

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES, CONT.

- “The Human Clay” is not only a biblical allusion, but the idea that all of us can be formed and reformed. We can be manipulated, and we can also reinvent and remake ourselves. Zombie states, “Ben Parish is dead. . . . Zombie is everything Ben wasn’t. Zombie is hardcore. Zombie is badass. Zombie is stone-cold.”

However, Zombie also protects and snuggles Nugget and bonds with the group. Write an essay on whether or not Ben Parish still exists.

- Cassie says, “The Hum is gone...The Hum of all our things and all of us. Gone.” Write companion poems about the Hum and about “the sound of the Earth before we conquered it.”
- Write a dialogue between an Other and a human. Have the Other explain why its race should take over the Earth, and have the human defend why people should keep the Earth.
- THE 5th WAVE follows in the footsteps of other works that deal with alien invasion and specifically aliens “disguising” themselves as humans. Watch and/or read another work in this genre, such as THE HOST, or INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS, or THE ANIMORPH series and make a Venn diagram showing the differences and the similarities between it and THE 5th WAVE.

PRAISE FOR *THE 5TH WAVE*:

★ “Yancey’s heartfelt, violent, paranoid epic, filled with big heroics and bigger surprises, is part *War of the Worlds*, part *Starship Troopers*, part *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, and part *The Stand* . . . a sure thing for reviewers and readers alike.” —*Booklist*, starred review

★ “As in the Monstrumologist series, the question of what it means to be human is at the forefront. . . . It’s a book that targets a broad commercial audience, and Yancey’s aim is every bit as good as Cassie’s.” —*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

★ “The plot flips back and forth with so much action and so many expert twists that readers will constantly question whom they can trust and whom they can’t. Best of all, everything feels totally real, and that makes it all the more riveting. Nothing short of amazing.”

—*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

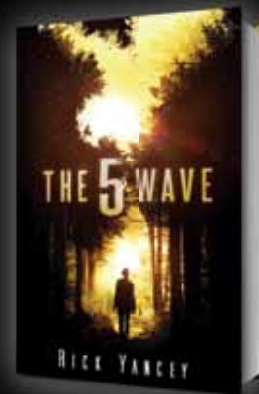
1ST WAVE: Lights Out

2ND WAVE: Surfs Up

3RD WAVE: Pestilence

4TH WAVE: Silencer

THE 5TH WAVE



THE 5th WAVE

by Rick Yancey

9780141345893 • £7.99

Ages 12+

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Talk About it #5thwave



This guide was created by Shari Conradson. She is an English, drama, and history teacher in Northern California. She runs a YA book group and believes that every reluctant reader is one 'just-one right book away from becoming an avid reader.'

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DISCUSSION GUIDE

THE 5TH WAVE

RICK YANCEY

ABOUT THE BOOK



After the 1st Wave, only darkness remains. After the 2nd, only the lucky escape. And after the 3rd, only the *unlucky* survive. After the 4th wave, just one rule applies: TRUST NO ONE.

Now it's the dawn of the 5th wave, and on a lonely stretch of highway, Cassie runs from Them: the beings who only look human, who roam the countryside killing anyone they see. Who have scattered Earth's last survivors. To stay alone is to stay alive, Cassie believes, until she meets Evan Walker. Beguiling and mysterious, Evan Walker may be Cassie's

only hope for rescuing her brother – or even saving herself. But Cassie must choose: between trust and despair, between defiance and surrender, between life and death. To give up or to get up.

From award-winning author Rick Yancey comes a gripping epic of catastrophic loss, unthinkable odds, and unflinching courage.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Rick Yancey (www.rickyancey.com) is the author of several adult novels and the memoir *Confessions of a Tax Collector*. His first young-adult novel, *The Extraordinary Adventures of Alfred Kropp*, was a finalist for the Carnegie Medal. In 2010, his novel *The Monstrumologist* received a Michael L. Printz Honor, and the sequel, *The Curse of the Wendigo*, was a finalist for the *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize. When he isn't writing or thinking about writing or traveling the

country talking about writing, Rick is hanging out with his family.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Should Cassie have killed the Crucifix Soldier? Why or why not?
- Both Ben and Cassie have the will to survive—to keep going when everything seems lost. How are Ben and Cassie similar in other ways?
- Vosch says, “We know how you think. We’ve been watching you for six thousand years.” How does Vosch’s overconfidence help Cassie and her companions to escape?
- What does Vosch not understand about humans? What does Vosch not understand about his own race?
- Why do the Others need psychological *and* technological warfare?
- Why does Evan fall in love with Cassie?
- One of the most terrifying aspects of THE 5th WAVE is not knowing whom to trust. After losing her family, Cassie lives by herself in the woods. How does she regain her ability to trust?
- Evan Walker says that some of his race didn’t want to go along with the plan to exterminate humans. Using information from the book, why do you think that group did not prevail?
- Would it be difficult for the Others to cohabitate with humans?
- “You don’t believe in guns,” I whispered.

“I used to not believe in a lot of things.”

Like her dad, Cassie contends that her beliefs have changed. What evidence is there that Cassie and her principles *haven’t* changed as much as she says?
- In what ways are humans like the Others?
- How is Manifest Destiny similar to the Others’ takeover of the Earth? How does the American concept of Manifest Destiny differ?
- Describe how THE 5th WAVE demonstrates that there is more to life than mere survival.

- Names and identity play an important role in the story. The book begins with Cassie telling us her name and what names she is not. All of the kids in boot camp have nicknames and make a point of hiding their birth names. Explore the importance of names. What is the significance of the characters changing their names?
- THE 5th WAVE suggests that humans need other humans. When their families are gone, the kids bond with each other. Initially, Cassie insists that the only way to survive is to be alone. Describe incidents in the novel that give evidence that humans are social creatures.
- The US military has just changed its policy to allow women to participate in combat. Cassie and Ringer are characters that certainly demonstrate that females are adept at war and mortal combat. Are Cassie and Ringer realistic characters in this regard?

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- Cassie says her gun is “my bestest of besties” and that “you can’t trust that people are still people. But you can trust that your gun is still your gun.” Invite students to debate the issue of guns and gun control.
- Cassie and Ben find the will to go on living because of a promise each of them makes. Create a collage of all of the things that you consider worth living for.
- Pogo quotes Walt Kelly: “We have met the enemy and he is us.”

Cassie says, “It wasn’t aliens that first made us gear up for war; it was our fellow humans.”

Find photographs of people’s reactions to a crisis. Consider Katrina, Super Storm Sandy, the bombing of Hiroshima, Japan’s Fukushima Daiichi nuclear meltdown, etc. Are we our own worst enemy, or do you find as many photos showing acts of kindness and generosity during a crisis?
- The Others’ goal is to rid the Earth of all humans. Marcus T. Funk defines “genocide” as “the deliberate and systematic destruction, in whole or in part, of an ethnic, racial, religious, or national group.” Research “genocide”, and write an essay on the reasons why people commit genocide. Be sure to include references to THE 5th WAVE.