

educator's guide

a BLIND SPOT *for* BOYS

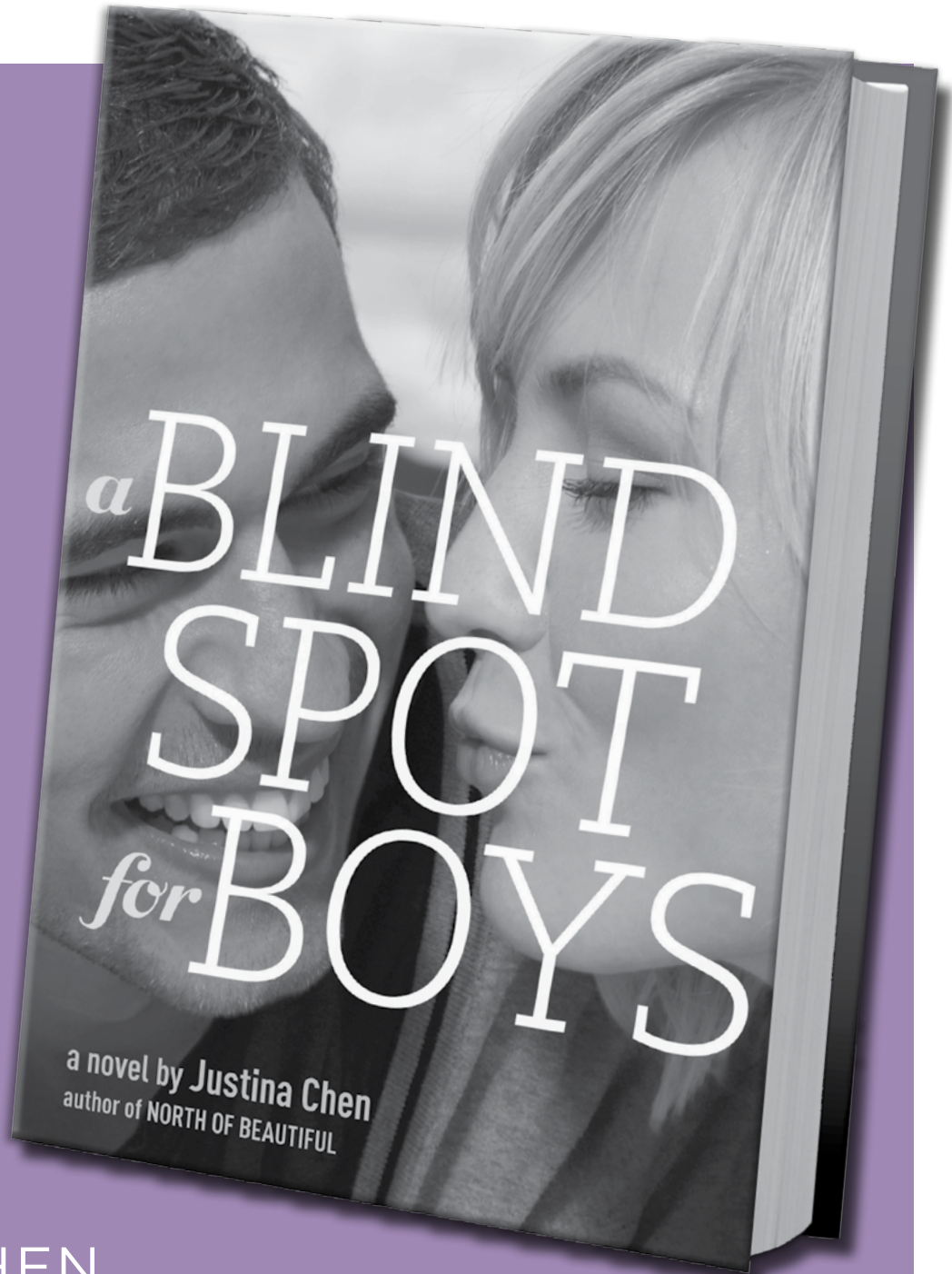
Curriculum connections

- ❖ Literature
- ❖ Psychology

Ages: 12 & Up

Thematic connections

- ❖ Family life
- ❖ Love
- ❖ Loss and Grieving



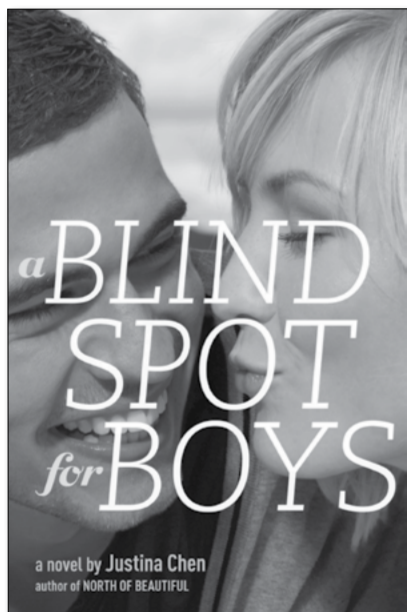
by
JUSTINA CHEN

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. *A Blind Spot for Boys* begins with a quotation from novelist Marcel Proust, and each of its three parts opens with a quotation. Take a closer look at each quotation. How do they set the stage for what is to come?
 2. Although Shana is already a gifted photographer, a college admissions officer tells her that a “great photo knocks your heart open,” and then asks Shana, “What knocks your heart open?” (Page 3) What ends up knocking Shana’s heart open? Why?
 3. A “man magnet” (page 7), according to her friend Reb, Shana is accustomed to boys fawning all over her. What are the advantages of being so attractive? What are the disadvantages? How much importance does Shana place on her looks?
 4. Mrs. Wilde tells her children to hold out for the *sine qua non* in their relationships. What does this Latin phrase mean? Is Shana’s mom offering good advice? Why or why not?
 5. Shana’s parents have been happily married for decades, but tensions flare after Mr. Wilde’s diagnosis. Why? How does each of them react to the bad news?
 6. Seven months have passed since Dom broke up with Shana. Why is she still brooding over him? Was he worth it?
 7. Mr. Wilde is initially opposed to raiding the family’s saving for a trip to Peru, insisting, “I won’t be selfish.” (Page 51) Afterwards, why does the word “selfish” keep rattling around in Shana’s head? Who does she believe is the selfish one in the family? Do you agree?
 8. Shana’s parents had a “Fifty by Fifty Manifesto,” a list of 50 adventures they hope to take before they turned 50-years-old. Why have so few of their goals been achieved? What adventures would be on your list? How will you achieve them?
 9. Why does Quattro feel responsible for his mother’s death? Should he? Why or why not?
 10. How are the “Bookster Babes,” Shana’s mother-daughter reading group in Seattle, similar to Grace’s walking group in Vermont? Which group would you rather join? Why?
 11. Shana believes “that a girl with serious brain wattage can intimidate a certain kind of guy.” (Page 84) Do you agree? What kind of guy is intimidated by an intelligent girl? Do you know any guys like that? Are you one?
 12. What is Hank’s immediate response to the mudslide? How do Mr. Wilde and Quattro react? What do their differing reactions suggest about their characters?
 13. Shana was supposed to help Grace make the trek to Machu Picchu. How does the elderly woman end up being Shana’s guide instead? What insights does she share with the teenager? What does Grace’s surprising strip tease reveal to Shana and the other travelers?
 14. How effectively does the Peruvian government respond to the mudslides at Machu Picchu? Why are tourists treated differently than natives? Should they be?
 15. According to Shana’s mother, “a girl may have started the Inca Trail but a woman finished the trek.” (Page 289) Do you agree? How has the trip matured Shana?
 16. Quattro doesn’t have a cell phone when he and Shana first meet but he does by the end of the novel. Why is this significant? What has he come to accept?
 17. How does her dad’s impending blindness transform the way Shana sees herself and the world around her? How does she lose “her blind spot for boys”?
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"BLIND SPOT for BOYS

about the book



After a devastating break-up with an older guy, sixteen-year-old Shana Wilde has declared a boy moratorium. Then she meets Quattro, and sparks don't just fly, they ignite. But just as she's reconsidering her ban on boys, Shana gets the devastating news that her father is going blind. Two weeks later she travels from Seattle to Peru with her parents to fulfill their lifelong goal of trekking to Machu Picchu. Who is already in Cusco? Quattro and his father, on their own tender mission.... Love and loss, humor and heartbreak collide in a new novel from the author of *North of Beautiful*, a Kirkus Best Book of the Year.

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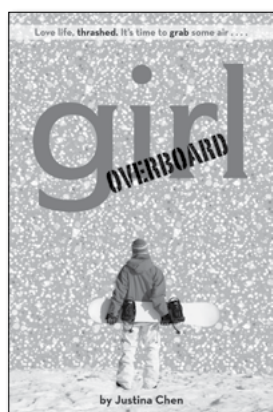
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about the author



Justina Chen is the acclaimed author of *A Blind Spot for Boys*, *Return to Me*, *North of Beautiful*, and *Nothing But the Truth (and a few white lies)*, which won the Asian Pacific American Award for Youth Literature. She is a co-founder of ReaderGirlz, the online book community for teens, and lives in the Seattle area with her two children. Her website is JustinaChen.com.

also by *Justina Chen*



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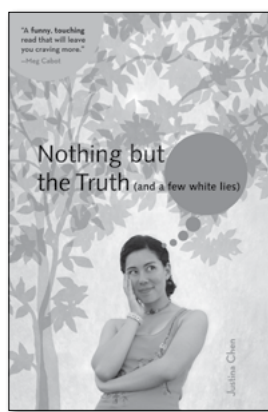
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