



# POSTER BOYS

THREE UNLIKELY HEROES VS ONE HUNDRED YEARS  
OF HIGHVIEW GRAMMAR TRADITION

VIVE LA  
RÉVOLUTION!

SCOTT WOODARD

TEACHERS RESOURCES

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SCOTT WOODARD

Teachers Resources by Robyn Sheahan-Bright

<b>Author's Note</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Before &amp; After Reading the Novel</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Themes &amp; Curriculum Topics</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS)</b>	
<b>English Language &amp; Literacy</b>	
<b>Visual Literacy</b>	
<b>Further Quotes for Discussion</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Further Activities</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>About the Author</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>About the Author of the Notes</b>	<b>16</b>

# AUTHOR'S NOTE

Hey there!

Thanks for picking up *Poster Boys*. I wrote this novel with teachers in mind, and it's stuffed full of themes that address key topics in the Australian Curriculum for English. I hope you and your classes find a lot to love (as well as a few belly laughs) in its pages.

*Poster Boys* is the story of three Year 9s who launch a Che Guevara-style revolution against their school using the power of propaganda. Through humour, it shows how language and history can be spun to push an agenda, as politicians, news organisations and advertisers routinely do. It teaches students that 'truth' is never objective, and there is an enormous amount of power in controlling a narrative. It's a great companion to teaching units on language analysis and argumentative texts.

It's also an easy introduction to satire and allegory. *Poster Boys* parodies revolutionary theory, and explores how the politics and dynamics of revolutions repeat and reverberate through history. Students with a basic understanding of either the French, American, Russian or Cuban revolutions will instantly see the parallels in *Poster Boys*, and may pick up on the bucketloads of references I had fun sneaking in. As much as I love George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, this book is far more relatable for twenty-first century Australian teens.

Finally (and most importantly), *Poster Boys* is a novel about self-acceptance, especially for teens who struggle to fit in at school. It empowers students to question and call out many of the sociocultural issues they'll experience in their everyday lives: from bullying to toxic masculinity, homophobia, fatphobia, privilege, inequity, and unhealthy perceptions of 'success'. Ultimately, I want readers to walk away knowing that they can love who they are, and not feel pressured to be anyone else.

This is a novel about private schoolboys, but like the many Aussie same-sex private school classics that proceed it—including Alice Pung's *Laurinda*, Will Kostakis' *The Sidekicks*, Melina Marchetta's *Looking for Alibrandi* and Henry Handel Richardson's *The Getting of Wisdom*—the themes it explores are universal and deeply relatable. Like teenagers themselves, *Poster Boys* is cynical, edgy and biting witty, but underneath that is a whole lot of intelligence, compassion and heart. It's the novel I wish I could've read as a teen, and I hope it speaks to your students in the same way.

So enjoy! And thanks for everything you do to support Aussie YA literature.

*Scott Woodard*

# INTRODUCTION

'Is this a revolt?' said Nolan.

'No,' said Crombie, 'it's a revolution. Students are the reason this school exists, and it's time we had our say.'

'But what good will it do if the teachers won't listen to us?' said Nolan. Crombie slapped his knees. 'Because they can't run a house competition if no-one's taking part.' (p 45)

**A jock, a try-hard and a space cadet. Highview Grammar will rue the day it put 'History' on the curriculum – because this unlikely trio is starting a revolution.**

Edward Heffernan wants one thing: to get away from Nolan Li. If he cuts ties with the embarrassing Nolan, his reputation at Highview Grammar can only go up.

But when Nolan gets a note from the coolest kid in Year 9, Edward sees a chance to be popular.

James Crombie is everything that Edward and Nolan are not, but it turns out this trio have one thing in common: they're all sick of the culture, tradition and rules of their snobby 100-year-old high school. And they're ready to do something about it.

**A laugh-out-loud debut novel that mixes razor-sharp satire with a rollicking plot and a whole lot of heart. This is a YA coming-of-age caper about accepting yourself just as you are.**

## BEFORE & AFTER READING THE NOVEL

- Examine the cover of the novel. What does it suggest about the novel's themes?
- After you have read the novel, examine the cover again: what does it suggest to you now?
- The cover includes the words: 'THREE UNLIKELY HEROES VS 100 YEARS OF HIGHVIEW GRAMMAR TRADITION. VIVE LA REVOLUTION!' How does this statement relate to this novel?
- After you have read the novel, read about Scott Woodard's novel in reviews and use the notes below to examine the text more closely.

## THEMES & CURRICULUM TOPICS

Several themes relevant to curriculum topics (Studies of Society and Environment, English Language & Literacy, and Visual Literacy) might be identified in this novel.

### HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (HASS)

<<https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/humanities-and-social-sciences/hass/>>

### BELONGING AND IDENTITY

*Discussion Point:* 'I said you're cool. You know, when you're just being yourself.' The warmth of the hot tap spread tingles up my arm again. My knees buckled like bent straws.

'But I am myself.'

'Yeah, but you're not. You care too much about what people think of you, so you act all fake and you pick on Nolan and you lose your shit any time someone laughs at you. But when you're yourself and you're honest and you're not trying to act like everyone else, then you're actually

pretty cool.' (pp 103–104)

This novel is Edward's 'bildungsroman'; it is a story of his rite of passage from child to youthful enlightenment and of how he finally faces the truth about himself and his peers. What does he learn about himself?

*Discussion Point:* 'I didn't know any gay kids: there weren't any at Highview. Sure, there were plenty of arse slaps and gay jokes, but no-one actually came out as gay. For all Crombie knew, I was probably the first, and he'd never see me the same. And now what was I meant to do?' (p 191)

Edward reveals that he suffers some doubts about his and James' sexuality in this quote. Does he resolve these doubts in the course of the novel?

*Discussion Point:* 'This was the life I'd be resigning myself to: the background character in someone else's story; I'd be a Lachlan by any other name.' (p 241)

Why are all the very minor characters called Lachlan?

*Discussion Point:* 'He doesn't want you to be him as a teenager. He wants to be himself as a teenager. That's why they call him an Old Boy. But he's still your dad, and what he wants for you, Edward Heffernan, is for you to be happy. And it doesn't sound like you're happy.'

'I'm not.'

'I know.' She took my stiff hands. 'And no matter what happens, honey, I love you, and I'm not going anywhere. (pp 319–320)

How often do fathers try to project their own aspirations onto their children? And how difficult is it to assert your own identity with this sort of parental expectation?

*Discussion Point:* The novel has an open ending. What do you think Edward, Nolan or James might have ended up doing next with their lives?

## EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND PHILOSOPHIES OF LEARNING

*Discussion Point:* 'We're split into houses and told to hate each other. We're crammed onto the Back Oval and forced to play sports we don't understand. We're refereed by a maths teacher who can't even count calories. And we're made to do it at the end of a school week, when we're tired and just want to go home. The school clearly doesn't give a shit about Sports Day or the house competition. Otherwise, they'd let us use Highview Oval. They're only doing it because they've always done a Sports Day. So, when you add up the factors, it was only a matter of time . . .' Crombie's voice trailed off into the hum of traffic.' (pp 32–33)

What does this quote say about the educational ethos at Highview?

*Discussion Point:* Wilmer, Hogun, Augusta and Dolf are the school's four houses named after former Principals. 'Every school worth its salt has a house system, boy. It's as normal as English or assembly. And here at Highview, it's more than tradition. It's culture.' Then he'd play his trump card, the one every teacher keeps in their pocket next to their detention slips: 'It's a privilege to go to Highview. This school has a twelve-year waiting list. So, if you don't like it, you can leave.' (p 27)

Is a House System a valuable aspect of a school's structure?

*Discussion Point:* Nolan's manifesto is outlined in a letter to Wilmer's housemaster Mr Johnson (pp 23–24).

Discuss the conditions he outlines in relationship to educational institutions generally.

*Discussion Point:* 'I'd always existed in two worlds: Highview and reality, but now, Highview was following me home.' (p. 240)

Explore the different 'worlds' Edward exists in inside and outside of school: how they differ and what happens when they combine.

*Discussion Point:* How do the school's values shape the behaviour of minor characters like Lynch, Hislop, Gilles and Macca?

## MORALITY

*Discussion Point:* 'There are things that people should be judged for, like violence and sexism and abuse of power. Then there are mistakes and mishaps, and all those little hiccups that are part of life, like getting erections and wetting your pants and accidents in sport. And evidently most people will judge you on those things. But I won't be one of them.' (p. 167)

There are several other quotes from Nolan in this exchange that speak to key themes of the book. Is it okay to act immorally if the final outcome is ultimately moral?

*Discussion Point:* 'I want our posters to work,' said Crombie. 'And these will bring the house down.' Nolan's cheeks darkened. His voice fell a semitone.

'But these men did horrible things. Illegal things. People should know.'

This wasn't the Nolan I knew. We disagreed every day about something, but Nolan never dropped his voice. He just smiled, acknowledged my opinion and continued to believe whatever he wanted. Even Crombie sensed that something was off. He turned on the politician's smile.' (p 141)

Is Nolan's view the correct one in this circumstance?

*Discussion Point:* Read these quotes:

'A Ruth,' said Crombie, 'is most of a truth. Dad talks about them all the time.' (p 143)

'People assume a truth that isn't there. That's a Ruth, and nearly everybody tells them. Politicians. Journalists. Advertisers.' He gestured at the packing boxes. 'Real estate agents. Even world leaders use them. "We have evidence of weapons of mass destruction": that's a classic Ruth. "We were acting on the information available at the time": that's a Ruth to a tee. Job applications are full of Ruths. So are obituaries. Those history books you're reading: they're Ruths too. Some self-appointed expert has selected the facts that support whatever they want to say. History itself is a Ruth. And now you've met Ruth, you'll see her everywhere.'

'But we're the voice for truth,' said Nolan, 'not Ruth.' (p 143)

Discuss the concept of 'Ruths' with your students.

## BULLYING, FRIENDSHIP AND PEER GROUP PRESSURE

*Discussion Point:* 'Since the day we'd met in Year 7, two-and-a-half years ago, I'd never invited Nolan to my house. Inviting him over meant admitting we were friends, and if you were friends with Nolan Li, then no-one else was friends with you.' (p 1) Peer group pressure is an active deterrent to making real friends in this novel. Is this an accurate description of the issue of making friends, in your students' views?

*Discussion Point:* 'But what made Hislop invisible was that he knew how to bully. We were all meat in the high school food chain: sweaty, pimply meat, trying not to be eaten alive. Picking on me was easy enough, but picking on Nolan was easier. He was a legless chook, pre-plucked and flailing in marinade. He was fast food.' (pp 12–13) How does this brutal description reflect the reality of any school environment?

*Discussion Point:* 'This was how a bully started: passive aggression. They inferred your idiocy rather than calling you outright stupid. That way, if a teacher intervened, the bully could claim innocence. You'd been shot by a gun that never smoked.' (p 13)

Does this description reflect your students' experiences?

*Discussion Point:* Edward reflects on himself as a bully: 'I'd never considered myself to be a bully – not like Hislop or Gilles. But that's what I'd become – and I was good at it. Every day, I bullied myself. I'd bullied Nolan out of my life, and I'd crossed an uncrossable line with Crombie.' (p. 272)

This admission comes as something of a surprise to the reader, as Edward has been bullied mercilessly at this school. What does this quote suggest about the motives behind bullying?

*Discussion Point:* 'Every day at Highview was a competition, and your friends were how you scored. If you had more friends than someone else, then you were the winner and they were a loser. And not all friends were equal. Most were worth one point, but some were worth two or three. They were the friends who got Bs on their science tests and played footy at lunchtime. They cracked jokes and bullied nerds and came with boring names like Lachlan. They were the friends with plenty of friends of their own. If Nolan and I had a value of one, Crombie was at least a five. And just being friends with a five could drag our sorry ones up to a three.' (p 38)

How accurate is this description of friendship, in your students' opinions?

## 'TRUTH' AND HISTORY

*Discussion Point:* 'But remember when Lachlan asked Ms Suarez why we studied history if it's all already happened? She said it's so we can learn from mistakes. I think this is what she was talking about.' (pp 25–26)

How does the book explore the subjectiveness of 'truth' and 'history'?

*Discussion Point:* 'But the fighting's only a small part of being a conscientious objector,' said Nolan. 'It's also the politics. We're being forced to fight a war that I don't believe in.' (p 21)

Discuss the parallels between global revolutions and the revolution depicted in the novel (and the repetition of history).

## MASCULINITY

*Discussion Point:* The novel explores toxic masculinity, including homophobia and sexism – discuss how at the beginning of the novel Edward evinces these values and how he learns to reject them; how it depicts Edward's journey towards empathy and self-acceptance.

*Discussion Point:* How are Edward, Nolan and Crombie's values shaped by their fathers?

## VIOLENCE

*Discussion Point:* 'No-one uses physical violence anymore. It leaves too many marks.' (p. 29)  
Explore the role of violence in the book (there's a lot of it: both physical and psychological, for example two noses are broken and other injuries are inflicted in it).

## POWER AND CONTROL VS REBELLION AND PROTEST

*Discussion Point:* Discuss how power and control are key themes running through the book, and how most scenes/conversations are (at their subtextual core) a battle for power/dominance.

*Discussion Point:* 'The truth was coming out about Common Sense, and I wanted to be the person telling it. (p. 327)

Discuss the power that's wielded by a storyteller, and how Edward's account of the events in this novel gives him power.

*Discussion Point:* ‘Have you heard of foco? Che Guevara came up with it. It’s the idea that you only need a few like-minded people to start a revolution. That was Cuba: it was Castro and Guevara and a few other guerrillas. They rallied the entire island behind them, and the government had to give in. That’s what we’ll do.’

‘But how will we make people care about this?’ I said.

‘I mean, four days ago, *you* didn’t care.’ (p 45)

Discuss the concept of foco and how this novel explores that.

*Discussion Point:* ‘The French were the Third Estate. The Russians were the Bolsheviks.’ (p 48)  
The three boys become ‘Common Sense’. What other name might they have chosen for themselves?

*Discussion Point:* On p 172 Crombie outlines why Nackers is a dictator and how the school is ripe for rebellion. Discuss his arguments.

*Discussion Point:* ‘Join the democratic alternative to Common Sense: the House of Representatives.’

The HoR stands up for student rights with openness, transparency and equality for all.

First HoR meeting: Friday recess in Room 1:04. You’re welcome!’ (p 182)

Nolan’s HoR never really gets off the ground. And the efforts of the members of Common Sense are largely unrewarded or punished. Edward is leaving the school at the end of the novel. Is an unsuccessful rebellion worth the undertaking?

## **ENGLISH LANGUAGE & LITERACY**

<<https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/english/>>

Study the writing style employed in this narrative, and examine the following sub-topics:

### **NARRATIVE PERSON, NARRATIVE PERSPECTIVE & TENSE**

*Discussion Point:* The novel is narrated by Edward Heffernan in first person past tense. How does Edward’s view of the action colour the reader’s interpretation? How differently would Nolan have described particular events?

### **SYMBOLISM**

*Discussion Point:* The motif of the colour ‘red’ meaning truth is reflected in references throughout the novel, for example: ‘The farm gates stood open, so we followed the basalt driveway to the red front door. Nolan had told me red doors meant good luck in China. I’d laughed at the time, but now I wanted to believe it’ (p 40)

Locate other examples of this symbolic motif.

*Discussion Point:* What other symbolism did you notice in this novel?

### **GENRE**

*Discussion Point:* This is a work of ‘rite of passage’ or ‘bildungsroman’ young adult fiction. In his Author’s Note, the author mentions Alice Pung’s *Laurinda*, Will Kostakis’ *The Sidekicks*, Melina Marchetta’s *Looking for Alibrandi* and Henry Handel Richardson’s *The Getting of Wisdom*. He

might also have mentioned David Metzenthen's *Jarvis 24* or Cath Crowley's *Graffiti Moon*. Read and compare some of these titles and compare to *Poster Boys*.

## LITERARY DEVICES

*Activity:* Find examples of the use of literary devices in this novel, using the table below to identify examples.

<b>Simile</b>	'It was like shouting at a dandelion.' (p 10) 'It had blown off his earlobe and crinkled his cheek like an overcooked potato chip.' (p 52) 'Neat rows of tulips, like platoons of soldiers, lined the garden beds in the Quadrangle's core.' (p 57)
<b>Metaphors</b>	'I couldn't feel my feet on the cobbles, just the hard drumroll of my heart as I ran.' (p 88)
<b>Personification</b>	'The [tape] gun gave a blood-curdling scream, like Crombie was peeling skin off the devil.' (p 90)
<b>Other</b>	

## HUMOUR

*Activity:* Identify techniques by which humour is provoked. Add quotes to the following table:

<b>Sarcasm</b>	'This was the only part I enjoyed: his Oxford accent could transform a ten-goal loss into the Dunkirk retreat.' (p 118)
<b>Irony</b>	'I puffed my soft toys into my cupboard. Teddy, Hippo, Foxy: I'd given them far more of my life than a soft toy could reasonably expect.' (p 49)
<b>Exaggeration</b>	'I dreamed that night of Common Sense. Worn, creased leaflets slipped between hands outside the Back Quad toilets. They passed through classrooms and sports teams, like dirty jokes or test answers. On the couch in the upstairs living room, Crombie and I penned ideas so fresh and dangerous that within weeks every kid at Highview knew them by heart. Riots started in the Back Quad. A thousand kids marched on the staffroom, posters in hand, chanting our battle cries until the school gave in and the houses dissolved like sandcastles in the tide. No-one was mad: teachers, old boys, Nackers. They only wished they'd listened sooner.' (p 49)
<b>Black Humour</b>	'That'd be my luck: if some moron finally blew up my train, now that my life was turning around' (p 50)
<b>Word Play</b>	'You know how the Czechs had the Velvet Revolution? Well, this is the Silk Revolution.' Nolan checked the tag on his tie. 'I think it's the Polyester Revolution.' (p 134)
<b>Other</b>	

## STRUCTURE

The structure of the story can be analysed in terms of narrative features used to engage the reader's attention and to shape the work:

a) *Strong beginnings and endings to chapters* are one way of structuring a narrative, for example: Beginning: 'I'd never had an out-of-body experience, but sitting in Crombie's living room was the closest I'd ever come.' (Ch 11, p 40)

Ending: 'I'd just made a deal that I knew I would regret.' (Ch 15, p 63)

Which other opening or closing sentence was particularly gripping, in your opinion?

b) *Suspense* is the key to any narrative's structure. What aspects of this novel were particularly suspenseful?

## SETTING

*Discussion Point:* 'I tugged at my ears and tuned in to the distant buzz of peak hour. Crows screeched in the eucalypts. Dogs barked at the fading sun. Footsteps crunched up the gravel path.' (p 30)

Description in setting can be evoked via a complex range of literary devices. Identify some of them in this novel.

*Discussion Point:* Setting can be evoked by hyperbole as well, for example, this description of the school library: 'How many times had I promised myself that I'd never return to the library? This was nerd turf. Geeks frolicked through the aisles and foraged by the fantasy shelves. They lapped up homework, swapped trading cards and fought for vacant computers. When someone stepped away from a screen, it was like mating season. A dozen nerds raced to the keyboard, jacked up on the thought of tapping out their login.' (p 54)

Identify other instances of hyperbole in this novel.

*Discussion Point:* Time is part of setting as well. We are told early in the text that this novel is set in 2003. How can you tell that this is not set in 2025? What hints make this time obvious? For example, reference to the War on Terror, the lack of technology, pop culture references to *Big Brother*, Limp Bizkit and *American Pie*, etc.

## CHARACTERS

**Major Characters:** Edward Heffernan, Nolan Li and James Crombie are described below.

Edward: 'I was Crombie's servant again. The privately educated peasant.' (p 88) What does this quote indicate about Edwards' self-image?

Nolan: 'No-one in this shitshow could claim to be the hero – except perhaps for Nolan.' (p. 353) Is this true, and why?

James: 'James Crombie was everything I wasn't. He was a jock, but not a meathead; smart, but not a nerd. He had the tan to match his surfer-blond hair. He had biceps like doner kebabs and a chest as flat as a street sign. His cheeks were pimple-repellent, and he smelled like nothing. Literally nothing. On the oval, no matter the sport, it was assumed that Crombie would win. He was the only good thing Hogun House had, and the whole of Hogun knew it.' (pp 8–9)

What does this quote omit in describing James?

**Minor Characters:** Mr Batista, the maths teacher; Matthew Hislop, a student; Dr Aito Nakamura (Nackers), the Vice-Principal; Dr Honey, the Principal; Sean and Bea Heffernan, Edward's parents; Herr Schloss, the German teacher; Will Gilles, a theatrically inclined student; Jan Gilles, Will Gilles' mum; Peter Crombie, James's father and former Education Minister; Mimi Crombie, James's unhappy mother; Chester Lynch, another student; Evan Poole, another student; Ms Anthorp, the English teacher; Mr Spotswood, the IT teacher; Macca (Toby McDonald), another student and Matthew Hislop's mate; Mr Anton Pecan, a teacher; Ms Suarez, the history teacher; Ms Kasyanov, another school employee.

*Activity:* Draw up a character chart and find key quotes which give a clear picture of any of these characters, and isolate events that demonstrate their nature. Then write a brief character study of the person, using the quotes and events to illustrate the points made in your summary.

*Question:* Which character was most intriguing and why? Which character would you like to have heard more about?

## WRITING TASKS

*Activity:* Nolan details the things he'd like changed at school (pp 135–136). Invite students to write a list of their own suggestions in relation to their school.

*Activity:* Write a diary entry by a Lachlan about the events that unfold at this school.

*Activity:* Write a letter as if written by Nolan to Edward explaining why he is not remaining at Highview.

## VISUAL LITERACY

<<https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/the-arts/visual-arts/>>

*Activity:* The cover is illustrated in graphic novel or comic style with cover design by Astred Hicks, and cover art by Timba Smits. Design a new cover for this book.

*Activity:* Create a graphic novel interpretation of an incident in the novel. [See **Bibliography.**]

*Activity:* Create a book trailer for this novel. [See **Bibliography.**]

## FURTHER QUOTES FOR DISCUSSION

1. 'And win? No way. Dad's lawyer has already talked to Nackers. We won't get a cent. The school has all the power. They force us to play by their rules and take part in their stupid rituals. My dad's paying the highest school fees in Melbourne so I can be treated like an idiot.' (p 33)

2. 'I was reflecting last night about the houses and your letter,' Crombie nodded at Nolan, 'and how the school can act like dictators because they're the grown-ups and we're the kids. And if you step out of line, they throw you in detention or expel you, just for having a voice. And I knew I couldn't sit idly by anymore. Someone needs to put the school in its place, and I think it's us.' 'So, what should we do?' I asked. 'I think we should bring down the house competition.' (pp 43–44)

3. 'He's a politician,' said Crombie. 'A good one too, not like the current flock of turkeys. He

taught me that, with a bit of thinking, you can sell someone literally anything.’ (p 46)

4. ‘The number-one rule at Highview was this: never show you’re vulnerable. If you had a weak spot – if you fainted during vaccinations or your sister was hot or you had a lisp or a twitch or more hair coming out of your nostrils than on your legs – you had a target on your forehead. Your weaknesses were your kryptonite. They were your second permanent record – and they were just as important as whatever Nackers had in his filing cabinet.

On Crombie’s driveway, I’d shown my vulnerability – and I hated myself for it.’ (pp 63–64)

5. ‘Dad always told me if you want something in life, then take it. Don’t back off just because you’re scared. Successful people choose fight. They know what they want, and they go all-in.’ (p 111)

6. ‘Of course I’m not afraid of gay people. I’m afraid people will think I’m gay.’

‘And why is that a problem?’

‘Because everyone else at this school is afraid of gay people.’ (p 117)

7. ‘We can convince ourselves it’s okay to tell Ruths and play dirty if it’s all for the greater good, because none of it is real yet. It’s some Common Sense fantasy world, where we can navel gaze about a school without ties and Speedos. But what happened today is real. It’s history now. It can’t be undone, and I thought I’d be okay with it, but I’m not.’ (p 167)

8. ‘Common Sense was just a Ruth.’ (p 262)

9. ‘The first is that success is everything. If you don’t succeed . . .’ he swiped the finger right, ‘you’re dead. And the second lesson is that your most dangerous enemy is your head.’ (p 281)

10. ‘But shouldn’t a school be for the students?’ I said. ‘We’re the reason you’re here.’ (p 344)

## FURTHER ACTIVITIES

1. **Compare this novel to other young adult novels** which deal with school politics. [See **Bibliography**.]

2. **Design a poster to advertise this book.**

3. The **title of this book** has a double meaning. *Poster Boys* might be young men who are the epitome of scholastic achievement, sporting prowess, pleasing appearance, and good manners, or it could refer to posters advocating protest and revolution: ‘Highview’s poster boys: Common Sense.’ (p 338) Discuss the meaning of this title. Then discuss what other titles the book might have had?

4. **Debate any of the topics** covered in these notes, or suggested by the novel.

5. Locate and study verse novels that deal with similar themes.

## CONCLUSION

This is a powerful novel about a teenage boy discovering who he is and what he stands for. It’s about the nature of true friendship, and about the importance of a balanced education. It encourages students to question the ‘facts’ they learn and to conduct a debate rather than lecturing or insisting on only one version of each circumstance. At its core it is about truth and authenticity.

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Scott Woodard** worked in train stations, call centres and bookshops around Melbourne, before landing his first commercial radio gig in outback South Australia.

Across seven years, three states and six radio stations, he's raced pantomime horses, annoyed reality TV stars, tossed thongs with politicians, copped abuse from puppets, MC'd music festivals, broadcast through fires and floods, championed communities around Australia, and played a lot of Ed Sheeran.

Scott holds a Bachelor of Creative Writing from RMIT under the tutelage of Toni Jordan. His debut chapbook *You Haven't Found Anything* was published in 2015, and is still available in all good landfills. He's an ardent advocate for youth mental health, and his comedic fiction emphasises the importance of empathy, self-acceptance and independent thinking for an Australian teenage audience.

Scott lives with his family on Ngunnawal Country in Canberra, ACT. When he's not writing or working in the public service (classic Canberra), he loves bushwalking and playing banjo.

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