

*Girl, Interrupted* is based on the book by the same name (published 1993) written by Susanna Kaysen about her 1967 stay in a mental institution. Kaysen is the daughter of famed economist Carl Kaysen (an advisor to JFK). **Note the behaviors for each of the following characters. Can you guess a possible diagnosis (or more than one?) for each character?**

Susanna Kaysen  
(Winona Ryder)  
(short dark hair)

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Lisa Rowe  
(Angelina Jolie)

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Georgina  
(Susanna's  
roommate)

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Polly (Torch)  
(has burn scars)

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Daisy  
(short bobbed hair)

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Cynthia  
(loud, blurts out)

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Janet Webber  
(petite blonde"  
(sings "Oh, Lordy...)

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Choose two of the following prompts on which to write a 3-5 paragraph reflection (typed), using specific examples from the movie to support your points. Share with me by end of class \_\_\_\_\_.

**Prompt #1:** The characters seem to ponder the line between mental illness and the expectation to conform. Discuss.

**Prompt #2:** Do you think Susanna Kaysen can see herself and the others realistically? When they get a chance to see their personal files, do you think this affects their views of themselves and each other?

**Prompt #3:** Was it necessary for these characters to be hospitalized in order for them to get treatment? Which ones, and why?

**Prompt #4:** At what point(s), does your perception of Susanna change? Is she “unreliable” as a narrator because of her mental disorder?

**Prompt #5:** Discuss how Susanna describes the doctors and nurses at the hospital. Does she see them as authorities? Does she respect them? Should she?



Cynthia (Cindy) & Lisa Rowe



Polly (torch)



Janet



Georgina



Susanna



Daisy