

The story quickly **engages readers** by introducing the plot conflict right away, capturing the attention of even reluctant readers from the start.

# Chapter 1

## Carlos

*what r u doing rn*

I froze as I looked at the text. It was from Carlos. How did he get my number? The guy was a total creep and wouldn't leave me alone at school. I didn't want to respond. I didn't want him to know what I was doing. Ever! Still, I had to say something. I sat down on one of the plastic bins full of decorations.

*hw*

I lied. I was trying to set up for my Christmas party, but there was no way I was telling him that. It was almost four and I wasn't close to ready yet. I wondered who would even show up. The party wasn't supposed to start until six, so I should have been chill about it. But I wasn't. Even though I had left school early to get ready, I felt like everything was moving at a slow pace. The last thing I needed was to be distracted by Carlos.

*r u trying to get rid of me? nw u doing hw*

Free reading guides provide question and reflection prompts, drawing from **background knowledge**, to **engage in discussion** or writing opportunities. For example:

Zonta has been taught that *it is best to never make anyone mad if you could help it*. Do you agree with this statement? Explain.

Free reading guides define **new vocabulary** for each chapter according to how the vocabulary is used in the current context. This includes texting terms, idioms, and other figures of speech. For example:

- chill**—calm
- hw**—homework
- nw**—no way
- rn**—right now

Simple sentence structure and fast-paced plots keep readers engaged and **improve reading fluency**.

The font spacing and size are **easily readable** yet still **appropriate for the intended audience**.

**Short chapters** promote a quicker pace and help keep students engaged.

