

John Marsden

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John Marsden has an incredible insight into the teenage mind and in his novels constantly succeeds in creating a sense of connection between reader and character. Through examining a number of novels written by John Marsden it became obvious that since the publication of his first novel "So Much To Tell You" Marsden has continued his successful portrayal of teenage characters. In a majority of his text Marsden's main focus audience is very much the female teenager. The text type that he utilizes in the formation of his writing promotes this fact. The text type that Marsden tends to lean towards in his work is first person narrative where the protagonist in the novel is female.

Marsden's first published novel "So Much To Tell You", the follow up to this first novel "Take My Word For It" and "Letters From The Inside" are all examples of the similar text type that Marsden incorporates into his writing. All three novels adopt a text type that resembles a journal and provide excellent foundations for extensive insight into the protagonists in the novel and in general everyday teenage life.

In a majority of his work Marsden utilizes a text type that nourishes his reader's minds and promotes emotional connections to be built between reader and character. Marsden moulds the text type to fit into the context of his writing. By using a format in his work that resembles a journal or diary Marsden creates a sense of intimacy within his writing. This intimacy plays a huge role in capturing his readers and drawing them into the writing and into the characters that he has created.

The journal can play a huge role in a teenage girl's life and by using this type of format in a lot of his writing Marsden's focus audience seems to be, a lot of the time the teenage girl. Within some of his early work including his first novel "So Much To Tell You" and the follow up "Take My Word For It" the journal style

of writing that Marsden employs in his work has a powerful impact on his readers. It opens up opportunities in which he can provide insight into the deepest feelings of the protagonist.

“I don’t know what I’m doing here. Well, I do really. It’s because I was getting nowhere at the hospital. I have been sent here to learn to talk again. Sent here because my mother can’t stand my silent presence at home. Sent here because of my face, I suppose. I don’t know.” “So Much To Tell You” is the story of Marina, a girl who does not talk, a girl who is having to face the real world again after being away from it for so long. Marsden’s novel explores the everyday life of Marina while she is at boarding school and provides amazing insight into the teenage mind and how teenage girls interpret and deal with the world around them.

“So Much To Tell You” is framed solely around the journal entries of Marina while she is at boarding school. Her entries provide an excellent insight into the world and life of teenage girls in a dorm environment and explore the different ways in which individuals deal with what is happening around them. Each girl in the dorm takes on a different role in Marina’s journal. Through Marina’s journal entries Marsden explores the ways in which girls view each other, the character of Marina offers a lot of insight into the different personalities surrounding her in the dorm.

Through his use of the journal or diary text type Marsden allows himself the opportunity to explore the deeper and more personal feelings of the protagonist. This particular text type allows Marsden to lead his writing off along a different tangent away from the normal context of a novel. This style of writing promotes insight into Marsden’s characters to an extent that other text type may not and provides

foundations for first person narrative within his writing, which also works to yield extra insight into the personalities, which Marsden presents in his writing.

Marsden uses the character of Marina not only to explore the thoughts of a fourteen-year old girl who is emotionally challenged, but also utilizes her character to provide grounds for the exploration of teenage life in general. Throughout the collection of Marina's journal entries common teenage issues are explored and dealt with. By incorporating this aspect into his writing Marsden provides a common ground between the characters in his writing and his readers. This is a common trait in Marsden's work, by promoting this relationship between his readers and his writing he encloses his readers in the world of the novel and therefore gives them a means of connection making the novel easier for them to read and relate to.

Marsden's amazing ability to write the way that a teenage girl thinks is expressed endlessly as the novel "So Much To Tell You" progresses. Throughout the novel Marsden explores issues dealt with by teenage girls and creates real characters that his readers can relate to. By using the character of Marina as his sole tool for the portrayal of the other girls in the dorm Marsden is able to examine the traits of the girls from an "insiders" point of view. Although Marina is different to the other girls in the dorm and she is very much an outsider the insight that she provides could not be offered through any other text type. The perspective that John Marsden has created through his writing could not be offered through any other style of writing and still provide the incredibly believable insight into the lives of the girls in the dorm.

By conveying the story of Marina as well as the other girls in the dorm through the journal of Marina Marsden leads his writing away from the common outsider's view of the world of a teenage girl. His readers are not confronted with an outsider's view of the world, an adult's view and in particular a male's

view. In a section of "Everything I Know About Writing" called "Banality" Marsden explores the fact that so many writers are unable to write about and portray women characters convincingly. He introduces the fact that so many female characters seem two-dimensional and tend to not have any connections or links to the real world. Readers are unable to recognise the character as a person and therefore do not get involved in the story or character.

Marsden himself overcomes these common downfalls in his writing and has promoted his ability to create realistic female characters in his writing very much through the text type of his work. Again the format of the journal can be sighted as the prominent tool in Marsden's understanding of the female character, however this aspect on its own is purely not enough to aid the successful portrayal of the female teenager.

"So Much To Tell You" was the first novel published by John Marsden and won the 1988 "Children's book of the Year Award", as well as several other prestigious awards, including the "Christopher Mendal Award" in America. The novel was one of Australia's biggest selling books ever. "So Much To Tell You" has now been published in sixteen different countries in eleven different languages. These facts alone help to portray the popularity of Marsden's writing and his ability to relate to his readers.

For many who read the book the content was too strong. One Sydney reviewer labeled the book as "the most pernicious book I have ever read". Other reviewers however were full of praise for Marsden's novel, calling it "unforgettable" and "absolutely shattering". The general acclaim of the book seemed to point towards the fact that many adults who read the book were unnerved by the powerful insight into the character of Marina and the other girls in her dorm. Teenage readers however, seem to thrive on this

amazing novel, young people loved it. John Marsden has been described as the “poet laureate of Australian teenagers”.

Marsden has an incredible ability to draw his readers into the world, which his characters are a part of. He takes advantage of common emotions or problems that his readers may be dealing with, pressures of life itself, school, friends and inserts these aspects of everyday life into his writing creating an atmosphere which entices his readers to become involved with the characters of his novels. By doing this Marsden makes the world that he creates within his writing seem real to his readers.

With the very first diary entry of Marina John Marsden examines a common problem that young people have to endure as part of growing up. He explores the extreme pressures inflicted on teenagers when beginning a new school and how young people deal with being the “new kid”. The pressures that have to be dealt with by a teenage girl trying to fit in are explored well through this first diary entry of Marina. Right away Marsden creates a certain kind of connection between the characters of his novels and his readers, which seems to have been taken on as a trade mark within his writing.

The descriptions and opinions of the other girls in the dorm that Marina expresses in the journal are an excellent portrayal of the ways in which girls constantly judge each other. In the early stages of the novel Marina spends a lot of time simply just watching and listening to the girls in her dorm, she actually gains extra insight into their lives because no one really goes to any effort to keep things from her. Marina is not seen as a threat by the other girls because she doesn't talk and she is viewed as being at the bottom of the “pecking order” in the dorm.

A definite 'pecking order' is represented amongst the girls within the dorm. There is always someone on the top who has the most influence and there is constantly a struggle to move up the ranks and gain more status. The struggle for power that Marsden represents and explores through the characters in "So Much To Tell You" and "Take My Word For It" is very much female orientated. The methods used to gain power can be easily related to by teenage girls reading Marsden's work and recognised as common traits in female character. The bitchiness between the girls and the everyday petty arguments in the dorm give the characters in the novel a sense of realness.

Within his characters Marsden has captured the essence of how teenage girls utilize their power-base and the means that they use in order to gain their power. An example of this that stands out in the text is the character of Kate who Marina describes as being "loud and kind of crude; her main interests in life are boys and sex, or sex and boys (it depends)." The character of Kate is used by Marsden to explore the ideals that some girls think they should live up to. Her character is also used to shed light on the fact that teenage girls are often stereotyped and criticized by adults for being obsessed with boys. Through Marina's opinion of Kate Marsden again shows an understanding of teenage girls and how they think. Latter in the novel Marina hints that she is pretty sure that Kate acts the way that she does to try and live up to the standards of those surrounding her, wanting to impress them and gain their respect.

This is a common trait among girls. Although girls rarely boast in the way that boys or men do about their achievements girls to a certain extent confide in their friends and tell them of their accomplishments. The character of Kate is used to examine the way that some girls tend to embellish the truth to play up what has happened to them or to make themselves sound better.

At one stage Kate boasts to the rest of the dorm after lights out about losing her virginity to a boy at a dance during the holidays. Sexual experience amongst girls and their peers plays an extremely dominant role in influencing the way that they act around others in their peer group. Readers witness what is probably a common reaction amongst girls when being confronted with the pressures of trying to “keep up” with friends or peers when it comes to important issues such as sex and relationships. Marina expresses the opinion that Kate is being too open about her private life, which probably reflects the likely opinion of the other girls in the dorm. There is no mention of any of the other girls voicing their opinions out in the open, they are probably avoiding a fight or hurting Kate's feelings.

The character of Kate is also utilized to represent the need that most girls feel to talk about how they are feeling and what is going on in their life. Gossip plays a large role in the day to day lives of most females. It is just one of those things that girls especially can't seem to do without. Gossip is an important factor in communication between girls, it is how they relate to each other and deal with a lot of their problems. Marsden has recognised the importance of gossip in relationships between females and recognizes this fact in his writing incorporating the concept of gossip into his work making it an important dimension in his characters.

Marsden's targeted audience can relate to the concept of gossip very easily. Gossip is a major form of communication between teenage girls and plays a huge role in the formation of ideals, opinions and relationships. By incorporating gossip into his writing Marsden presents a character that seems real, through the use of gossip he provides a foundation of what real life is like. Gossip relates the character back to the reader and the world that they come from. By creating this continual link between his characters and his readers Marsden makes the characters that he has created seem part of the world that the reader is from,

the character becomes a real person, therefore allowing the reader to be absorbed in the characters and their actions.

In "So Much To Tell You" Marsden expresses his amazing ability of insight into the teenage mind continuously. He continues to utilize this ability in the follow up novel to "So Much To Tell You" called "Take My Word For It", which gives readers another perspective of Marina's dorm through the eyes of Lisa. In Marina's journal Lisa is portrayed as very cool and collected, Marina looked up to her and in a way idolized Lisa for her courage to speak what she thought and always appear so strong. Marina thought that Lisa pretty much had it all, she was pretty popular around school, she was great at sport and got good grades, she was respected by teaches and a lot was expected of her.

Throughout the course of "So Much To Tell You" readers are able recognise some downfalls in Lisa's life through Marina's portrayal of her and although Marina respects Lisa a great deal in some journal entries she does express concerns about the way that Lisa is coping. "Take My Word For It" provides a look at the interior of the strong, determined Lisa and provides readers with content that makes them realise that they can never judge anything by it's face value.

Although Lisa, as portrayed by Marina comes across as tough and ready to handle anything that is thrown her way in a mature and rational way readers gain a deeper insight into Lisa's personality under the tough front that she puts on. She isn't as tough as she makes out; she feels pressure just like everyone else and sometimes feels like she does not belong.

“...you know what Tracy said to me today? She said: “The reason you’ve got no friends is that you don’t tell anyone your problems”...I hate the way they tell everyone every single detail about themselves.” Lisa is criticized by Tracy for not opening up and talking to the other girls in the dorm. Lisa feels that talking won’t help solve her problems so instead she bottles everything up inside. This is seen as a form of rejection by the other girls in the dorm, talking and sharing their problems is the essence of their relationships with one another.

Through “Take My Word For It” John Marsden again explores the importance of talking about problems and discussing feelings and the influence that these factors have on teenage girls and their friendships. He takes into consideration the unspoken bond between girl friends that they will have no secrets from one another. His target audience, being teenage girls is able to easily relate to this concept and understand what the protagonist of the novel is going through. By creating this connection Marsden establishes closeness between his readers and Lisa. The relationship that Marsden promotes between reader and novel is the key to his success when it comes to relating to young people, in particular teenage girls.

In “Everything I Know About Writing” in the section titled “Sex and Death” Marsden investigates the fact that sex plays a large, prominent role in the everyday lives of readers. The issues surrounding sex are among the largest in society and because of this Marsden stresses the importance of these issues to the writer. Marsden believes that a good writer must confront sex and deal with the issues surrounding it in a meaningful way.

“...I’ve been thinking about Rhys and when we were dancing... The way his hands kept touching me, and that little bit of extra pressure sometimes, just when you don’t want it and where you don’t want it. OK, I

know I'm lying – I wanted it.” Towards the end of “Take My Word For It” Lisa begins to express her feelings towards her boyfriend Rhys and the confusing new emotions that she is experiencing. Through this entry in Lisa's journal Marsden is incorporating the all-important issue of sex into his writing along with some of the different issues that go along with it. Marsden has molded the concept of sex and shaped it to fit into the context of his writing by making it suit the character of Lisa. Marsden writes about sexual urges in a way that is not confronting and in a way that can be related to by his major audience, teenage girls.

Again Marsden used the journal format when writing “Take My Word For It” which of course contributes to the insight that Marsden provides into the character of Lisa. Exactly how much insight into a character that this particular text type provides is made more apparent in “Take My Word For It” because a point of view from Marina has already been given. When reading Lisa's journal entries Marsden's audience is able to pick up on differences of opinion and fact between the two corresponding journals. By doing this Marsden promotes the fact that individuals express different opinions and deal with different situations in different ways.

Through his readers being able to pick up on these distinct differences between the two characters and their opinions Marsden is exploring a concept that is extremely important to teenage girls, their sense of individuality and identity. Being their “own person” is probably one of the most prominent elements incorporated in growing up for teenagers and by touching lightly on this subject Marsden plays on his reader's mindset, again creating the all important connection between the writing and the reader.

Marsden uses an extremely similar text type within his novel “Letters From The Inside” in which he explores the relationship between two girls, Tracy and Mandy solely through their letters to one another.

Letters represent a closeness between girls in particular and by utilizing this text type Marsden creates a sense of intimacy between the characters that he has created and his readers.

Through his use of the letters Marsden creates a certain kind of bond between his readers and the two protagonists of the novel. While reading the letters Marsden's audience feels almost privileged to be reading the letters between the two girls. In places the letters reveal emotions that resemble real life so closely that they remind the reader of their most sensitive and private moments. By utilizing this aspect of the letters Marsden draws his readers into the characters of his novel and again stimulates feelings of connection between reader and text. By creating this connection Marsden recognizes the fact that in order for a reader to relate to a piece of writing they need to feel connected in some shape or form to the characters that they are reading about.

The relationship that forms between Tracy and Mandy throughout the course of the novel mirrors the close friendships that teenage girls seem to form with each other. As the novel progresses readers sense a certain kind of bond beginning to form between Mandy and Tracy, a bond that Marsden's focus audience can understand and relate to. The two girls begin to open up to one another and express their deepest thoughts and secrets in their letters. The letters reflect a kind of diary or journal, which helps reflect the closeness that is forming between the girls as their written relationship continues and grows.

Readers get the impression that Mandy tells Tracy a lot of stuff that she would never dream of telling anyone else. From the beginning of the relationship between the two readers recognise that Mandy uses her early letters to Tracy to express worries about her older brother Steve. And in the later letters from Mandy, when she knows that Tracy is in a kind of prison, she expresses these problems more. She delves deeper

into her feelings and tells Tracy exactly the way that she is feeling. The fact that they have never met, that they live in two very different worlds gives both of them the kind of freedom that they need to express their true feelings.

This ideal is one that most of Marsden's young readers would be able to relate to. Every teenage girl goes through a stage in her life where she feels that she can not relate to anyone around her, especially her parents and the letters between the two girls opens up a gateway for emotions to come pouring out.

The two girls begin to write to each other when Mandy answered an add in a magazine that Tracy put in as a joke. At first the letters are light hearted and fun. The girls write to each other about guys, family problems and school, they basically just compare everyday life with one and other and in a way offer each other support and advice. Marsden utilizes everyday activities and issues to create a sense of light-heartedness within the girls' letters. By doing this he doesn't simply focus on the serious, emotionally draining moments within his text.

Marsden uses little comic moments in his writing, like when Tracy makes a crack in one of her early letters about shrinking Steve's condoms in the microwave as punishment for being such a pig to take readers away from the heavy material that he is confronting them with in the main body of the girls' letters. Moments like this give readers a break from the depressing truth that is being put to them and gives them chance to re-vamp their energy before having to deal with the next emotionally driven moment that will appear next in the letters.

At this stage in the relationship between the two girls readers are able to recognise that Tracy does not like Mandy discussing her problems about her brother in their letters. Up until this point Tracy has basically ignored Mandy's problems with Steve. Readers are able to pick up on Tracy's reluctance to discuss anything negative in either of their lives. At this stage in the novel readers have only witnessed a positive Tracy who seems to have the perfect life and who has a picture perfect view of the world around her.

Mandy begins to get frustrated with the perfect life that Tracy seems to have and sometimes even seems jealous; readers recognise the fact that Tracy's life seems too perfect. In her early letters Marsden creates a certain kind of fakeness in Tracy's character, he manages to add an element to her character that sets his readers cogs of suspicion in motion, readers realise that there is something missing, something not quite right. Marsden utilizes the common behavior of girls in the real world to communicate his betrayal of the character of Tracy. By writing in this way Marsden is deliberately creating a connection between the characters of his novel to his main target audience, teenage girls.

"...I need to keep writing to you. Our letters have been good for me. They help me keep going." When Tracy stops writing back to her Mandy begins to miss the contact. Although she also seems worried for her friend readers get the impression that maybe Mandy is missing being able to confide in Tracy more than missing Tracy herself.

The fact Mandy and Tracy know each other only through their letters and that they have never met in person tends to influence readers making them believe that perhaps Mandy is missing the therapeutic side of the letters more than Tracy herself. From the very beginning of the written correspondence between the two girls Mandy began to divulge things in her letters to Tracy that she obviously doesn't and wouldn't tell

anyone else. As the correspondence between the two girls continues throughout the novel readers begin to gain a stronger sense that these letters play a crucial role in Mandy's life and help her face the world around her.

Throughout the novel John Marsden uses everyday events to lighten the letter up. While the letters contain the thoughts of two girls and deal with extremely serious events in their lives Marsden seems to have the ability to pick the mood up and turn it upside down surprising his readers by making them laugh. An excellent example of how Marsden does this is a moment in one of Mandy's letters when she is retelling the day's events at school. Mandy describes a boy in her class called Darren who has unbelievable abilities when it comes to doing weird and disgusting things with his body. She mentions that he can fart "Baa Baa Black Sheep and that he has an amazingly big mouth, which he likes to shove objects in and then take them out again. On this particular day Darren and his huge mouth were challenged with an exceptionally large apple. It got stuck and he nearly passed out because he couldn't breathe, the teacher had to cut the apple out bit by bit.

The way that Marsden incorporates little humorous moments like the one mentioned above into his writing can be related back to his book "Everything I Know About Writing", which is a teaching aid for writers. In a section called "Good for a Laugh" he explores the need of humour in writing and examines the effect that a little bit of laughter can have on the way that readers relate to the piece of writing. Marsden explores the fact that almost every successful book or film uses humour in some way or another. He touches on how Shakespeare used humour in his plays and that he obviously understood the importance of humour to keep the audience interested and entertained. Shakespeare used a fool or a clown to gain this element in nearly all of his plays.

The way that Marsden utilizes humour in his writing is similar to that of Shakespeare. Through his characters of the fool and the clown in his many plays Shakespeare employed humour as an essential tool in the telling of his story and the portrayal of what the underside of his play was exploring. Through the humour in his writing Shakespeare depicts the seriousness of what he is trying to explore and uses the comical characters in his plays to examine the main motives in the plays. By doing this Shakespeare managed to create a certain kind of lightness in his plays, by using humour he is able to explore issues that otherwise would seem extremely confronting. Through the use of humour Shakespeare avoided swamping his audience with total seriousness and managed to explore the main focus of his plays on a lighter note, therefore not confronting his audience with solemn, long-faced gloom.

Marsden uses humour in his writing to the same effect. While most of Marsden's novel's have a main focus of exploring serious teenage issues he uses little moments of humour with-in the text to make it easier for his readers to obtain connections to the characters in his writing. By using moments in his writing like Mandy's story about the boy in her class Marsden relates the characters that he has created in his text back to the real world that his readers come from. Through the use of humour Marsden is able to put forward the issues explored in his writing to his audience in a way that is not confronting. His readers are not constantly challenged with the seriousness of his writing, but are able to escape from the daunting issues explored in Marsden's writing through the small humorous moments in his text.

Through this section in "Everything I Know About Writing" Marsden expresses the importance of allowing readers a break before launching into the next emotionally draining segment of the story. He states that humour gives the readers breathing space, a rest before they are thrown into another emotional stage in the

novel. "Humour can give a story or a character more sweetness". Humour can create a sense of warmth within the story, making it easier for the reader to relate to the writing.

Marsden also examines the fact that by using humour, the climax of the paragraph, chapter, or even the story is put off a little longer, therefore helping to create a sense of anticipation within the reader. Leading back again to Shakespeare's writing it is easy to recognise that Shakespeare employed humour in his plays to create exactly this effect. Humour makes up a large portion of the text in Shakespeare's plays.

Shakespeare utilizes humour even in his tragedies; he seems to use humour as a kind of padding in his plays to accompany the main issues that are being explored through his writing.

Marsden utilizes very similar text types within his writing and uses them to his advantage in order to gain maximum insight into the teenage point of view and way of life. He employs everyday aspects of life in his writing to create a sense of understanding and connection within the readers of his work. Connection between his readers and his characters play a large role in Marsden's writing and is an important tool in the formation of understanding within his readers. Marsden has an amazing ability to provide an extensive insight into the world of teenage girls and he uses the text type of journal entries and letters to extend this insight.

Reflection Statement:

When beginning the research for this major work I decided to solely focus upon Marsden's series of "Tomorrow When the War Began". The series has been a favorite of mine since primary school and I immediately leaned towards the series as the focus of my major work because I knew that I would enjoy writing about this particular series, I also knew that I was able to relate to the novels. As I went through the process of re-reading the series I soon began to realise that there were so many different aspects that I was able to explore through the series. There were simply too many different elements within the series to try and examine absolutely everything that John Marsden touches on in his writing.

I finally managed to narrow down all the different options, which Marsden presents within his writing for exploration and decided upon a particular aspect for main focus of my final essay. The main focus of my work explores the stunning ability that John Marsden has to relate to teenage readers and the amazing impact that he makes when taking on the role of a teenage girl in his writing.

After re-reading the "Tomorrow When the War Began" series I realised that there was a broader spectrum within Marsden's writing when it came to taking on the role of a teenage girl. I began to remember all the other novels that I had read over the years written by John Marsden and finally it hit me and I realised that nearly every novel that I have read of his was written from the perspective of a teenage girl. This realisation opened up a whole other jar of possibilities; this realisation made the concept of a middle-aged man writing as a teenage girl a lot easier to explore.

After re-reading a number of his other books including “So Much To Tell You”, “Take My Word For It”, “Letters From The Inside” and “Winter” the extent to which Marsden incorporates the female perspective into his writing became more apparent. As Marsden’s characters grow and change throughout the novel so to does the view of the reader. Through his incredible use of emotion amongst his characters Marsden creates a sense of connection between his readers and his characters. Marsden has the ability to draw his readers into the characters that he creates. Through this ability Marsden’s readers become intimately involved in the lives of the characters in his writing, forming the important connection between reader and character that is so prominent in all of Marsden’s work.

Marsden takes advantage of common emotions or problems that his readers may be dealing with, pressures of life itself, school, friends and inserts these aspects of everyday life into his writing. By doing this Marsden creates an atmosphere where his readers become involved with the characters aiding the formation of connection between reader and writing. This concept is the main focus in the final essay. A major part of this final essay has been dedicated to exploring the ability that John Marsden possesses to write from a teenage girl’s perspective and his amazing ability to relate to and create connection with younger readers.

The text type that Marsden utilizes in the formation of his writing promotes the connection with his younger readers that he seems to uphold throughout the course of his writing. The text type that Marsden tends to lean towards in his work is first person narrative where the protagonist in the novel is female.

Marsden’s first published novel “So Much To Tell You”, the follow up to this first novel “Take My Word For It” and “Letters From The Inside” are all examples of the similar text type that Marsden incorporates

into his writing. All three novels adopt a text type that resembles a journal and provide excellent foundations for extensive insight into the protagonists in the novel and in general everyday teenage life.

The journal can play a huge role in a teenage girls life and by using this type of format in a lot of his writing Marsden's focus audience seems to be, a lot of the time the teenage girl. Marsden utilizes this text type that nourishes his reader's minds and promotes emotional connections to be built between reader and character. Marsden moulds the text type to fit into the context of his writing

"So Much To Tell You" is the story of Marina, a girl who does not talk, a girl who is having to face the real world again after being away from it for so long. This novel is framed solely around the journal entries of Marina while she is at boarding school. Her entries provide an excellent insight into the world and life of teenage girls in a dorm environment and explore the different ways in which individuals deal with what is happening around them. Through his use of the journal or diary text type Marsden allows himself the opportunity to explore the deeper and more personal feelings of the protagonist.

Marsden utilizes the protagonists in his writing to provide grounds for the exploration of teenage life in general. Throughout the collection of Marina's journal entries in "So Much To Tell You" common teenage issues are explored and dealt with. By incorporating this aspect into his writing Marsden provides a common ground between the characters in his writing and his readers. This is a common trait in Marsden's work, by promoting this relationship between his readers and his writing he encloses his readers in the world of the novel and therefore gives them a means of connection making the novel easier for them to read and relate to. Marsden's amazing ability to write the way that a teenage girl thinks is expressed endlessly within his writing and is promoted through the similar text type that he uses in most of his work.

The perspective that John Marsden has created through his writing could not be offered through any other style of writing and still provide the incredibly believable insight into the teenage world if a different text type was used. Marsden has promoted his ability to create realistic female characters in his writing very much through the text type of his work. The format of the journal is used as a prominent tool in Marsden's understanding of the female character.

The text type that Marsden uses in his writing is an important tool in his exploration of the teenage girl and the connections that he builds up with his readers in his writing. Through the use of this common text type in his writing Marsden is able to promote his understanding of the female teenager and therefore create immense connection between his readers and his writing.