

STRONG FEMALE CHARACTER



THE BINGE READING CLUB



Content

The Binge Reading club

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Signpost 1: If the writer of this book visited your country, which three pieces of news would she read? Why?



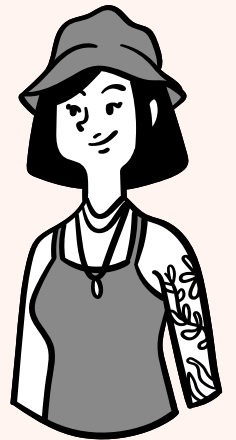
If Fern Brady visited Argentina, she would read first about the "National Stand-Up and Scientific Monologues Competition". This contest's goal is to share and promote research work and learn more about those who work in the scientific field, their subjects of study, and their most interesting anecdotes. We believe that this piece of information is essential for Brady's field because even though she doesn't talk about scientific facts, she does stand up and knows how challenging it is to have an opportunity to achieve goals in the comedy industry. Secondly, Brady would read an article called "Laughing to Avoid Crying: The Feminist Struggle of Women Comedians" by Zoe Hochbaum, an Infobae journalist who wrote about the role of women in stand-up in our country in 2022. Brady would learn how women use humour to discuss their personal experiences but from their own personal and feminist perspectives. Finally, she would watch different advertisements on the Net of a stand-up school in Argentina called "Stand Up Argentina" which provides online workshops. This school has a website that gives a lot of information about its offerings and the shows currently performed. We believe this is a useful platform where Brady can promote her future shows in our country.



NEWS



Signpost 2: The Tattoo



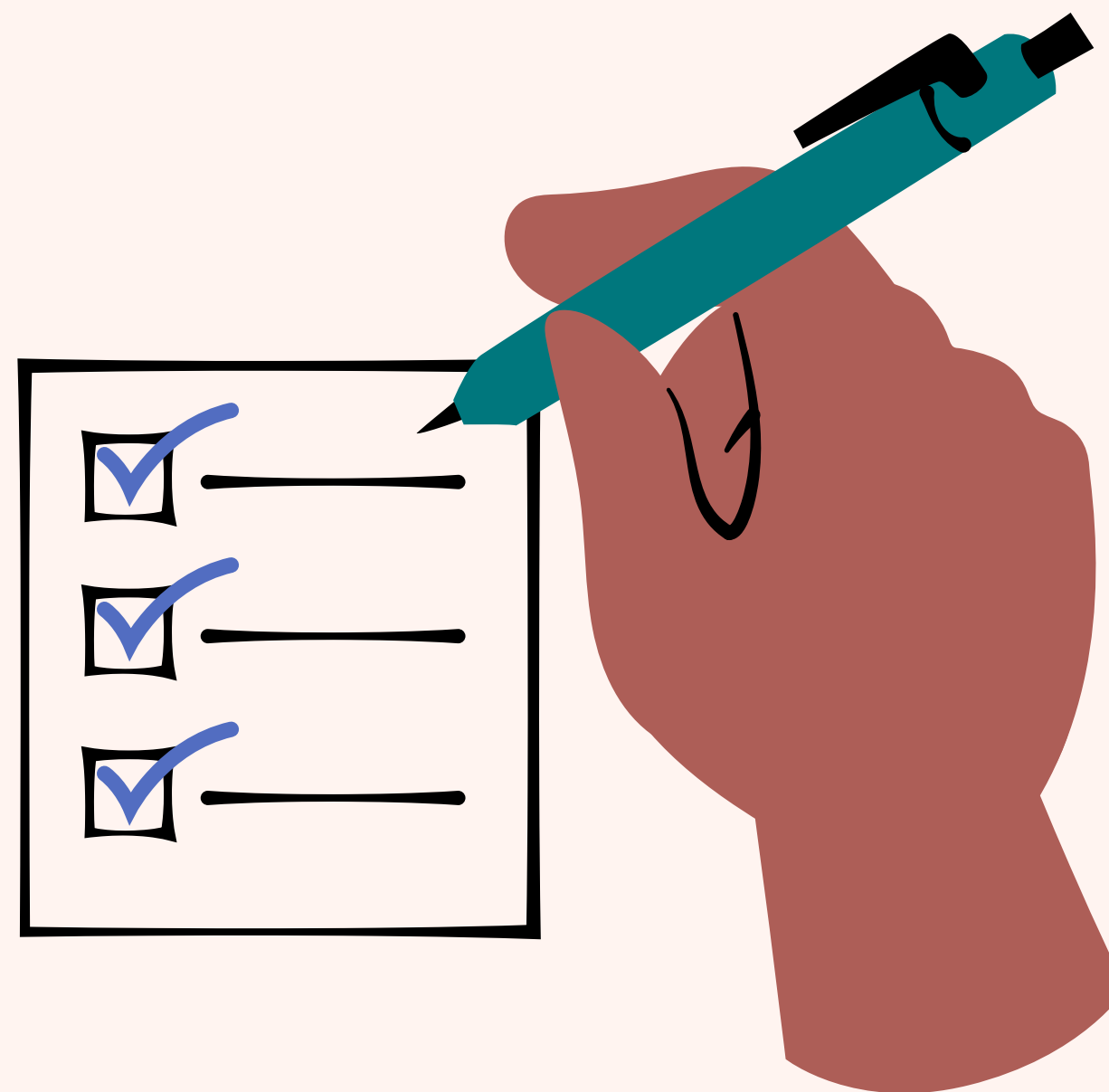
A CHAMELEON



Fern Brady's tattoo is going to be a chameleon. At a moment in the story, she mentions that autistic women are chameleons and they have to learn how to become brilliant at masking, which is a technique autistic people use when they have to suppress natural autistic responses in everyday situations, especially in their social life. As the main character knows this is a hard task to do for her, having a tattoo like this will remind her that, with a bit of effort and concentration, she is going to be able to control herself and adapt to a context that would make her feel uncomfortable. Another reason for choosing this fascinating animal is its symbolic meaning. The question is, "Are you struggling to fit in?" It is said that a chameleon teaches ease of adaptation in any situation. A chameleon's characteristics include transformation, personal power and choices, emotional control, shape-shifting, and safety, among many others. Considering these features, this tattoo will remind Fern that she is in control of her emotions. She will remember that she has the power to choose to feel safe in any social environment and that she can transform herself and make better decisions for her own future.

Signpost 3: the plot of this story

Click on the icon for the activity





Signpost 4: Hashtags

#UNDIAGNOSED

#OSTRACISE

#AUTISTICPERSPECTIVE



We've chosen #autisticperspective as a hashtag to interpret this story since we've acknowledged how complicated the life of a person with autism can be. We learn about Fern's symptoms, behaviour, meltdowns, needs, and suffering in her daily life while discovering society's ignorance or misconceptions about this condition. In this way, the text is presented as useful material to entertain the readers and to aid them in acquiring some knowledge about this disorder. The novel invites us to leave our comfort zone to force ourselves to dig into this topic so as to be better prepared to set these people at their ease.



Signpost 5: Connections



TEXT-TO-WORLD: A TED TALK



What I've learned from my autistic brothers

1,480,316 views | Faith Jegede Cole | TED@London • April 2012



Signpost 5: Connections



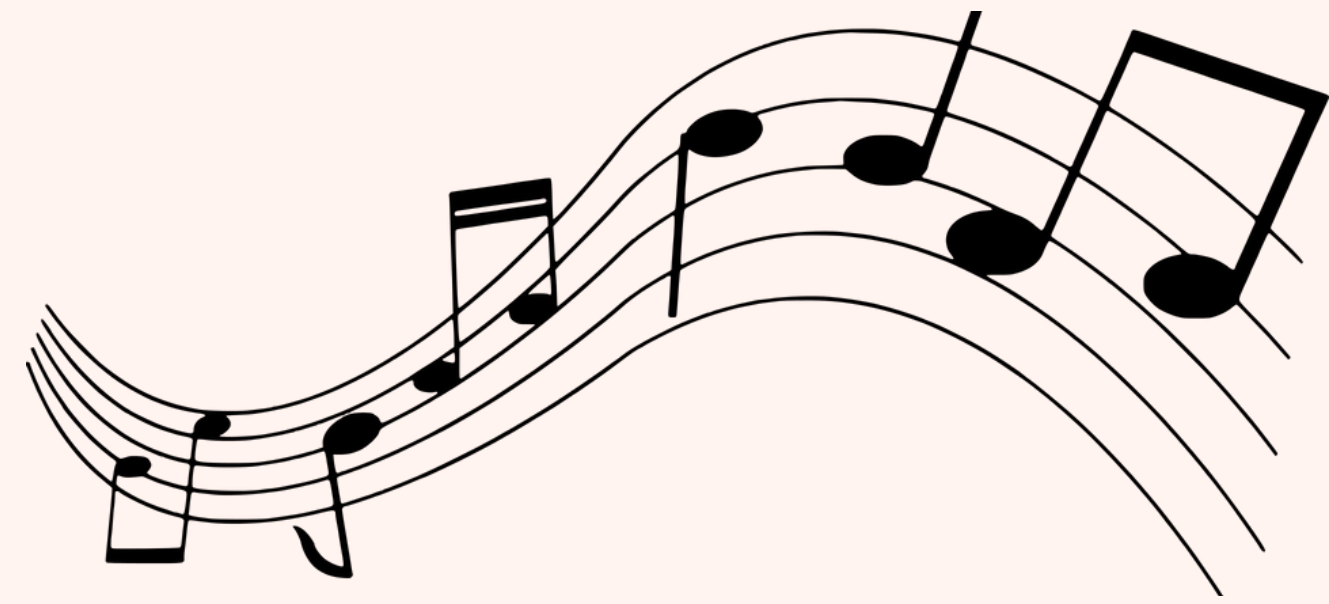
TEXT-TO-WORLD : A TED TALK

The British writer, speaker and researcher, Faith Cole has made families dealing with autism feel better. She really believes in the power of storytelling to change the way people think. In her TED talk, she shares her own story of growing up with two special autistic brothers. We've chosen this talk since it provides us with the point of view of someone who lives together with her two autistic brothers. From the novel, we can have the perspective of the main character who struggles with this diagnosis, but from this talk, we can have the viewpoint of the speaker who is not the one dealing with this condition but she is the one that speaks out as a member of a family that coexists with two autistic children. She starts her speech with just one request for her audience: "Please, don't tell me I'm normal."

- **What is it like to be *normal*? What does it imply to be *normal*?**



Signpost 5: Connections



TEXT-TO-MEDIA: A SONG



But I'm a creep, I'm a weirdo.
What the hell am I doing here?
I don't belong here.



Signpost 5: Connections



TEXT-TO-MEDIA: A SONG

Radiohead is an English rock band whose first single "Creep" was a huge success in 1993. We've selected this song because it could represent the way in which Fern might have felt in plenty of events in her life. Each of the lines in the chorus of this song portrays Fern's sensations, especially, when she tries to socialize. We've highlighted the line in the song that states, "I don't belong here" since it perfectly shows and connects to that sense of not fitting in with a group of people, this feeling Fern experiences every time she has to interact with someone. The sense of belonging we could have with family members or friends is significant due to its power to increase our self-esteem and help us manage stress in hard situations. However, this is not the case for those who suffer from autism.

- **How can we, as teacher-to-be, help Ss to deal with that feeling of not fitting in?**

Signpost 6: task based on the content

After reading A Strong Female Character and considering Fern's lack of information and parents' guidance on contraceptive methods when she was a teenager, we have considered that our secondary school students may also be undergoing similar situations. For that reason, we have created a reading task for students from fifth year in a public school with some adaptations so as to suit students' English level, which varies from intermediate to upper-intermediate. First, students will answer some questions using their background knowledge or predictions. Then, they will check those predictions by reading the adapted text quickly. After that, they will fill in some gaps with the corresponding missing information. Later, they will decide whether some pieces of information are true or false, and provide the correct answer for the false ones. Finally, they will work in groups of four classmates and design a flyer about the different contraceptive methods that secondary school students can have access to, where to find them, and the importance of being well-informed when choosing the appropriate methods for them. Those flyers will be shared in our celebration for Students' Day on 22nd September. The aim of this activity is to inform teenagers about their right to sexual health services and contraceptive methods, focusing on the fact that they are the ones who decide the best method for them, no matter their age, socio-economic situation, or their parents' approval. We strongly believe that by giving students accurate information about their rights and how and where to find assistance, we are providing them with the necessary tools to make better decisions for their lives. As students who are about to graduate from secondary school, this empowerment will certainly help them in future personal moments.



Signpost 6 Pre-reading activities

1

We are going to read a text about contraceptive methods. But before reading, answer the questions below with your prediction and/or previous knowledge about this topic

1. What contraceptive methods exist?
2. Do all contraceptive methods prevent Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI)?
3. When can you have access to contraceptive methods?

2

Now read the article and check your answers for task 1

1. Were your predictions OK?
2. What pieces of information are new for you?

[read the text](#)

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Contraceptive methods



Right for contraceptive methods

It is your right to choose the contraceptive method of your preference. Ley 25673 de salud sexual y procreación responsable and Ley 26130 (de anticoncepción quirúrgica) are the laws that protect your right for sexual health and responsible procreation. These laws guarantee sexual health services and contraceptive methods in public hospitals and health centres, health insurance, and prepaid health coverage. The contraceptive methods that are part of the Obligatory Medical Plan include: condoms, pills, injections, IUD, emergency contraception, tubal ligation, vasectomy, and implant.

It is also your right, no matter your age, to have autonomous access to information about sexual health and condoms, without an adult’s presence or permission. According to the Civil and Commercial Code, you have the right to make use of all reversible contraceptive methods since you are 13 years old.

The Law 26.130 states that you can have access to free tubal ligation and vasectomy in an autonomous way since you are an adult. The Civil Code recognizes that you can make your own autonomous decisions about your body since you are 16 years old. The only prerequisite is evidence in writing of your decision after receiving full comprehensible information.

There are sexual and reproductive health councils in health centres and hospitals where health professionals can inform you about contraceptive methods and help you choose the one of your preference and according to your necessity and state of health. Moreover, it is your right to receive free condoms and emergency contraception in all health institutions as well as in urgent medical attention.

What are contraceptive methods?

Contraceptive methods prevent or reduce the possibilities of pregnancy. We recommend that you start using contraceptive methods from your first sexual encounter and during your whole reproductive life.

We also recommend that you use double protection: use condoms to prevent Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) and another method to prevent pregnancies more effectively.

- Contraceptive methods include...
- Male and female condoms: 1. _____
- Injectable birth control: 2. _____
- Oral contraceptive methods: 3. _____
- Emergency contraception: 4. _____
- Intrauterine device (IUD): 5. _____
- Implant: 6. _____
- Tubal ligation (sterilisation): 7. _____
- Vasectomy (sterilisation): 8. _____



Image taken from www.freepik.com

[Go back to pre-reading activities 1 & 2](#)

[Go back to while-reading activity 4](#)

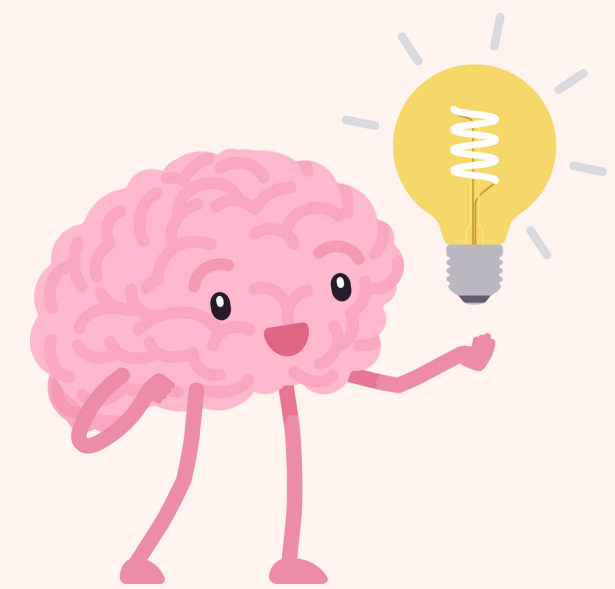
[Go back to while-reading activity 5](#)

[Go back to post-reading activity 6](#)

The best contraceptive method is the one that you choose. Information is your right. Línea Salud Sexual 0 800 222 3444 saludsexual@msal.gov.ar

Adapted from Métodos anticonceptivos | Argentina.gob.ar and Birth Control | Contraception | Contraceptives | MedlinePlus

Signpost 6 while-reading activities

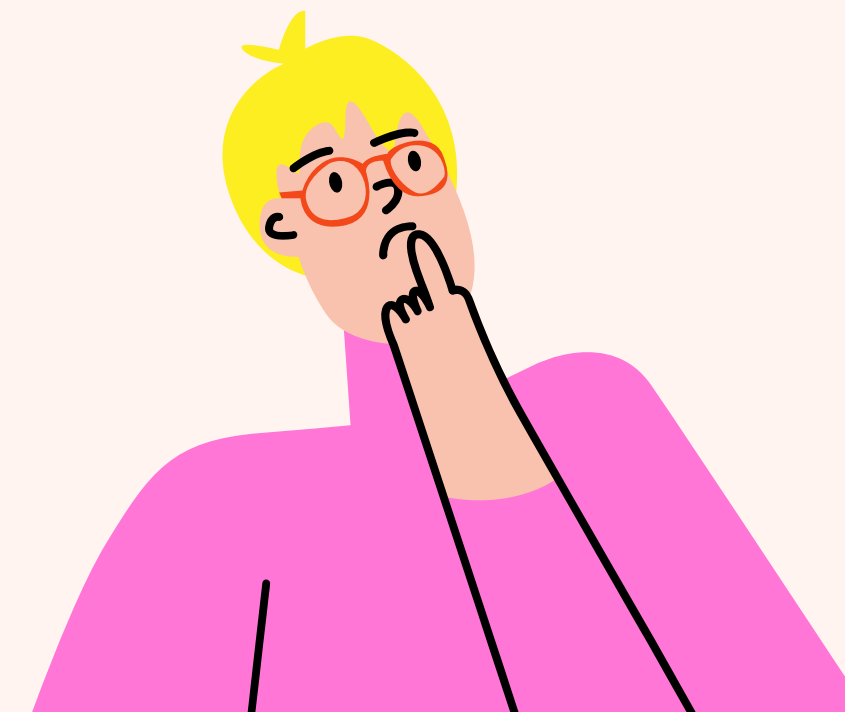


4

Some lines were erased from the text. Match 1- 8 in the text with A-H

- a. Pills that a woman takes every day. They may contain only progestin or both progestin and estrogen.
- b. It is not a regular method of birth control. But it can be used to prevent pregnancy after unprotected intercourse or if a condom breaks. It is a hormonal pill which the woman takes as soon as possible after unprotected intercourse.
- c. The former is a thin sheath that covers the penis to collect sperm and prevent it from entering the woman's body. The latter is a thin, flexible plastic pouch. Part of it is inserted into the vagina before intercourse to prevent sperm from entering the uterus. Both of them can also help prevent STI.
- d. A small, T-shaped device that a provider inserts into the uterus. It can last from 3 to 10 years. There are two types: hormonal and copper.
- e. An injection of a hormone that a woman gets once every month or three months.
- f. A surgery that prevents a woman from getting pregnant. It is permanent.
- g. A single, thin rod that a provider inserts under the skin of a woman's upper arm. It is done in your provider's office. It can last for four years.
- h. A surgery that prevents a man from getting someone pregnant. It is permanent.

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Signpost 6 while-reading activities

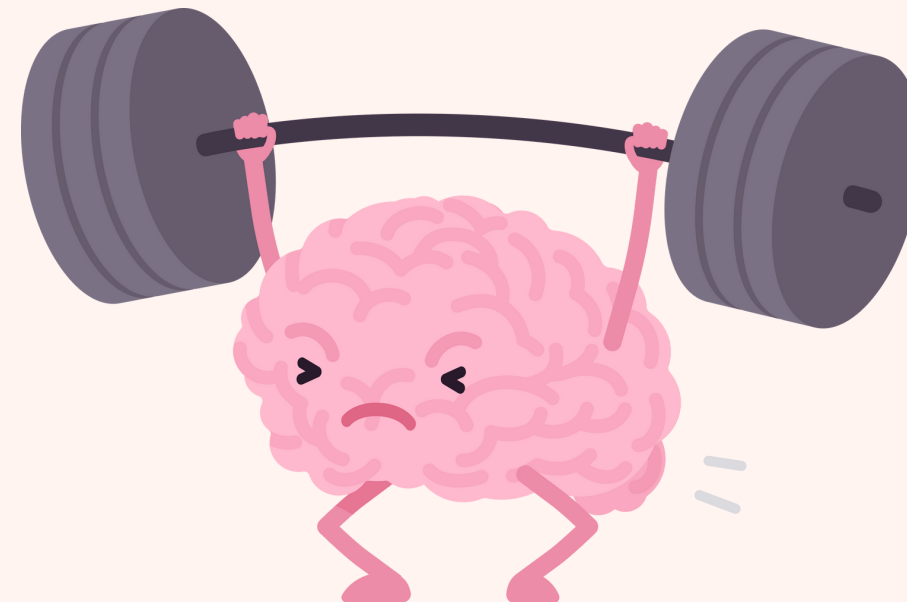
5

Are the following sentences true or false? Correct the false ones

1. You cannot have access to reversible contraceptive methods until you are 18 years old.
2. You need your parents' permission to have access to contraceptive methods if you are not an adult.
3. Both male and female condoms can prevent Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI).
4. You cannot choose your contraceptive method because doctors are the ones who decide which one is best for you.
5. Only people who have health insurance and prepaid health coverage can have access to sexual health free sexual health services and contraceptive methods.



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Signpost 6 Post-reading activity

6

Group project (4 students): You are going to design a flyer about the different contraceptive methods that secondary students can use and where they can have access to them. You must include:

- useful information about each contraceptive method,
- catchy pictures,
- the places (address and telephone number) in your city where you can have free access to contraceptive methods,
- three essential reasons for being informed about the different contraceptive methods and why they are important.

We are going to share these flyers on our celebration for Students' Day (22nd September). Get ready!



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Signpost 7: References

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Thanks for listening!