



Jodi Picoult

Book club discussion questions

Second Glance

1. As *Second Glance* opens, the town of Comtosook begins experiencing bizarre weather occurrences such as rose petals raining from the sky, and the ground freezing in August. What is the symbolic relevance of these occurrences?
2. Ross has no desire to live, yet can't seem to die. Ethan, on the other hand, wants to live a long life yet was born with a genetic illness that will likely result in an early death. What is the one major thing they share in common, despite this difference?
3. Why might Lia have appeared to Ross, a stranger to her, as opposed to anyone else?
4. Why does Ross feel such a strong obligation to help Lia, a woman he barely knows?
5. What is the thematic relevance of Ethan's affliction with xeroderma pigmentosum?

6. How would you explain Shelby's love of words and her superior command of the English language?
7. In what way do Ross's struggles parallel Shelby's?
8. How does Meredith's work closely parallel the work of Spencer Pike and his father-in-law, Harry Beaumont? Is her work more admirable, or is this a case of history repeating itself?
9. When leaving work and faced with a group of pro-life picketers, Meredith "wished she could explain to them that there were some sorts of lives that were not worth living. That it was not cruel to be the judge of that, but humane." Do you agree, or disagree? Does Meredith feel strongly about this, or do you think she struggles with this belief?
10. How does his investigation into Cissy Pike's death effect a change in Eli?
11. When Ross first arrives in Comtosook, he accidentally loses his dead fiance's engagement ring. Much later, Shelby mysteriously finds it in Eli's bed the first time they are together. What is the significance of this?
12. What is the symbolic relevance of Angel Quarry?
13. Why does Az bury the evidence of the Vermont Eugenics Project, instead of letting the world know the truth about what happened to his people, the Abenaki?
14. Do you believe that through knowledge and education, we can prevent history from repeating itself? Or is it beyond our control?
15. Skeptics of the paranormal claim the existence of a ghost when it can't be proven scientifically. Yet *Second Glance* spotlights a period of history

where science itself turned out to be unreliable. What do you think the author was trying to suggest in this contrast?

16. In what ways is the title, *Second Glance*, appropriate for this novel?