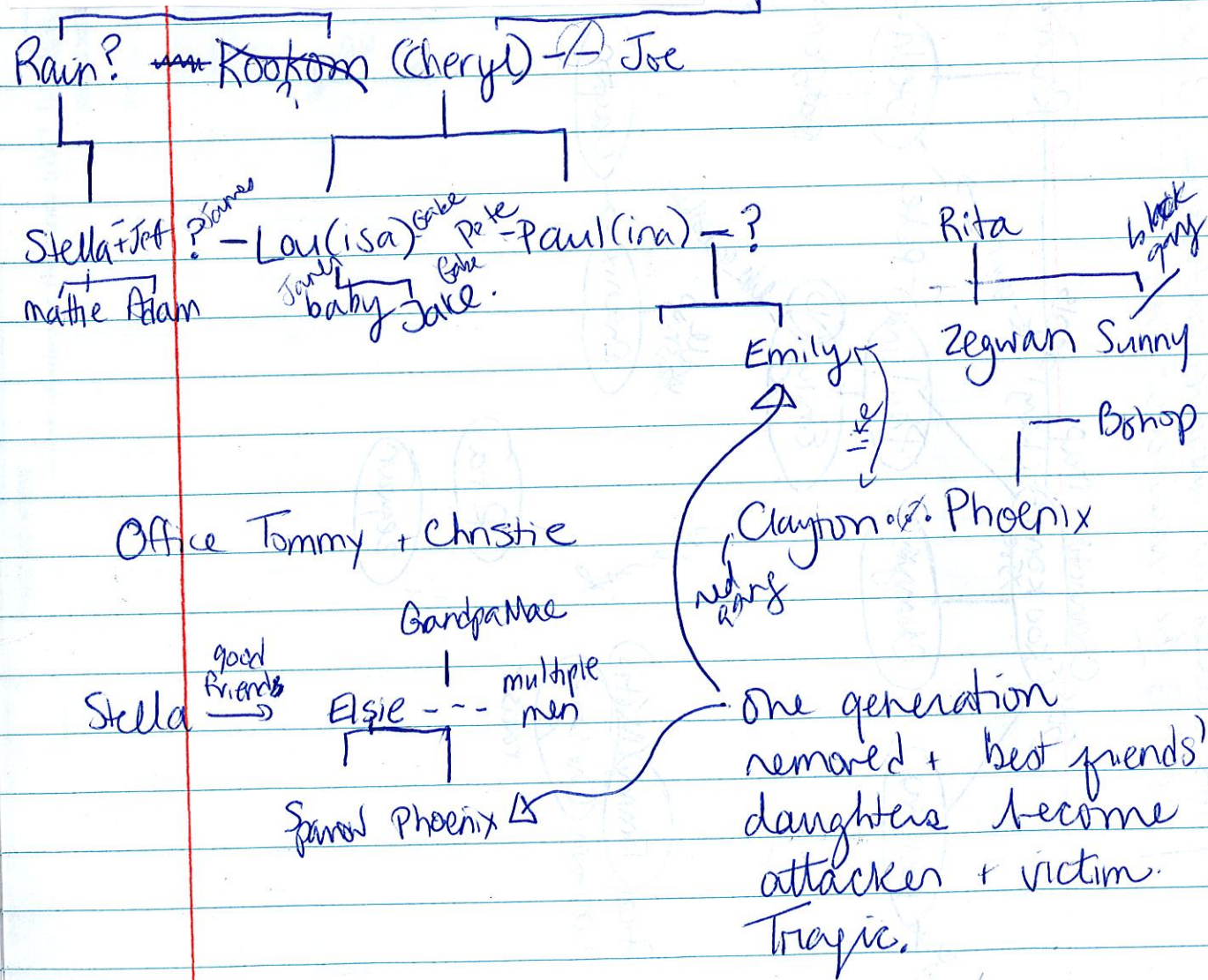
only Male perspective

P.O.V. CHARACTERS ALONG WITHINGS T.M. DIVISION

CHARACTERS

Characterization

You may choose to do a character chart (Figure 1) or draw just the key characters and label their qualities (Figure 2) or you might cut out pictures of people in magazines and say which characters the people represent and why (Figure 3). As your teacher, I want to feel a sense of knowing who the main characters of the novel are from looking at this page and understand the relationships between them.



p. 250 Stella - "Stella's lived a whole life since her mom died. She graduated high school, went to university, travelled, had good jobs, married a nice guy, planned her babies - all the things she didn't ever think she could do!"
 ↳ She sounds like most middle-class people I know. Except she 'escaped' what she thought was her destiny.

Characterization
 Creative writing: create your own character and write a description of him/her.

Jane was strong - the kind of woman who never complained. Lucy could imagine her being nine months pregnant, giving birth without anaesthetic, and being back at work that evening. She had severe eyes that seemed to survey the world around her with a cold, calculating, gaze.

CHARACTERS ALGUE TTING T No. 16 VETS *RUON

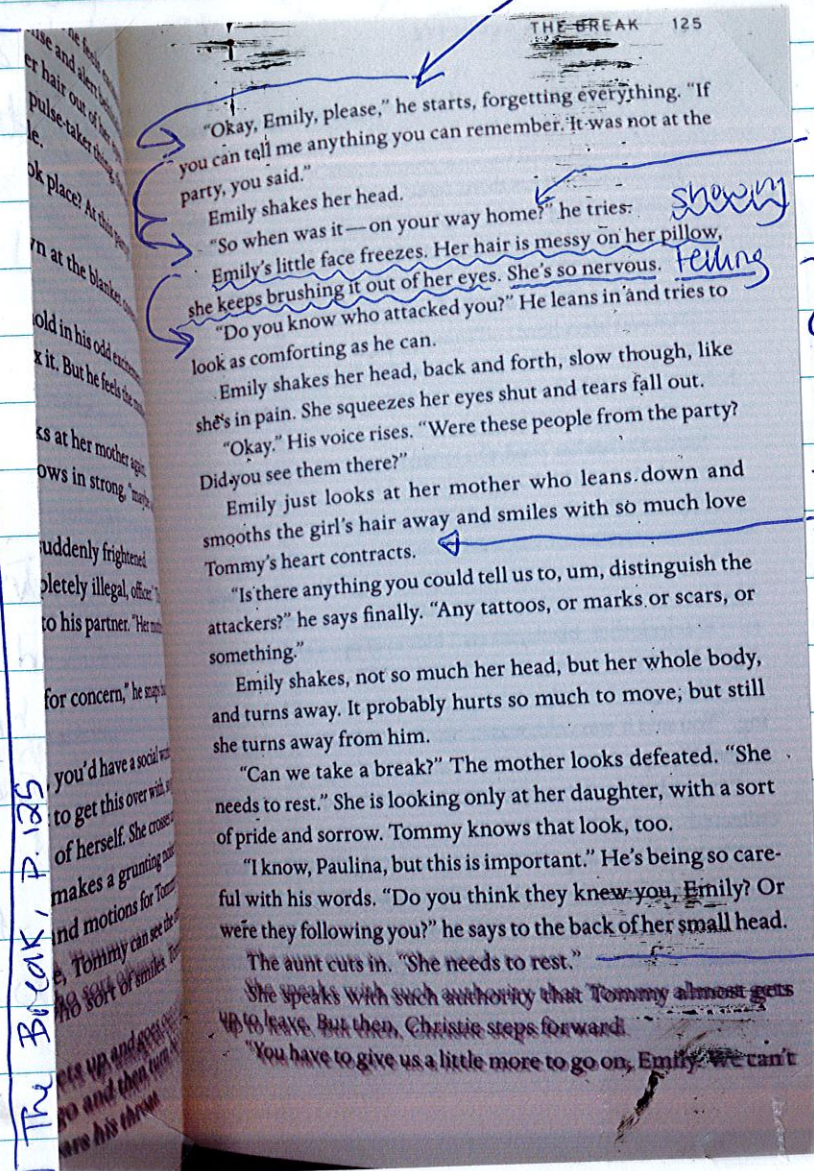
DIALOGUE

Dialogue

Copy down examples of strong dialogue from your novel in your notebook. Be sure to include who's speaking and what page number the quotes are from. At the end of reading your novel go back and highlight one piece of dialogue and attach a sticky note beside the quote explaining why you feel that quote is your favourite.

I chose this page of dialogue because the visuals that are created are so crisp.

Also, the interplay between cop & Emily illustrate the power dynamic playing out between them.



Dialogue - what do you notice about punctuation?

- each time a different character speaks the dialogue it begins on a new line.

punctuation exists inside the quotations.

The police officer is the only one talking Emily's voice being absent shows her fear.

3rd person but readers know Tommy's feelings

she clearly doesn't want to talk to him.

Shows her aunt is protective of her.

Dialogue

Creative Writing: try writing a conversation between two characters.

"Hey, did you ever hear back from Lewis?" Lynn asked.

"No," Rachel replied sadly. "I thought he was amazing, but the ~~the~~ feeling must not have been mutual.

"That sucks," Lynn said. "I was sure he was into you."

"I tried friending him on Facebook but never heard back."

"I doubt he's really the social media type, what with all those sports he's into"

"Argh," Lynn shrugged. "Boys, who needs them?"

"Yeah, they just complicate things!" "Remember back when we were in elementary school and never bothered with them?"

"Those were the days!"

DIALOGUE TINGS T No. 216

SETTING

Setting

When and where is the story set? What is the mood and tone?

Winnipeg, Manitoba. Near 'the break'. The mood is dark, fearful, + depressing. It's winter. Rape has occurred. Bleak.

Setting

Similar to the dialogue activity, copy down excellent examples of "showing versus telling" in your novel. Be sure to include the page number. At the end of the novel study, go back and include one sticky note where you select the best example of "showing" and explain why you chose that one.

"When they pulled up to the hospital, the sky was purple and clear. The cold growing. She says goodnight to Pete as if they were dating again" (188) ← distance growing between them

"Just stay there this time, will ya? Stop coming back here every time you want a cheap getaway. Just stay there where you belong." He threw the door open and the blast of cold hit her face like a slap, and he went out to the sounds of his barking dogs and didn't look back" (252)

↑ This is my favourite example of showing because the emotion in the dialogue is reinforced by the cold setting. I really felt it.

Weather seems to play a factor in creating atmosphere/mood/tone. For example, when the attack happens it blizzards. ~~Darkness~~ Darkness is mentioned frequently. In calmer parts of the novel the sun/clear sky is mentioned.

* Makes me think of "Grey" by Kоди Dill and "Half the Sky" - poem (A30)

"When they wrote segregation out of policy they left it in economy + wrote it into geography."

Setting

Creative writing: write a brief paragraph where you "show" versus "tell".

~~The summer~~ as Fall was coming, Simone realized it was in the air - it was thinner, lighter, and crisper than summer. It was like the heat was being vacuumed up into the atmosphere and only cold molecules ~~would~~ remained.

Though it could possibly be west side Saskatoon

crisp imagery

visceral reaction similar

SETTING T No. 116 DIVISION

GREAT MOVES

- Flashback - Stella recalls her childhood memories ~~at~~ which include Lou + Paul. I'm wondering what the significance is

- Symbolism - several of the characters' names are unusual. I'm wondering if these are symbolic? Ironic? Typically one would expect a positive transformation

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| <p>historical</p> <p>symbolic</p> <p>Church</p> <p>Euro/Canadian</p> <p>Racism?</p> | <p>Phoenix</p> <p>Bishop</p> <p>Christie</p> <p>Ziggy</p> <p>Rain - sadness</p> | <p>Paul (ma)</p> <p>Lou (isa)</p> <p>Stella</p> <p>Emily</p> | <p>Tougher? More masculine?</p> <p>key characters -</p> <p>very Euro names</p> <p>I didn't know they were Aboriginal.</p> <p>Intentional?</p> |
|---|---|--|---|

- Repetition - I'm noticing the author seems to repeat part of the story from different people's perspectives, but adds layers of extra details in. 'Overlap'

- Personification "Someone else did." Paul's words tiptoe across the room. (189)

- Foreshadowing - Elsie
- Phoenix - fat, 'sick' - is she pregnant?

Great Moves

In your notebook, collect great passages. Does the author use any of the following? What impact does it have?

- Foreshadowing ✓
- Flashback ✓
- Symbolism ✓
- Repetition ✓
- Irony ✓
- Metaphor ✓
- Simile ✓
- Personification ✓
- Hyperbole
- Alliteration
- Onomatopoeia
- Imagery ✓

Sentence Structure?

*Skies/ weather also seems symbolic

"Our werewolves are women. Young, beautiful women who can turn into wolves and eat the youth of young men so they can live forever" (254)

that's why Cheryl paints wolves

Simile - ~~her hand~~ ^{Kookoni's hand} is soft, ~~white~~ + wrinkly just like her bannock dough" (203)

The break type that's attack occurs

Irony - That Stella + Elsie were best friends but Elsie's daughter, Phoenix, beats up/rapes Emily - Stella's cousin.

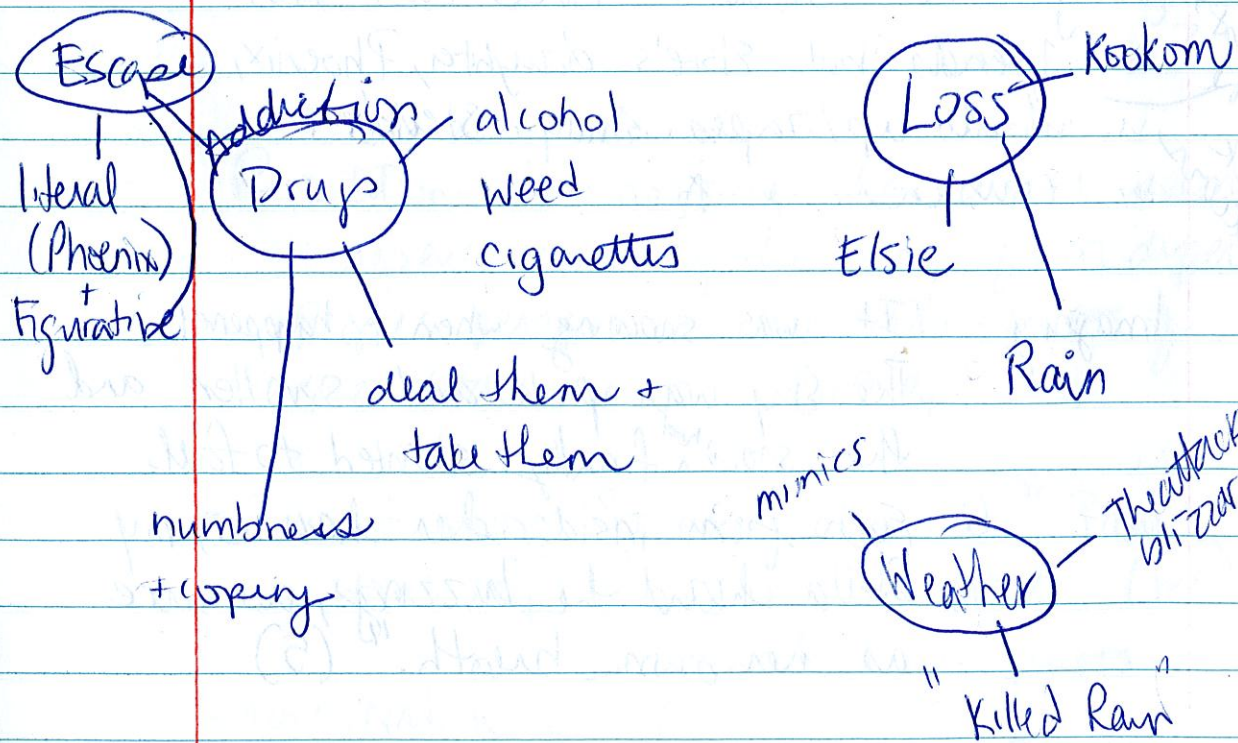
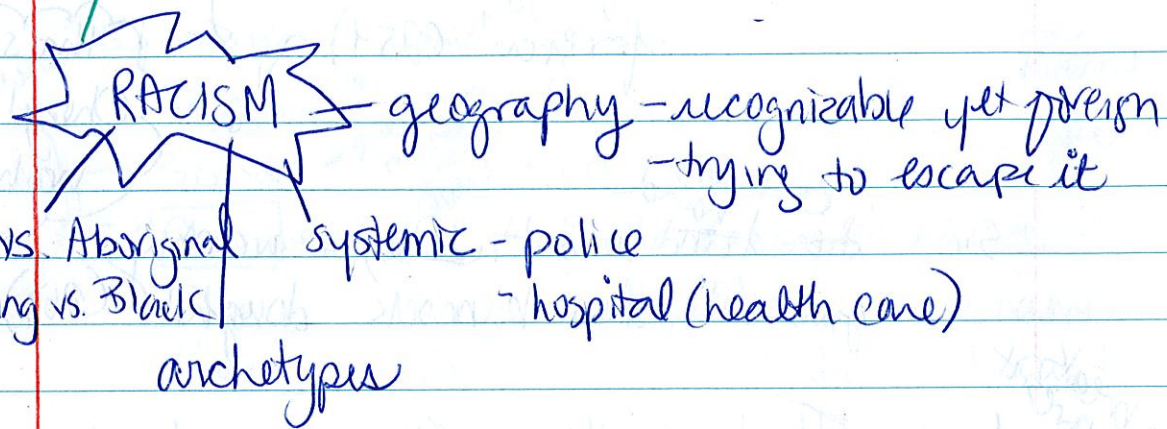
Imagery - "It was snowing when it happened. The sky was pink and swollen and the snow ^{had} finally started to fall. Even from inside her house, my Stella heard the buzzing, as sure as her own breath." (5)

GREAT MOVES 416

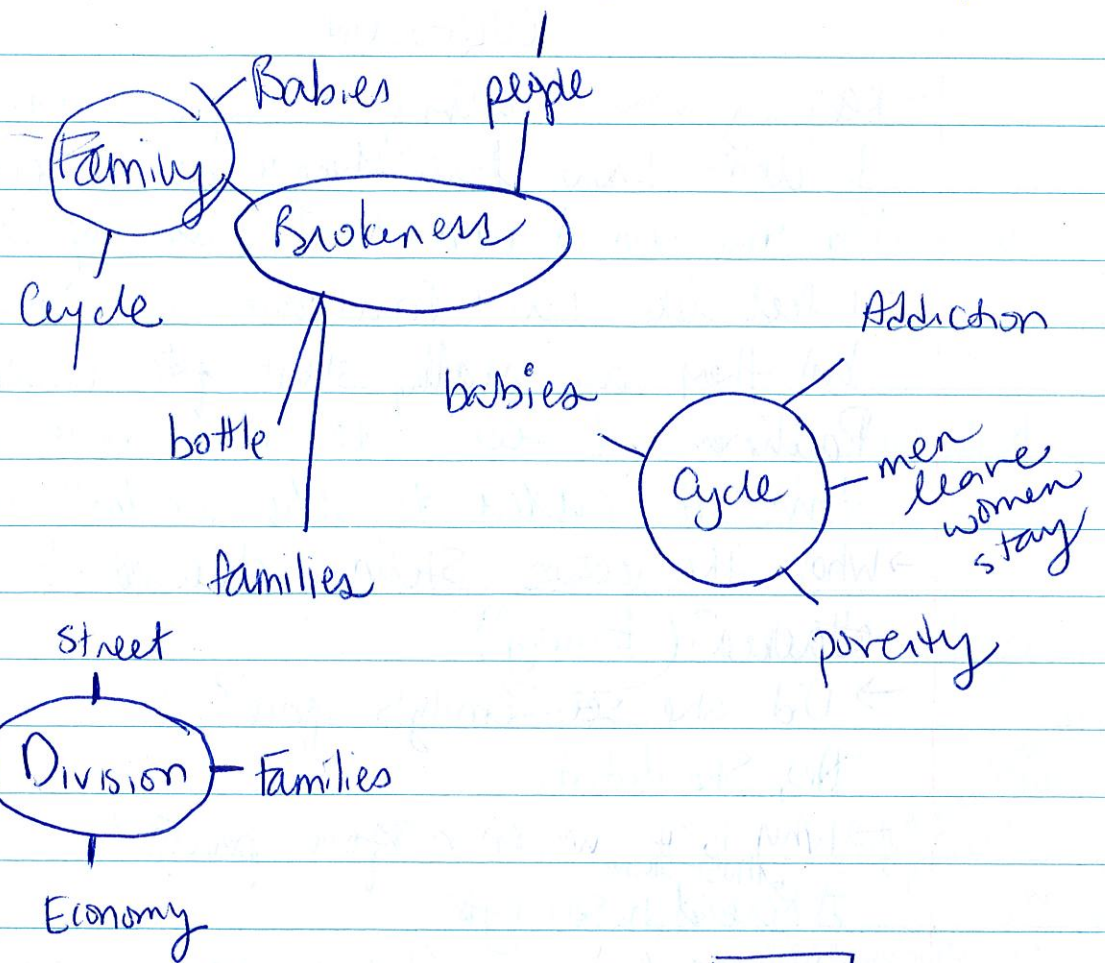
Big Ideas

Big Ideas: What are some of the big ideas you notice in your story?

→ theme: Racism is systemic and engrained in our society. *prevalent*



Elsie, Phoenix, Rain, Emily



Using evidence (quotation) write a formal paragraph about a theme prevalent in this novel.

demanding towards Aboriginals is illustrated says

It is depicted in the police force, the health care system, and in the city's geography.

The theme of racism being systemic is prevalent throughout the novel. For example, *think of the way it is* Christie, the senior police officer, is racist, which is shown when he says "... just nates beating on nates. Same old" (72). His slang use of the word 'nate' for 'Native' reveals his racism. In addition, *the content of* his comment shows he doesn't care if Aboriginal people beat each other up.

Big Ideas Racism

CONFUSION

- Keeping who's talking is super-confusing. I don't know how they're all connected. By the end I understood. I did my characters.
- I feel like Lou + Paul are guys' names, but they are really short for Louisa + Paulina. I feel like this must have been this. It added to the initial confusion.

→ Who's the victim Stella witnessed being attacked? Emily

→ Did she see Emily's face?

No. She didn't.

→ Why is it written in four parts?

* Reread to see why *

→ Where's Gabe gang? We never really know. Lou says 'home'. She seems sad but okay.

→ What happened to Kookom's sister Rain?

She was beaten to death + died behind a dumpster.

→ p. 244 - Storyteller once ~~said~~ ^{told} me our languages never had a sense of time - is that true?

* Interesting facts (Googled) → 60 Indigenous languages

→ Are Kookom + Cheryl the same person?

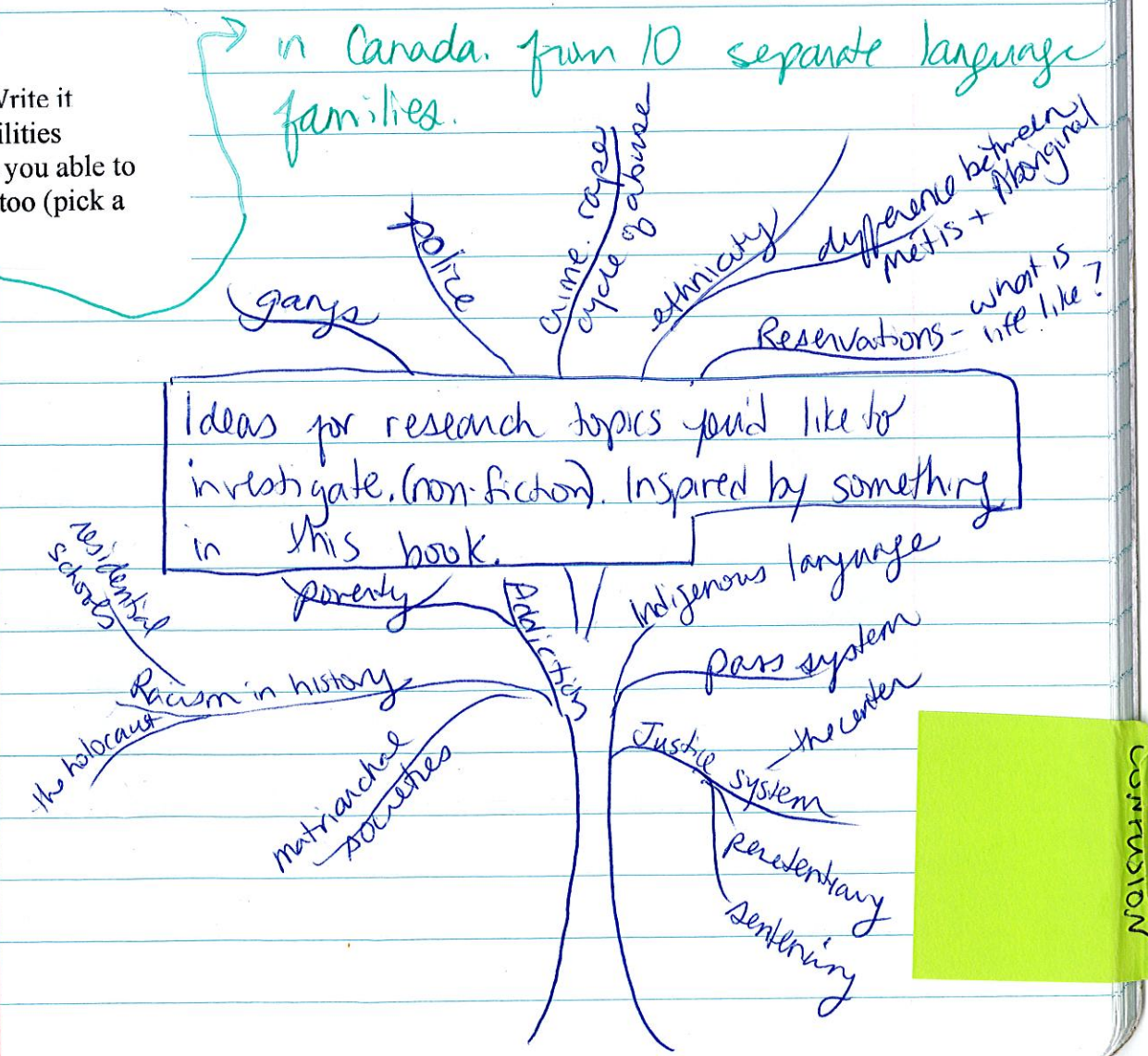
Or is Kookom grandmère? ^{No} X. Is thought Lou + Paul were Cheryl's kids? They are.

They are different people. Kookom is Cheryl's mom.

Confusion
Track your confusion. What's confusing? Write it down consistently in one pen colour. Possibilities include: words, characters, plot twists... Are you able to resolve what is confusing? Write that down too (pick a different coloured pen).

→ map half way through. It really helped me to physically see it.

Purposeful, but I'm still not sure why the author did of having so many characters



CONFUSION