



Book club 19: Crime & guilt

Everyone Here is Lying
by Shari Lapena



Rules

In this book club you will discuss *Everyone Here is Lying* by Shari Lapena in a group of 4-6 readers. The book club opens with a brief introduction that one of you reads out loud. The book club then continues in four rounds:

- 1 Round 1 consists of 5 questions about the plot. One of the group members acts as the quiz master who reads each question out loud, after which everyone (including the quiz master) writes down their answer. The correct answers will appear on the screen after you have turned over the final question card. You may then check your answers and calculate your scores.
- 2 Round 2 consists of asking and answering questions each of you have about the book/story: in turn, the players say what they did not understand about the book and try to find an answer together. When the biggest confusions are solved, round 3 starts.
- 3 Round 3 consists of discussion questions. The person with the most correct answers to the quiz questions from round 1 gets to be the first to turn over a card and respond to the question. The other members of the group may then add to the discussion by responding and sharing their ideas. Take turns until all cards are flipped.
- 4 Round 4 is when you get to review the text. How many stars would you give the text and why? Discuss this together until you have reached a shared verdict. Use the text box to explain your choice.

This book club was developed by the editors of LitLab, a digital laboratory for high school literature research. For more teaching materials, visit www.litlab.nl. A teacher's guide and a didactic justification of this teaching method are available at www.litlab.nl/docenten.



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Everyone Here is Lying

Introduction

'It's likely that she has been taken. And when a child is taken, quite often it's someone known to the family. You'd be surprised.'

Everyone Here is Lying by Shari Lapena tells the thrilling story of Avery Wooler, a 9-year-old girl who has vanished without a trace. The town of Stanhope was supposed to be a safe community where neighbours were vigilant, but now the entire city is wondering: where did this little girl go? After Avery goes missing, Detective Besoe and Detective Gully search the town for clues about what happened to her. As the investigation begins, long-buried secrets start to come to light. Secret affairs, domestic abuse, marital jealousy —every lie and dirty secret is about to be exposed in the search for this young girl.

In this book club you enter into a discussion about the complex role of secrets, prejudices, mental disorders and traumas in relationships between people, both from this novel and your own life.

Round 1: Quiz

Turn over the 5 cards with quiz questions one by one. Write down the answer on a piece of paper.

Round 2: Initial questions

What questions popped into your head while reading *Everyone Here is Lying*? Were there any parts that left you confused or wondering? Take turns sharing your questions about the story and try to come up with answers together. Use evidence from the text to support your ideas.

Round 3: Discussion

The player with the most correct answers to the quiz questions gets to turn over a card first from one of the two piles of discussion questions. Once they have answered the question, the other members of the group may then add to the discussion by responding and sharing their ideas.

Round 4: Review

Review *Everyone Here is Lying* by rating the novel on a scale of one to five stars, and then provide an explanation for your choice. Discuss what aspects you enjoyed and what aspects you didn't, and provide reasons for your opinions. Reflect on whether the discussion influenced your individual perspective, and if so, how. Incorporate examples and arguments from your responses to the discussion questions to support your review.



Question 1

What are the names of the characters in the book who had an affair?

Question 2

What is the name of the hotel that William is staying at?

Question 3

Where did Derek meet Avery in private?

Question 4

What is Marion's profession?

Question 5

What happens to Avery at the end of the book?

Answers

1. William Wooler and Nora Blanchard
2. The Excelsior Hotel
3. in the tree house in the woods
4. She is a nurse at the hospital where William works.
5. She escapes Marion's basement (by pushing her down the stairs).



Question

3

Question

2

Question

1

Answers

Question

5

Question

4



Personal connections? 1

Avery has ADHD, a disorder that influences how she acts and responds to others. What do you know about this disorder? Look up symptoms of ADHD and identify which ones you observe in Avery.

Personal connections? 2

Describe William's character in four words. What do you like and dislike about him? And what about his wife, Erin Wooler?

Personal connections? 3

In the book, characters like Derek and Ryan are stereotyped because of their past actions or disorders. Why are these two characters perceived in a different way? Would you perceive them differently? Explain your answer.

Personal connections? 4

Have you ever felt that the way others treated you was based on prejudices or stereotypes? What have you learned about stereotypes related to mental disorders from reading this book?

Personal connections? 5

During the investigation, people come forward with information about the case. However, it also becomes clear that people will always try to protect their own. Which characters do you think attempt to manipulate the investigation? Would you do the same in their situation? Why (not)?

Personal connections? 6

As her mother, Erin Wooler feels the pressure of having to control Avery's behaviour, but also feels she has to protect her family. Why did Erin think that keeping secrets would protect her family? Do you understand why she made these choices? Explain your answer.

Personal connections? 7

Stanhope seems like an idyllic little town, but it harbours hidden secrets beneath the surface. What does the novel suggest about the dangers and pressures that exist in a small town like this? What is your view on Stanhope - do you like or dislike the town and their response to the crisis of a missing girl?

Personal connections? 8

The novel ends with an interview where Avery is put on the stand. What do you think Avery planned to do during the interview? What do you think will happen after the final question in the novel? Explain your interpretation of the ending.



Personal connections?

3

Personal connections?

2

Personal connections?

1

Personal connections?

6

Personal connections?

5

Personal connections?

4

Personal connections?

8

Personal connections?

7



Food for thought? 1

Secrets and lies play a significant role in the reasons for Avery's disappearance. What are the most important secrets and lies in the story and which characters are involved? Work together to create an overview, starting with each lie or secret and listing which characters are connected to it.

Food for thought? 2

The author, Shari Lapena, often ends her chapters with plot twists. What plot twists stood out to you the most, and why? Explain your choices using evidence from the book.

Food for thought? 3

Avery's jean jacket is often mentioned throughout the story. What do you think the jacket symbolises? Discuss why the jacket is important for the story and how it influences our perception of, for instance, William.

Food for thought? 4

All of the parents in *Everyone Here is Lying* firmly believe that their children had no involvement in Avery's disappearance. How do the parents differ in the way they express their belief in their children's innocence?

Food for thought? 5

Religion plays a minor role in the book, yet it still influences the actions of, for instance, Nora and Al. How would you explain the role God plays in their relationship and the decisions that they make?

Food for thought? 6

The novel explores both psychological and physical trauma. Give examples of each type of trauma. Explain which characters are affected by these types of trauma using examples from the book.

Food for thought? 7

One of the central themes in the novel is the 'Psychological Effects of Crime and Investigation'. What psychological effects of the investigation do we see in the main characters (Avery, William, Ryan, and Erin)? How do these experiences shape their behaviour throughout the novel?

Food for thought? 8

The ending of the story shows the different sides of Avery. What sides does she show to the people around her? How does she change her personality depending on which family member she is interacting with?



Food for thought?

3

Food for thought?

2

Food for thought?

1

Food for thought?

6

Food for thought?

5

Food for thought?

4

Food for thought?

8

Food for thought?

7