

FREDRIK BACKMAN

#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF  
*ANXIOUS PEOPLE*

BRITT-MARIE  
WAS HERE

"Backman's truest,  
most satisfying  
book to date."

—*Paste Magazine*



ESL 360  
BOOK CLUB

Chapters 21 - 23

1 April 2026

## Weekly Book Club Assignments, Group A (10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.)

Week	Date	Reading	Ira	Flavia	Maria	Lisa	Mariana	Banu	Fatemeh
2	28 Jan	Ch 1-3	Summarizer & Deep Thinker	Vocab Builder	Sound Spotter	Character Analyzer	Word Artist	Connection Maker	Time Keeper
3	4 Feb	Ch 4-5	Vocab Builder	Sound Spotter	Character Analyzer	Word Artist	Connection Maker	Summarizer & Deep Thinker	Time Keeper
4	11 Feb	Ch 6-8	Sound Spotter	Character Analyzer	Word Artist	Connection Maker	Summarizer & Deep Thinker	Vocab Builder	Time Keeper
5	18 Feb	Ch 9-11	Character Analyzer	Word Artist	Connection Maker	Summarizer & Deep Thinker	Vocab Builder	Sound Spotter	Time Keeper
6	25 Feb	Ch 12-14	Word Artist	Connection Maker	Summarizer & Deep Thinker	Vocab Builder	Sound Spotter	Character Analyzer	Time Keeper
7	4 Mar	Ch 15-17	Connection Maker	Summarizer & Deep Thinker	Vocab Builder	Sound Spotter	Character Analyzer	Word Artist	Time Keeper
	11 Mar	NO BOOK CLUB							
	18 Mar	NO BOOK CLUB — SPRING BREAK							
8	25 Mar	Ch 18-20	Summarizer & Deep Thinker	Vocab Builder	Sound Spotter	Character Analyzer	Word Artist	Connection Maker	Time Keeper
9	1 Apr	Ch 21-23	Vocab Builder	Sound Spotter	Character Analyzer	Word Artist	Connection Maker	Summarizer & Deep Thinker	Time Keeper
10	8 Apr	Ch 24-26	Sound Spotter	Character Analyzer	Word Artist	Connection Maker	Summarizer & Deep Thinker	Vocab Builder	Time Keeper
11	15 Apr	Ch 27-29	Character Analyzer	Word Artist	Connection Maker	Summarizer & Deep Thinker	Vocab Builder	Sound Spotter	Time Keeper
12	22 Apr	Ch 30-32	Word Artist	Connection Maker	Summarizer & Deep Thinker	Vocab Builder	Sound Spotter	Character Analyzer	Time Keeper
13	29 Apr	Ch 33-34	Connection Maker	Summarizer & Deep Thinker	Vocab Builder	Sound Spotter	Character Analyzer	Word Artist	Time Keeper
14	6 May	Ch 35-36	Summarizer & Deep Thinker	Vocab Builder	Sound Spotter	Character Analyzer	Word Artist	Connection Maker	Time Keeper
15	13 May	Ch 37	Vocab Builder	Sound Spotter	Character Analyzer	Word Artist	Connection Maker	Summarizer & Deep Thinker	Time Keeper
16	20 May	Ch 38	Sound Spotter	Character Analyzer	Word Artist	Connection Maker	Summarizer & Deep Thinker	Vocab Builder	Time Keeper

## Weekly Book Club Assignments, Group B (11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.)

Week	Date	Reading	Monica	Cristy	Esmeralda	Yulianna	Lily S.	Yariela	Lily L.
2	28 Jan	Ch 1-3	Summarizer	Deep Thinker	Vocab Builder	Sound Spotter	Character Analyzer	Word Artist	Connection Maker
3	4 Feb	Ch 4-5	Deep Thinker	Vocab Builder	Sound Spotter	Character Analyzer	Word Artist	Connection Maker	Summarizer
4	11 Feb	Ch 6-8	Vocab Builder	Sound Spotter	Character Analyzer	Word Artist	Connection Maker	Summarizer	Deep Thinker
5	18 Feb	Ch 9-11	Sound Spotter	Character Analyzer	Word Artist	Connection Maker	Summarizer	Deep Thinker	Vocab Builder
6	25 Feb	Ch 12-14	Character Analyzer	Word Artist	Connection Maker	Summarizer	Deep Thinker	Vocab Builder	Sound Spotter
7	4 Mar	Ch 15-17	Word Artist	Connection Maker	Summarizer	Deep Thinker	Vocab Builder	Sound Spotter	Character Analyzer
	11 Mar	NO BOOK CLUB							
	18 Mar	NO BOOK CLUB — SPRING BREAK							
8	25 Mar	Ch 18-20	Connection Maker	Summarizer	Deep Thinker	Vocab Builder	Sound Spotter	Character Analyzer	Word Artist
9	1 Apr	Ch 21-23	Summarizer	Deep Thinker	Vocab Builder	Sound Spotter	Character Analyzer	Word Artist	Connection Maker
10	8 Apr	Ch 24-26	Deep Thinker	Vocab Builder	Sound Spotter	Character Analyzer	Word Artist	Connection Maker	Summarizer
11	15 Apr	Ch 27-29	Vocab Builder	Sound Spotter	Character Analyzer	Word Artist	Connection Maker	Summarizer	Deep Thinker
12	22 Apr	Ch 30-32	Sound Spotter	Character Analyzer	Word Artist	Connection Maker	Summarizer	Deep Thinker	Vocab Builder
13	29 Apr	Ch 33-34	Character Analyzer	Word Artist	Connection Maker	Summarizer	Deep Thinker	Vocab Builder	Sound Spotter
14	6 May	Ch 35-36	Word Artist	Connection Maker	Summarizer	Deep Thinker	Vocab Builder	Sound Spotter	Character Analyzer
15	13 May	Ch 37	Connection Maker	Summarizer	Deep Thinker	Vocab Builder	Sound Spotter	Character Analyzer	Word Artist
16	20 May	Ch 38	Summarizer	Deep Thinker	Vocab Builder	Sound Spotter	Character Analyzer	Word Artist	Connection Maker

# 60-SECOND SUMMARIZER

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B A N U

Bank comes home drunk in the middle of the night and destroys all the photographs belongs to her past. Britt-Marie cleans up the mess next morning and gives Bank a beer as a gift. She also tells her about Liverpool supporters who never give up. A new boy named Max shows up and ask to join the soccer team. Vega disagrees at first but later Max insists on and proves himself by surviving after Vega's brutal behaves. Britt-Marie add his name to her list so he becomes a part of the team.

Later, officials from the district soccer association arrive and ask about Britt-Marie's licensed. She doesn't have a coaching license so the team cannot play in the January Cup. However, suddenly Bank shows up and volunteers to be coach because she has a license from when she played the national team. Bank becomes coach and immediately starts practice. She teaches players noisy soccer. kids shouts " I'm here " so she can understand where they are. Bank knows more about soccer than them despite being nearly blind. That night Britt-Marie is expecting Sven's visit she is excited and restless.

There is a knock at the door but it is Kent, not Sven.

Britt-Marie reminds her past with the brothers, Alf and Kent. They competed for her attentions, she choose Alf, the ambitious one to please her mother. However Alf cheated on her. Her mother died Kent return and become her whole life 40 years .

Kent tracked Britt-Marie by using her cash flows and find her in Borg. He apologizes and wants her back. He cries and begs. She agrees to see him tomorrow. that night, she sits alone on the balcony all night with her packed bags, not answering calls , just thinking.

# DEEP THINKER

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BANU

Q-1) Why do you think Bank destroys the photographs but then agrees to be coach?

Q-2) "if you can be heard then you exist" What does this frame mean beyond just soccer?

Q-3) Is Kent right? which would you choose and why?

# 60-SECOND SUMMARIZER

## MONICA

Bank comes home drunk and swearing, she knocks off all the pictures of her memories playing soccer, Britt Marie checks on her and cleans up.

At the recreation center, Karl gets another parcel, Britt Marie receives a letter for the team's registration and coach's license. She realizes she miss Sven.

Before practice, the boy who plays hockey demands to be part of the team, Omar challenges him and after a fight with Vega, Max earns a spot. At practice, Karl's truck headlights light the field.

A man and a woman show up at practice looking for Britt Marie. As soon as they found out Britt Marie was not a licensed coach, they try to discourage the team from participating in the January cup. Then, Bank interrupts saying she is a licensed coach and wants her name on the paperwork. Omar refuses the idea of having a blind coach, but Bank demonstrates is them who have no chance of winning. That evening at Bank's Kent knocks at the door.

Britt Marie realizes she will never be good enough for her mom, specially after the passing of her sister who was always consider the favorite.

The day after her mother's funeral, Britt Marie ran into Kent and she held on to him for a new beginning. Now, Kent pretends to persuade Britt Marie, to comeback despite the fact he betrayed her, never apologizes and continue belittling her.

# DEEP THINKER

CRISTY

1. Why is Britt Marie being more social with people?
2. Why do you think Bank decided to help the team?
3. Do you think Britt Marie still loves Kent?

# DEEP THINKER

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CRISTY

1. Why is Britt Marie being more social with people?

A: I think she lived in a bubble, first manipulated by her mother and then by her husband. Now that she feels free, she realizes she's capable of doing things for herself because she'd never been alone. Her mother just died when Kent went and found her. She feels free in Borg to be herself without being judged.

2. Why do you think Bank decided to help the team?

A: I think when Britt Marie asked her which team her father supported and if he never gave up, she remembered all the love she and her father had for soccer. Also, I think there's a history with Anika (as enemies) and that's why Bank is helping the team only for disturb Anika.

3. Do you think Britt Marie still loves Kent?

A: I don't think she loves him, but I think all the years together weigh on her and that she has always acted according to what she "SHOULD DO" without thinking about what she really wants.

# VOCABULARY BUILDER

IRA

Not yet submitted

# VOCABULARY BUILDER

ESMERALDA

Not yet submitted.

# SOUND SPOTTER

FLAVIA

**BANDAGED** verb past tense / adjective

BAN-dihj-id

/'bæn.dɪdʒ.ɪd/

Difficult: to say the ED at the end

“ If she notices Britt Marie’s bandaged hand she certainly says nothing about it.” P- 177

Ex: She has a bandaged arm.

**STARTLED** verb past tense/ adjective

STAAR-tɪd

/'stɑːrd(ə)ɪd/

Difficult: the ED at the end

“ He ducks and throws himself back, startled, stumbling over the dog and stepping neatly into the puddle.” P- 186

Ex: I gave a startled scream when I saw the cat.

# SOUND SPOTTER

FLAVIA

**ACCOMPLISHED** verb past tense/ adjective

uh-KOM-plisht

/ə'kæmpliʃt/

Difficult: long word and ED

“ Well, mission accomplished.”P-191

Ex: She is an accomplished dancer.

**WITHDRAWAL** noun/ verb

with-DRAA-uhlz

/wɪð'drɔ:əl/

Difficult: the TH sound

“ ...the accountant checked your cash withdrawals...”

Ex: I made a withdrawal from my savings account.

# SOUND SPOTTER

YULI ANNA

## **Menacingly** (adverb) [ˈMENəsingly]

From book: She waves her stick menacingly at the children and mutters. p 185

- In English, if a syllable is unstressed, its vowel usually becomes a reduced, neutral sound called a “schwa” /ə/.
- Stressed syllable → vowel is pronounced clearly, like in MEN of menacingly.
- Unstressed syllable → vowel is weak, quick, and neutral, like the second syllable -a- in menacingly, pronounced /ə/ instead of “ay” /eɪ/ or “i” /ɪ/.

### Example:

- banana → /bəˈnæ.nə/
  - o First syllable “ba” is unstressed → /bə/ (schwa)
  - o Second syllable “na” is stressed → /næ/
  - o Third syllable “na” is unstressed → /nə/ (schwa)

So in menacingly, the second syllable -a- is unstressed → pronounced /ə/, not /aɪ/.

Example: She looked menacingly when she burst into the room to check why kids were making so much noise.

## **Figment** [ˈfigmənt] noun

From book: When she hears the knock at the front door, she has been hoping for it for so long that at first she thinks it must be a figment of her imagination. P. 189

Why is the “g” in figment is pronounced /g/ (hard “g” like in go), and not /dʒ/ (like giant, gem, general). Here’s why:

### English spelling rules for “g”:

- Hard “g” /g/ usually occurs before a, o, u, or a consonant.
  - o Examples: go, garden, gun, girl
- Soft “g” /dʒ/ usually occurs before e, i, or y.
  - o Examples: gem, giant, gym

### In “figment”:

- The g comes before m, which is a consonant, not e/i/y → so it stays hard /g/.

Example: The dragon in the story was just a figment of my mind.

# CHARACTER ANALYZER

MARIA

## **Character: Britt-Marie**

### **Trait: Caring**

Caring is a person who is compassionate, empathetic, and shows kindness or concern for others.

Evidence from the text: Bank comes home spectacularly drunk somewhere between midnight and dawn.

Britt-Marie has compassion for Bank and she is there to help him, she take care of him then she just fetches a broom and starts sweeping up the glass.

Britt Marie shows that she cares about others, even if she doesn't always say it directly. She continue helping the children with their activities and support them. Even though she doesn't fully understand soccer, she still takes responsibility and tries her best to help.

Additionally, her willingness to continue helping the people of Borg, especially the children.

# CHARACTER ANALYZER

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LILY S.

Not yet submitted.

# WORD ARTIST

.....  
LISA

## **Scene: Bank comes home drunk**

It's almost dawn when Bank comes home after a long night of drinking. The night is dark and cold, but the sun is about to rise and light the day. Bank is very drunk and struggles to use her key to open the door, missing the lock again and again. The smells of alcohol follows her, strong like a nail polish remover. She is carrying a pizza box that tastes a pepperoni and cheese.

She enters inside the house; the entryway is dark and quiet, there are a few pieces of antique furniture, there is also an old wooden stairs with pale wallpaper, and many framed pictures hanging on the walls. Bank walks unsteadily in this room that is full of lovely memories. Suddenly, she grabs a picture from the wall and throws it to the floor. The loud and sharp sound of glass breaking echoes the entire house. Then she pulls down more frames. It feels like she is not only breaking the frames, but something inside her.

After one hour, she gets tired. She sits on the floor, surrounded by broken glass and wrinkled photos. Then she slowly falls asleep.

# WORD ARTIST

YARIELA

Not yet submitted

# CONNECTION MAKER

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MARIANA

I chose the connection between Britt-Marie and Bank because their relationship becomes a true friendship.

Britt-Marie and Bank both face grief, loss, and big life changes. Bank struggles with losing her football career, her vision, and her father, and she hides her pain with anger and isolation. Britt-Marie feels broken after her failed marriage and her sister's death, and she must learn how to live independently for the first time.

In a way, life brings them together. They connected during a difficult moment in both of their lives, when they felt lost, without direction, and without hope. Even though they are very different, they understand each other's pain, and their friendship grows through shared struggles.

Britt-Marie slowly starts to face her problems instead of hiding behind cleaning, showing personal growth. The balcony at Bank's house becomes a safe space where she can feel calm and at peace.

Overall, their story shows that friendship can come at the right time. Through their connection, Britt-Marie and Bank help each other and start a new life.

# CONNECTION MAKER

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LILY L.

## **Everyone deserves to be believed in!"**

The story of the soccer coach's license is a beautiful reminder that no one is ever truly "finished," even when the world has stopped looking at them. In the town of Borg, there is a woman named Bank. To most people, she is just a shadow of her former self someone who is partially blind, struggles with alcohol, and seems to have lost her way. The community has largely looked past her, seeing only her current problems instead of the person she used to be.

Everything changes when the local children are told they can no longer play soccer. A representative from a large sports organization arrives to shut the team down because they lack an "official" coach with a "proper" license. It is a cold, bureaucratic moment where rigid rules and paperwork threaten to take away the only thing these kids have left.

Just as hope is fading, Bank steps forward. Despite her messy life and her personal struggles, she reveals that she still holds a professional coaching license from her days as a champion. In that moment, she isn't just a "broken" person anymore; she becomes the only one who can save the children's future. Her old license acts like a shield, forcing the officials to let the kids keep playing.

I made this connection because it reminds me of how we often judge people by their worst days or their current health, forgetting the lifetime of skills and history they carry inside. In real life, there are so many people like Bank, teachers, experts, and specialists, who are sidelined because society only sees their age or their difficulties.

This story confirms my belief that a person's value never disappears, no matter what difficulties they face. Bank and the children ended up saving each other: the kids gave Bank a reason to remember who she was, and her professional history gave the kids a chance to belong. It shows that even when a life feels broken, there is often a "hidden license" or a secret talent waiting for the right moment to come back to light.