

## NO ONE KNOWS

### Questions for Discussion

1. Aubrey is a good example of the *unreliable narrator*, a classic trope of fiction that appears in novels from *Lolita* to *Fight Club* to *Gone Girl*. In what ways is Aubrey's unreliability revealed? Why do you think Ellison chose to tell her story this way? Do you find Aubrey to be a sympathetic protagonist? Why or why not?
2. Ellison creates several characters—Daisy, Josh, Chase—who could be considered antagonists to Aubrey's protagonist. Who do you feel is the "villain" of this story, and why? What are their motivations, and do their intentions influence your sense of them as "bad" or "good"?
3. Throughout the book, Aubrey writes letters to the presumed-deceased Josh. Why do you think she writes them? How do you think Ellison uses them?
4. Do you believe that Aubrey and Josh are truly in love? Is there such a thing as "true love"? How does their relationship change over the course of the book?
5. Throughout the novel, we see repeated contrasts between Aubrey's childhood and Josh's. How do their families of origin influence their behavior as children, teenagers and adults? Josh appears to have a model family, and Aubrey's foster home is far from picture perfect, but in what ways are their experiences similar? What strengths or weaknesses does each character take from his or her upbringing?
6. What did you think about Daisy Hamilton, Josh's mother? Is she a sympathetic character especially considering her situation and limitations? How does her approach to life affect her son's decision-making process?
7. Describe Aubrey's relationships with characters other than Josh, like Tyler or Megan. How deep are those connections? Do you think she's sincere in her friendships with them?
8. Many events in *No One Knows* seem to portray people doing "the wrong thing for the right reasons." What are some examples of this? What does this novel suggest about the notion of right and wrong, or about morality? Would you say Josh and Aubrey are "moral" people? What about Chase or Daisy? Why or why not?
9. In an earlier draft, the novel had a different ending, which you can read [here](#). Why do you think the author changed the ending in the final edition? Do you prefer the published version, or the alternate ending?

- 10.** J.T. Ellison is from Nashville, and sets many of her books there. What is the importance of the Nashville setting to *No One Knows*? Discuss some passages where the setting is particularly prominent or distinct. How does that influence your experience of the text?
- 11.** We realize at the climax that Aubrey has been keeping a huge secret from everyone around her. Have you ever had to keep something secret from absolutely everyone around you? How did you do it?
- 12.** Did you predict the “twist” at the end of the book? What are some of the clues that point toward the reveal of the novel’s climax? Do you feel that the twist was adequately supported?
- 13.** If you were faced with Aubrey and Josh’s situation, what would you have done?