



Reading 50

You are going to read a book review written by a British teenager. Complete the tasks following the text.

Attachments by Rainbow Rowell is a novel I highly anticipated, having read three of Rowell's other books. The book is marketed as being for adults, but I think it is still suitable for people who enjoyed the author's YA books.

This novel is about Lincoln, a young man whose job is to read flagged emails at a newspaper company. He begins to read exchanges between two women, Beth and Jennifer, and falls in love with one of them. This raises the book's key question: is it possible to fall in love with someone before first sight?

In my opinion, one of the things that makes *Attachments* so interesting is the structure and writing style. The book is a combination of third-person writing about Lincoln, and direct transcriptions of Beth and Jennifer's email exchanges. This gives equal insight into all three of the novel's main characters.

Attachments is a very character-driven novel. What makes it such a page-turner is that we, the readers, are desperate to find out what happens next in the characters' lives. Rowell effectively plays on human curiosity. Not only this, but she teases her audience with an inevitable conclusion. We know what is going to happen, we just want to hear how.

Another thing that makes this novel so appealing is how relatable the characters are. None of them have gone through anything particularly astounding or unique, but this normality is what makes the book so satisfying to read. Beth, Jennifer and Lincoln feel more like good friends than characters. The novel also deals superbly with secondary characters. We get to know Beth's boyfriend, Jennifer's husband. Lincoln's high school sweetheart and Doris the cleaning lady excellently, as well as a host of other characters.

This book was particularly interesting for me as it is mostly set in 1999, three years before I was born. Although this meant I missed some of the cultural references, it was interesting to observe the change and continuity to the present day.

All this being said, the book does deal with relationship issues and miscarriages. This, I suppose, could be upsetting for some younger readers, although Rowell deals with the topics expertly.

If I had to criticise *Attachments*, I would say that it can drag in places. This, I have found, is quite common among contemporary/realistic books because there are no major plot twists, action sequences or mutant villains to hurry the plot along. The point in the novel, towards the end, when things seem to start really happen, seems slightly staged; like the author realised it was beginning to drag and so just kicked in her ending without it quite fitting yet. But I think that criticism is frivolous enough to overlook. The ending, however, was superb, if slightly rushed. It's wonderfully adorable. *Attachments* is a superb novel, with deep and interesting characters and a lovely plot. I would recommend it to anyone over 13, particularly fans of Rainbow Rowell's other novels.

Find the words in the text which match the following definitions/explanations.

1. an exciting, suspenseful book
2. possible to understand because of being like something you have known, experienced, etc.
3. the connected series of events which make up the story

Read the following statements and decide whether they are true or false and explain your answer (in 30–35 words).

1. The author of the review finds the book flawless.
2. The book is not appropriate for younger readers.

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Reading 50 — Keys

1. page-turner
2. relatable
3. plot

1 False

“... it can drag in places...”

“... the end ... seems slightly staged; like the author realised it was beginning to drag and so just kicked in her ending without it quite fitting yet.”

2 True

“The book is marketed as being for adults, but I think it is still suitable for people who enjoyed the author's YA books.”

“I would recommend it to anyone over 13.”