

Second Chance

Teacher's Guide

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Preliminary remarks

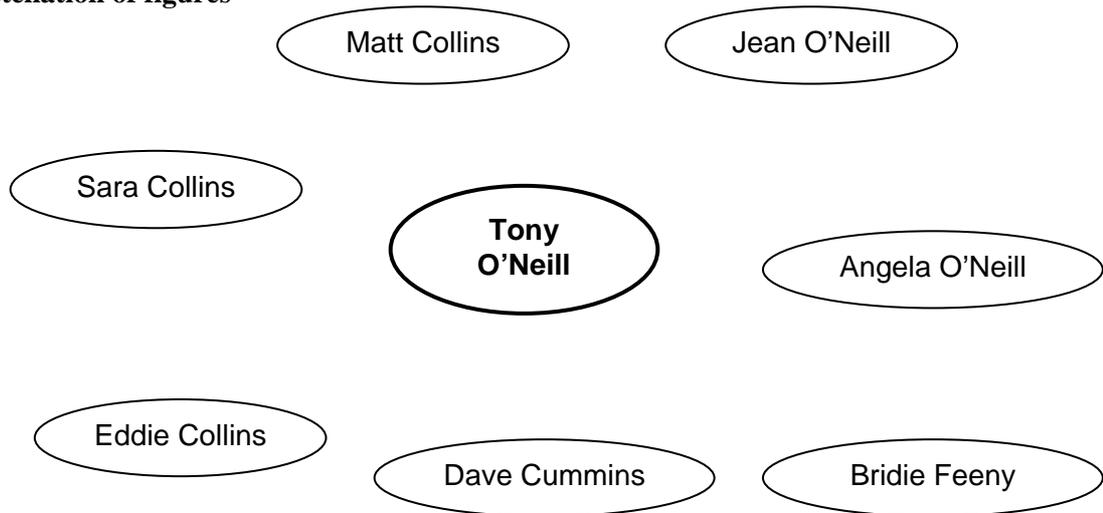
- The following assignments offer tasks and activities, which the teacher or students can choose from.
- Many tasks are suitable for talks or presentations to the class.
- Some tasks overlap with others.
- Since the material can be edited, the teacher may enlarge the tables, diagrams, and charts, or the students may copy them into their exercise books.

Pre-reading activities

- 1 Take a close look at the picture on the **cover** and use your imagination. What do you associate with a handbag like this?
- 2 The title of this story is *Second Chance*. In what situations do people speak of a second chance? (If possible, tell the class a true story.)
- 3 Think about what you know about how drugs can influence someone’s life. (If possible, tell the class a true story.)

While-reading activities

1 Constellation of figures



How are the characters connected?

Use lines, arrows, symbols, and/or keywords to indicate the relationships.

2 Reading journal

Chapter	Who?	Where?	When?	What?	Comments

3 Titles

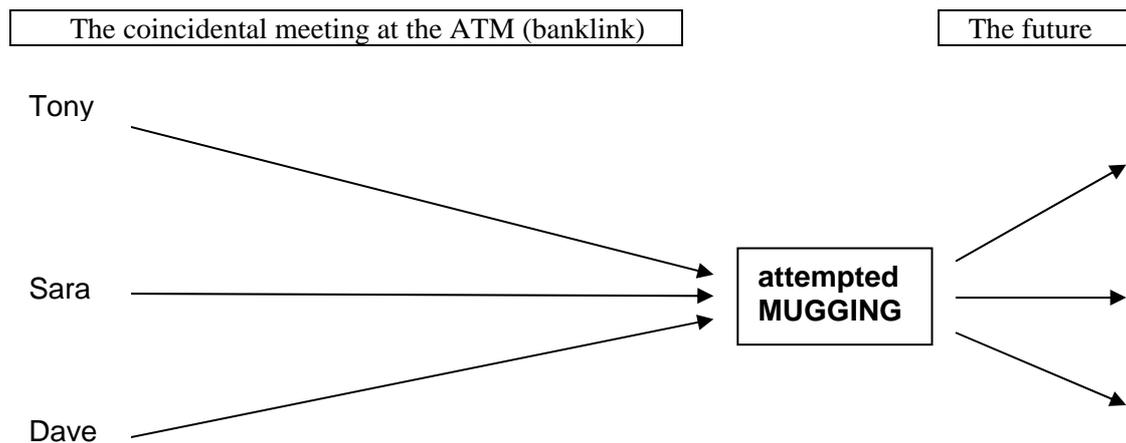
Create titles for each chapter.

4 Summaries

Write a very short summary of each chapter (2 or 3 sentences each).

5 Structure

A decisive moment occurs for Tony, Sara, and Dave when Dave attempts to mug Sara.



- 1 Show how Tony, Sara, and Dave happen to be at the same place at the same time.
- 2 What does the future hold for Tony, Sara, and Dave?

6 Characterization and relationships

- 1 What makes life complicated for Jean now that she has moved into her mother’s house with her baby and her husband?
- 2 How do Tony, Jean, and Bridie show that they regret their big argument in Chapter 2?
- 3 How does Tony show that he has not given up yet in spite of his hopeless situation?
- 4 Characterize Bridie Feeny.
- 5 Describe the relationship between Sara and Eddie Collins.
- 6 How do the drugs influence Dave Cummins’ life over time?

7 Setting

Find out where the story is set.

8 Atmosphere

In what way does the atmosphere in Chapter 4 represent the atmosphere of the story as a whole?

9 Narrator and point of view

Show that this story has an omniscient narrator.

(You can find a definition of omniscient narrator in a library or on the Internet, or your teacher may have one ready for you.)

10 Themes

While reading the book, make notes about the following themes:

- 1 What role does **love** play in the story?
- 2 What problems of **unemployment** does the story show?
- 3 What is the importance of **pride, self-respect, and self-confidence** in this story?
- 4 What **social criticism** does the story convey?

11 Interpretation by acting

Act this scene: Chapter 2, p. 19, line 1 through p. 20, line 12.

(This is just one example. There are more opportunities for acting in other passages.)

12 Freeze frame

Make a freeze frame of this scene: Chapter 6, p. 56, line 22 through p. 57, line 11. A freeze frame is like a snapshot of a situation.

1st step: Imagine your character's body position in this situation and decide what your character's face looks like. Then find and freeze your pose. Don't talk.

2nd step: Hold your pose while the rest of the class interprets the freeze frame.

3rd step: Rejoin the class and participate as students discuss this interpretation.

(This is just one example. More freeze frames are possible in other passages.)

13 Language and Style

How does the word choice reflect Tony's moods in these two passages?

- Chapter 1, p. 10, line 4 through p. 11, line 8.
- Chapter 7, p. 75, line 16 through p. 77, line 20.

Post-reading activities**1 Book review**

Write a critical book review and state your personal opinion.
(If you liked the book, you may encourage other students to read it.)

2 Summary

Write a summary of the story in 90–100 words or 180–200 words or 270–300 words.
(*It is more difficult to summarize a story like this in 100 words than in 300 words.*)

3 Ending

- 1 Write Chapter 8 of *Second Chance* and deal with Dave Cummins' possible future.
- 2 The final sentence appears in Chapter 7, p.77, lines 17 through 20:

Thrilled with themselves, they set to work with a will that not even the most stubborn patch of wallpaper could resist.

Explain how this concluding sentence reflects the story to a great extent.

4 Newspaper report

Write a newspaper report about Tony O'Neill's courageous deed in the style of a popular paper such as *USA TODAY*. Don't forget to create a catchy headline.

5 Comment

What makes Tony O'Neill's deed in the middle of a big city an extraordinarily courageous one if you think of the times that we live in?

6 Speech

Imagine that Tony O'Neill receives a medal from the local authorities for his courage. Give a brief speech of honor.

7 Book cover

Design your own book cover.
(*Your teacher may hold a contest for the best entry.*)

8 Title

Think of other titles for the story.
(*Your teacher may hold a contest for the best suggestion.*)