Brown Bag Items for *Speak* (Spring ’15)

1. a poster referencing the suffragettes
2. a progression of report cards (3 other students selected this item)
3. turkey bones/the turkey sculpture (2 other students selected this item)
4. Maya Angelou poster (3 other students selected this item)
5. hall pass
6. the closet/ the secret closet/the janitor’s closet (5 other students selected this item)
7. trees or a tree or a picture of a tree or the tree project (11 other students selected this item)
8. a very well-trimmed oak tree
9. a heart – representing love, the love that Melinda needs
10. Melinda’s high school – Merryweather High School
11. the Thanksgiving “soup” dinner
12. art class/art room (2 other students selected this item)
13. a dark, small room
14. stuffed bunny or a small rabbit (1 other student selected this item)
15. wishbone
16. linoleum blocks
17. the notebook (where Melinda writes to Rachel/Rachelle)
18. Melinda’s lips/lips/chapped lips (3 other students selected this item)
19. a broken piece of mirrored glass
20. a diary
21. an art kit/art supplies (1 other student selected this item)
22. a dead/dying/damaged plant
23. bathroom stall
24. a pencil (art pencil) (1 other student suggested this item)
25. the names of teachers: Mr. Neck, Hairwoman, and Mr. Freeman
26. red solo cup
27. turkey-flavored lip balm
28. a mirror
29. “David pins her froggy hands to the dissection tray. He spreads her froggy legs and pins her froggy feet. I have to slice open her belly. She doesn’t say a word. She is already dead.” (81)
30. “By Monday morning, the prom is legend. The drama! The tears! The Passion” What hasn’t anyone made a television show out of this yet?” (190)
31. “I wake to the sound of girls screaming, ‘Be Aggressive, BE-BE Aggressive! B-E A-G-G-R-E-S-S-I-V-E!’

For a minute there, I think that I’ve tripped into the land of the truly insane.” (130)

1. “I need a size ten, as much as it kills me to admit that… I look at my canoe feet and my wet, obnoxious anklebones. Aren’t girls supposed to stop growing at this age?” (123)”
2. “Where to sit? I’ve never been a backseat wastecase. If I sit in the middle, a stranger could sit next to me. If I sit in the front, it will make me look like a little kid, but I figure it’s the best chance I have to make eye contact with one of my friends, if any of them have decided to talk to me.” (3)
3. “I need a new friend. I need a friend period. Not a true friend, nothing close or share clothes or sleepover giggle giggle yak yak. Just a pseudo-friend, disposable friend. Friend as accessory. Just so I don’t feel and look so stupid.” (22)
4. “I want to insert the glass all the way through his throat, I want to hear him scream. I look up. I see the stubble on his chin, a fleck of white in the corner of his mouth. His lips are paralyzed. He cannot speak. That’s good enough.

Me: ‘I said no.’”(195) (1 other student selected this quote)

1. “He pins me against the closed door. Maya Angelou looks at me. She tells me to make some noise. I open my mouth and take a deep breath.” (194)
2. “Mr. Freeman: ‘Sore throat? Don’t worry, it’s going around.” (63)
3. “I look Mom square in the eye, then rinse my plate and retreat to my room. Deprived of Victim, Mom and Dad holler at each other. I turn up my music to drown out the noise.” (36)
4. “ ‘You’re a good kid. I think you have a lot to say. I’d like to hear it.’” (123)
5. “That’s what you get for speaking up.” (102 – in reference to Rachel/Rachelle questioning Hairwoman about Hawthorne)
6. “Plants make way more seeds than they need, because they know that life is not perfect and all the seeds won’t make it.” (126)
7. “David stares at Mr. Neck, looks at the flag for a minute, then picks up his books and walks out of the room. He says a million things without saying a word…I have never heard a more eloquent silence.” (57)
8. “I used to be like Heather. Have I changed that much in two months? She is happy, driven, aerobically fit. She has a nice mom and an awesome television. But she’s like a dog that keeps jumping into your lap. She always walks with me down the halls chattering a million miles a minute.

My goal is to go home and take a nap.” (24)

1. “Mr. Freeman turns off the wheel and grabs a piece of chalk…’SOUL,’ he writes on the board… Ask me to help you find the wind.” (10)
2. “I want to make a memorial for our turkey. Never has a bird been so tortured to provide such a lousy dinner.” (61)
3. “My fingers wave overhead, looking for a branch, a limb, something to hang onto.” (195)
4. “You have to know what you stand for, not just what you stand against.” (in the film version)
5. “When people don’t express themselves, they die one piece at a time. You’d be shocked at how many adults are really dead inside—walking through their days with no idea who they are, just waiting for a heart attack or cancer or a Mack truck to come along and finish the job. It’s the saddest thing I know.” (122)
6. “A small, clean part of me waits to warm and burst through the surface. Some quiet Melindagirl I haven’t seen in months. That is the see I will care for.” (188-9)
7. “’You’ve been through a lot, haven’t you?’

The tears dissolve the last block of ice in my throat. I feel the frozen stillness melt down through the inside of me, dripping shards of ice that vanish in a puddle of sunlight on the stained floor. Words float up.

Me: ‘Let me tell you about it.’” (198)

1. “Me: ‘I said no.’”(195) (1 other student selected this quote.)
2. “I should probably tell someone, just tell someone. Get it over with. Let it out, blurt it out.” (99)
3. “It is easier not to say anything. Shut your trap, button your lip, can it. All that crap you hear on TV about communication and expressing feelings is a lie. Nobody really wants to hear what you have to say.” (9)
4. “I have to slice open her belly. She doesn’t say a word. She is already dead. A scream starts in my gut – I can feel the cut, smell the dirt, leaves in my hair. I don’t remember passing out.” (81)
5. “I almost tell them right then and there. Tears flood my eyes. They noticed I’ve been trying to draw. They noticed. “ (72) (2 other students selected this quote.)
6. “Mr. Freeman thinks I need to find my feelings. How can I not find them? They are chewing my alive like an infestation of thoughts, shame, mistakes. I squeeze my eyes shut.” (125)
7. “I can smell him over the noise of the metal shop and I drop my poster and the masking tape and I want to throw up and I can smell him and I run and he remembers and he knows. He whispers in my ear.” (86)
8. “My parents declare that I am too old to go trick-or-treating. I am thrilled.” (39)
9. “He hurt me. It wasn’t my fault. And I’m not going to let it kill me. I can grow.” (198)
10. “I have survived. I am here. Confused, screwed up, but here. So how do I find my way? Is there a chain saw of the soul, an ax I can take to my memories or fears?” (188)
11. “’No, I haven’t decided on colors yet. That’s not what I mean. I mean no, I won’t help you.’”
12. “I snag a couple of copies of *People* magazine and I am out of there.” (111)
13. “The suffragettes were all about speaking up, screaming for their rights. You can speak up for your right to be silent. That’s letting the bad guys win.” (159)