

# To All the Boys I've Loved Before by Jenny Han

## SESSION #5 (CH. 25-32)—Summer 2026 ESL360 Book Club

This summer we are reading *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* by Jenny Han. The novel is about a teenage girl navigating first love, family, and the slow process of figuring out who she is. Each week's discussion is also framed by a short passage from *The Laws of Human Nature* by Robert Greene.

Robert Greene is one of the most widely read authors in the world. His books have sold millions of copies and have been translated into dozens of languages. His book *The Laws of Human Nature*, published in 2018, became a number one New York Times bestseller immediately. The book draws on psychology, philosophy, history, and biography to identify eighteen patterns in human behavior that shape what we do, often without our awareness. Greene has a talent for taking difficult ideas from scientists and philosophers and making them clear and useful for everyday readers. The book is not a textbook. It reads more like a guide to understanding the people around you and the person you are still becoming.

You do not need to read Greene's book. Each week, one short passage is provided on your session sheet. Think of it as a camera lens. Jenny Han shows us a story. Greene provides a way of looking at it. The laws selected relate directly to what happens in the novel. Lara Jean is a teenager figuring out who she is and what she wants. The people around her illustrate, in real and recognizable ways, the very patterns Greene spent years studying. Reading the novel through Greene's lens makes the story richer and our discussions deeper and more interesting.

### Reading Schedule

| Session | Date           | Chapters  | Theme                                 |
|---------|----------------|-----------|---------------------------------------|
| 1       | June 3, 2026   | Ch. 1–6   | <i>The Law of Repression</i>          |
| 2       | June 10, 2026  | Ch. 7–12  | <i>The Law of Irrationality</i>       |
| 3       | June 17, 2026  | Ch. 13–18 | <i>The Law of Death Denial</i>        |
| 4       | June 24, 2026  | Ch. 19–24 | <i>The Law of Shortsightedness</i>    |
| 5       | July 1, 2026   | Ch. 25–32 | <i>The Law of Covetousness</i>        |
| 6       | July 8, 2026   | Ch. 33–40 | <i>The Law of Role-Playing</i>        |
| 7       | July 15, 2026  | Ch. 41–48 | <i>The Law of Envy</i>                |
| 8       | July 22, 2026  | Ch. 49–56 | <i>The Law of Compulsive Behavior</i> |
| 9       | July 29, 2026  | Ch. 57–64 | <i>The Law of Conformity</i>          |
| 10      | August 5, 2026 | Ch. 65–72 | <i>The Law of Aimlessness</i>         |



### Your Weekly Assignment:

Before each session, read the assigned chapters and review the discussion questions on this sheet. Think about each question and jot down a few notes of your own thoughts in the space provided. You do not need to prepare a formal answer. You simply need to come ready to share your perspective. The more thinking you bring to the room, the richer our conversation will be.

## SESSION 5: CHAPTERS 25-3 & THE LAW OF COVETOUSNESS

**Covetousness** is a strong desire to have something that seems out of reach, especially something that might be taken away or that someone else appears to want.

### FROM THE NOVEL

*"This is the first time I've walked down the school hallway holding hands with a boy. It should feel momentous, special, but it doesn't, because it's not real. Honestly, it feels like nothing. Emily Nussbaum does a double take when she sees us."* Ch. 25

### GREENE'S LAW

Robert Greene writes that human desire is shaped by one powerful force: we want most what we cannot easily have. When something is always available to us, we stop appreciating it. But when it becomes scarce, when it might be taken away, or when someone else seems to want it, our desire for it suddenly grows stronger. This is not a flaw in a few people; it is a basic feature of human psychology. Greene calls it **covetousness**. It is the deep, instinctive desire to have what is just out of reach. We see it in the way we suddenly want something more the moment we think we might lose it. We see it in the way another person's love or attention becomes more precious when it is no longer guaranteed. Understanding this helps us ask an honest question. When we want someone, is that desire genuine? Or is it simply a reaction to the fear of missing out?

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do Peter and Lara Jean pretend to be boyfriend and girlfriend? Are their motivations the same or different? Greene says desire grows strongest when something seems scarce or might be taken away. What does Peter's and Lara Jean's relationship reveal about how the law of covetousness works in practice?
2. In Chapter 26, Lara Jean tells Josh that she and Peter could talk for hours and that he really gets her. Josh squints, says he never saw Peter as the reading type, and walks away. This is not the reaction Lara Jean was hoping for. What was she hoping Josh would feel, and how does this connect to what Greene describes about desire and scarcity?
3. Greene says the pull toward something that is just out of reach is universal. Have you ever found yourself wanting something more the moment it seemed less available?

## SESSION 5: VOCABULARY

Chapters 25–32 & The Law of Covetousness



**double take** n. /ˈdʌb.əl teɪk/ DUB-ul tayk

If you do a double take when you see or hear something surprising, you react slowly because you need a moment to process what you have seen or heard.

*"Emily Nussbaum does a double take when she sees us."* Ch. 25



**crow** v. /kroʊ/ kroh

If someone crows, they are loudly pleased about something and show this in a boastful or triumphant way. Note: crow is also the name of a black bird.

*"Now that Peter and I have everything worked out, I can triumphantly crow all about it."* Ch. 26



**smirk** n. /smɜːrk/ smurk

A smirk is a smile that expresses satisfaction or pleasure about something bad that has happened to someone else, or about a secret advantage you have.

*"When Genevieve's back on the sidelines, Peter has a satisfied smirk on."* Ch. 29



**gleefully** adv. /ˈɡliː.fəl.i/ GLEE-fuh-lee

If you do something gleefully, you do it with great delight, often at someone else's expense.

*"'Can't touch me,' she says gleefully."* (Ch. 31)



**quantify** v. /ˈkwɒn.tɪ.faɪ/ KWAHN-tih-fy

If you quantify something, you measure it and express it as a number or amount.

*"I don't feel like it's my responsibility to quantify myself for them."* (Ch. 32)

## SESSION 5: GRAMMAR

Chapters 25–32 & The Law of Covetousness

### Question Formation

In English questions, the auxiliary verb (do, does, did, am, are, is, will, would, can, could, may, must, might) comes BEFORE the subject.

Form: Auxiliary verb + subject + BASE form of main verb?

Statement: She likes Peter. → Question: Does she like Peter?

Statement: They went home. → Question: Did they go home? (did + BASE form, not past tense)

Statement: Come to my party. → Question: Will you come to my party?

Statement: He ate an entire pizza. → Question: Did he eat an entire pizza/ (did + BASE form, not past tense)

Common errors:

- ✗ "Why she left?"      ✓ "Why did she leave?"
- ✗ "Where you are going?"      ✓ "Where are you going?"
- ✗ "What he said?"      ✓ "What did he say?"
- ✗ "Did he cleaned?"      ✓ "Did he clean?"

Subject questions — when the **subject** is the question word, no auxiliary verb is needed:

- ✓ "Who kissed Peter?" (Who = subject)      ✗ "Who did kiss Peter?"
- ✓ "What happened next?" (What = subject)      ✗ "What did happen next?"

### From the book:

"Are you seriously taking the bus every day?" Ch. 25

→ auxiliary (are) before subject (you)

"What do you guys even talk about?" Ch. 26

→ do + subject + base verb

"Have you lined up an internship for the spring?" Ch. 30

→ present perfect question



## SESSION 5: PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Chapters 25–32 & The Law of Covetousness

### Vocabulary

1. Fill in: She did a \_\_\_\_\_ when she saw him — she had to look twice to believe it was really him.
2. Fill in: He couldn't wait to \_\_\_\_\_ about his promotion to everyone in the office.
3. Fill in: He had a satisfied \_\_\_\_\_ on his face, as if he already knew what was going to happen.
4. Fill in: The children ran around the yard \_\_\_\_, splashing each other with the hose.
5. Fill in: It's hard to \_\_\_\_ exactly how much a happy childhood is worth.

### Recycled — Session 4

6. Fill in: Their meeting was \_\_\_\_\_. Neither of them had planned to be in that park at the same time.

### Grammar — Question Formation

7. Correct: "Why she left without saying goodbye?"
8. Write the question: Statement — She is taking the bus every day. → Question:
9. Subject or object question? Explain: "Who kissed Peter?"
10. Correct: "What he said to her?" Hint: Form = Auxiliary verb + subject + BASE form of main verb?

### Recycled — Third Conditional, Session #2

11. Complete: If Peter hadn't grabbed her hand in the hallway, Genevieve \_\_\_\_\_ (not/notice) them together.

## SESSION 5: PRACTICE ANSWERS

Chapters 25–30 & The Law of Covetousness

### Vocabulary

1. Fill in: She did a **double-take** when she saw him — she had to look twice to believe it was really him.
2. Fill in: He couldn't wait to **crow** about his promotion to everyone in the office.
3. Fill in: He had a satisfied **smirk** on his face, as if he already knew what was going to happen.
4. Fill in: The children ran around the yard **gleefully**, splashing each other with the hose.
5. Fill in: It's hard to **quantify** exactly how much a happy childhood is worth.

### Recycled — Session 4

6. Fill in: Their meeting was **impromptu**. Neither of them had planned to be in that park at the same time.

### Grammar — Question Formation

7. Correct: "Why **did** she ~~left~~ **leave** without saying goodbye?"
8. Write the question: Statement — She is taking the bus every day. → Question: **Is she taking the bus every day?**
9. Subject or object question? Explain: "Who kissed Peter?" **This is a subject question. When the subject is the question word, no auxiliary verb is needed.**
10. Correct: "What he said to her?" **What did he say to her?** Remember: Form = Auxiliary verb + subject + BASE form of main verb?

### Recycled — Third Conditional (from Session #2)

11. Complete: If Peter hadn't grabbed her hand in the hallway, Genevieve **would not have noticed** them together.