

READING GUIDE: THE PERKS OF BEING A WALLFLOWER

PART ONE (August 25th, 1991 – September 29th, 1991): Pages 3-20

1. What has happened to Charlie's friend, Michael?

2. Why doesn't Charlie like high school?

3. What happens between Charlie's sister and her boyfriend?

(October 6th, 1991 – October 28th, 1991): Pages 20-42

1. Why do you think Charlie refers to Patrick as 'nothing'? What does that say about how he views people?

2. Why do you think Charlie doesn't ask Sam out?

3. What type of advice does Patrick give Charlie about girls?

4. Bill tells Charlie 'We accept the love we think we deserve'. What do you think Bill means by that?

5. What is Charlie's excuse for not going to dances or out on dances?

6. Why does Charlie's sister tell him that she hates him and that he's a freak?

7. How does Charlie's first party go?

8. What is Brad scared of?

9. What do you think Charlie means when he says 'in that moment, I swear we were infinite'?

PART TWO (November 7th, 1991 – December 7th, 1991): Pages 45- 66

1. Why is Charlie enjoying school now much more than when he first started?

2. As it is told to Charlie, why did Brad start to avoid Patrick?

3. What are Charlie's feelings towards Sam? However, what's the bad news about Sam?

4. How does Charlie's mom deal with the fact that her son (Charlie's brother) cancelled his trip home for Thanksgiving?

5. Do you think Michael's death contributed to his parents getting a divorce? Why or why not?

6. At Thanksgiving dinner, Charlie says "I'm thankful that my brother played football on television so nobody fought". Why do you think he says this?

7. For secret Santa, who does Charlie have and what does he plan on getting him? Why do you think he is giving that for a present?

PART TWO (December 11th, 1991 – December 25th, 1991): Pages 66–95)

1. What does Charlie get from his secret Santa?

2. Why does Patrick decide to get Charlie a suit coat?

3. How do you think Charlie feels when Sam gives him her gift? What does she say that really catches his attention?

4. What happens between Sam and Charlie? Why does she do this?

5. Why do you think Charlie gets his father a recording of *MASH*?

6. What does Charlie's brother say to their sister that almost starts a fight? Why do you think he said it?

7. When Charlie is lying in his father's old bed, he thinks a lot of his father. Why does Charlie think that his father carries around a lot of guilt?

PART TWO (December 26th, 1991 – February 15th, 1992): Pages 95-105

1. What do we learn about how Aunt Helen was? What happened to her when she was younger? Also, how did this affect her as she got older?

2. Why does Charlie feel guilty about Aunt Helen's death?

3. How does Charlie react when he goes to see Aunt Helen's grave for the first time by himself?

4. What is Charlie afraid might happen if he continues to be depressed and things don't get better?

5. How does Sam help Charlie get himself back on track?

6. Why do you think Charlie is suddenly in a very good mood after meeting with his psychiatrist?

7. What happens to Charlie at the Rocky Horror? Also, what does Mary Elizabeth ask him?

8. Why do you think Charlie wants Sam to be a little jealous of Mary Elizabeth?

9. What happens to Charlie's sister?

PART THREE (February 23rd, 1992 – April 26th, 1992): Pages 125-149

1. Why does Charlie leave the clinic where his sister is at and goes to sit in the car?

2. Why do you think Charlie calls an 800 number but doesn't want to order anything? Why call at all?

3. How does Charlie describe Mary Elizabeth to the reader?

4. After the dinner at Charlie's house, what are his feelings towards Mary Elizabeth?

5. Why does Charlie start to get mad (internally) when Mary Elizabeth gives him a book that she likes?

6. What happens when Patrick dares Charlie to 'kiss the prettiest girl in the room'?

7. How does Mary Elizabeth react to this? How does Sam react to what Charlie does?

8. Charlie ends his letter with 'Something is really wrong with me. And I don't know what it is'. What do you think is wrong with Charlie? How do you think he can learn to deal with these feelings?

9. How do the rest of Charlie's friends react to what he did at the party?

PART FOUR (April 29th, 1992 – May 17th, 1992); pages 153 - 176

1. Why do you think Charlie goes up to talk to Susan, who used to be Michael's friend as well?

2. What is Brad's father's reaction when he finds out about his son and Patrick?

3. Why do you think Charlie doesn't do anything, even though he states he wants to be Patrick's friend and help him?

4. What happens between Brad and Patrick in the lunchroom at school?

5. How does Charlie react to this? What does he do?

6. What threat does Charlie make to Brad to ensure something like this never happens again?

7. What advice does Sam give Charlie about Mary Elizabeth?

8. When Patrick tells Charlie about Brad, why does Charlie just sit there and listen to him?

PART FOUR (May 21st, 1992 – June 13th, 1992); pages 176 – 196

1. What was the senior prank that happened at Charlie's school?

2. How does Charlie feel about Sam going to college in the fall?

3. Why do you think Charlie's psychiatrist keeps asking questions about his childhood? (Charlie doesn't know why either at this point).

4. How do Charlie, Sam and Patrick celebrate the end of the school year?

5. When he's at the party, Charlie says "It was a great way to sit alone at a party, and still feel a part of things". Do you think Charlie is still a wallflower or is he slowly breaking out of it?

6. Why do you think Charlie's good grades don't put him in a good mood? Why might he feel so down at a time of year when most people are feeling very positive?

7. What happens between Charlie and Craig? How does Charlie react to this news?

PART FOUR (June 16th 1992 – June 26th, 1992):Pages 196–231

1. Why do you think Charlie gives away the books he read this year as presents to his friends?

2. Why does Charlie start crying?

3. Why do you think Charlie waits until the last day of school to introduce himself to the student that has the locker next to him?

4. Why do you think Charlie never asked Sam out when she broke up with Craig?

5. What do we learn about aunt Helen from the dream Charlie has? What effect has this seemed to have had on Charlie?

6. In his letter, Charlie tells the reader he doesn't want them (or us) to worry about him. Would you or are you worried about him? Explain why or why not.

7. Charlie ends this letter and part 4 of the book by simply saying goodbye. What do you think will happen next?

EPILOGUE (August 23rd, 1992)

1) Where do you find out Charlie is? Why is he there?

2) What did Charlie learn that led to his breakdown? What happened to him?

3) Charlie tells his reader to believe that things are good for him, "and even when they're not, they will be soon". What do you think he means by this?