

"Once you start, you can't stop; you need to read this book."

—JULIE BERRY, *NEW YORK TIMES* BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF *LOVELY WAR*

# FADE AWAY

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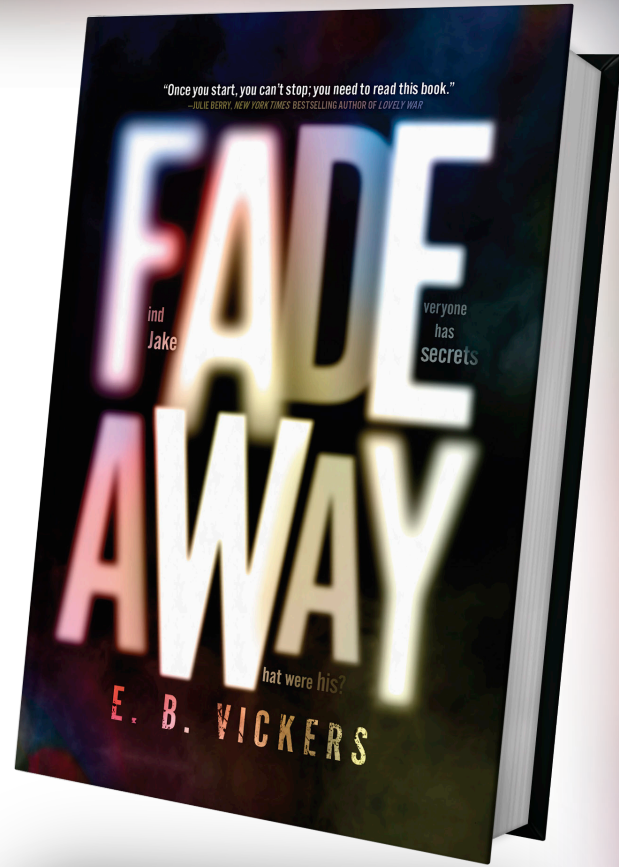
E. B. VICKERS

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

Based on the novel by E.B. Vickers

## PRE-READING QUESTIONS:

1. Under what circumstances should a person reveal someone else's secret? Under what circumstances should a person keep another's secret?
2. There are times when we make assumptions about someone's life. What assumptions might people make about you? What things might they get wrong? Are assumptions helpful? Why do we make them?
3. What comes to mind when you hear the word addiction? If you don't know about addiction through people you know personally, where have you gathered ideas of what addiction looks like?



## READING ACTIVITIES:

- Have students read Stephanie Ericsson's "The Ways We Lie," summarizing each of the ten kinds of lies she outlines. As students are reading *Fadeaway*, have them note an example of characters telling each kind of lie, and why they think the character told that kind of lie. (See chart at the end of this guide.)
- When Kolt starts telling his part of the story, he says he and Jake "were from the same part of town – the wrong part" (7). What might he have meant by this? Based on what you have read so far, what do you think the wrong part of this town is? What kinds of assumptions do people make upon hearing a statement like this?
- At the start of the book, there are several characters who give statements to the police. Re-read Kolt's (5), Daphne's (16), Luke's (52), Sabrina's (70) and then Kolt's second statement (84). Why do you think the author included police reports? Do you believe these characters are telling the truth? Explain/discuss and/or perform these sections as reader's theater.

• In Luke's first poem (55), he is trying to explain several things he doesn't fully understand: the Big Bang theory, the existence of God, and what happened to Jake. Make a list of 5-7 things you have tried or are trying to understand. Are any of the items in your list similar to Luke's? Why or why not? With your list in mind, practice writing a poem at least 20 lines long using imagery and life experiences.

(Bulletin board option: display poems, perhaps anonymously, to invite authentic expression and broaden understanding among classmates)

• By page 47, there have been several characters talking about Jake. On the cover are these statements: *Find Jake, Everyone has secrets, What were his?*

What do you know about Jake from these characters?

Where do you think Jake is?

What do you know about characters' secrets at this point?

What do you think were Jake's secrets?

• Throughout the book, we see characters who take pills for one reason or another. There are some who argue against using drugs at all, others who argue drugs can be beneficial. Invite students to research different kinds/classes of drugs and using *Fadeaway* as a guide, lead students in a Socratic seminar discussing the prevalence of prescription medication in our modern society.

• In "The Book of Luke & Jake: Part 2" (131-142), readers get a clearer glimpse into present Jake. What clues did you see that helped you understand what happened to Jake? What clues did you miss? What do you think happened that changed Jake from hating the pills to requesting/stealing from others? Does Jake's path to addiction align with what you thought before?

• After reading "Rumors" (183-195), go back to what you said or discussed in pre-reading exercise #1. Based on what you are seeing in *Fadeaway*, how do you think a person should decide between keeping a secret/rumor or telling someone about the secret/rumors? How might someone determine if a rumor is true? At your school, who could you tell?

• In "One Small Thing in Return" (196-199), the only detail Vickers gives about this point of view character is his gender. Who do you think this is? (Teachers: using hash marks on the board or tech such as google forms, show anonymous poll based on named male characters. Then discuss how it's possible for students reading same book to have such varied responses. Extension activity could be researching the reliability of eyewitnesses in police reports and court cases.)

• Who do you think sneaks into the house when Luke is sick in "Metal on Metal" (239-247)? Do you believe Luke knows who this is? Why do you believe Luke reacts the way he does?

• There are several mentions of God within *Fadeaway*. Why do you think Vickers included religion in a book like this? How do the mentions of God seem to help or hinder the characters who mention deity?



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- “It seems so unfair that our worst moments stain for so long but our best fade so quickly” (279). This line may resonate with many of us as it did with Daphne. Why do you think our brains remember our worst moments more easily than our best? How might the use of fade in this quote add greater depth to the book’s title? What additional layers of meaning can you find in the title itself?

- The dedication page of *Fadeaway* includes “and to anyone who has ever faced the monster of Not Enough.” What was it about various primary characters that made them feel they were not enough? What kinds of circumstances could have been changed to help them feel like they were enough? Why do you think “the monster of Not Enough” is so prevalent in our society?

## **POST-READING ACTIVITIES**

- Recommended: Share the animated TED Talk by Mike Davis called “What Causes Opioid Addiction, and Why Is It So Tough To Combat?” Discuss with students how what they viewed does or does not align with what they read. What was one thing in this talk they knew before? What was something new they learned while watching this talk? What questions do they still have about the opioid epidemic after reading *Fadeaway* and watching the TED talk?

- Essay: Throughout *Fadeaway* by E.B. Vickers, there are many examples of characters telling lies. Using examples from the text, defend, challenge, or qualify the maxim that people should never tell a lie.

- Create a newspaper outlining the culminating events in *Fadeaway*. Write articles and include appropriate pictures (hand or computer-drawn, cut from magazines or newspapers, or found on the Internet). In addition to major articles, include typical newspaper features like editorials, obituaries, society events, entertainment, advertisements, and comics.

- Vickers doesn’t use dates, simply the markers of before and after the state championship game while depicting events. In small groups, list key events from the book and create a timeline of events as you believe they occurred.

- Pick 10-12 characters or scenes throughout *Fadeaway*. Based on the tone, dialogue, description, and characterization, select a song of your choice that you feel embodies each character or scene on your list. Consider how you would build this as a playlist to accompany the novel and write a 3-5 sentence paragraph for each song explaining

why you think the song is representative of the character or scene. (Teachers may determine how they would like this playlist submitted).

- Using 15-20 memes, emojis, and/or gifs, summarize key plot or character elements in *Fadeaway*. Afterward, discuss your process. How did you decide how to represent the plot or character visually? What advantages and disadvantages does a visual system have?
- Prior AP Lit test question (adapt for *Fadeaway*): Choose a complex and important character in a novel or a play of recognized literary merit who might on the basis of the character's actions alone be considered evil or immoral. In a well-organized essay, explain both how and why the full presentation of the character in the work makes us react more sympathetically than we otherwise might. Avoid plot summary.

## CORE STANDARDS

Reading Standards in this Plan	Reading Standards for Informational Text in this Plan	Writing Standards in this Plan
RL 6-12.2	RI 6-12.1	W 6-12.1
RL 6-12.3	RI 6-12.2	W 6-12.2
RL 6-12.4	RI 6-12.5	W 6-12.4
RL 6-12.5		W 6-12.5
RL 6-12.6		W 6-12.10

## CONTINUED READING RECOMMENDATIONS

### Books That Feature Sports:

*Furia* by Yamile Saied Mendez  
*After the Shot Drops* by Randy Ribay  
*Dragon Hoops* by Gene Luen Yang

### Books That Feature Secrets:

*Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson  
*Sadie* by Courtney Summers  
*Clap When You Land* by Elizabeth Acevedo  
*We Were Liars* by E. Lockhart  
*Evidence of Things Not Seen* by Lindsey Lane

The logo for 'FADEAWAY' is displayed in a stylized, glowing font. The letters are white with a blue and purple gradient glow, set against a dark background with a blurred rainbow spectrum.

### **Books That Feature Addiction:**

*Heroin* by Mindy McGinnis

*Crank* by Ellen Hopkins

*You'd Be Home Now* by Kathleen Glasgow

### **Classic Literature:**

*Sonny's Blues* by James Baldwin

### **Additional Recommendations: based on similar tone, issues, etc.**

*Everything Sad Is Untrue* by Daniel Nayeri

*All American Boys* by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely

*You Are the Everything* by Karen Rivers

*Let Me Hear a Rhyme* by Tiffany D. Jackson

*How It Went Down* by Kekla Magoon

*Where Things Come Back* by John Corey Whaley

*Goodbye Days* by Jeff Zentner

*Far From the Tree* by Robin Benway

### **ABOUT THE BOOK:**

At 8:53 pm, thousands of people watched as Jake Foster secured the state title for his basketball team with his signature fadeaway. But by the next morning, he's disappeared without a trace. Nobody has any idea where he is: not his best friend who knows him better than anyone else, not his ex-girlfriend who may still have feelings for him, not even his little brother who never expected Jake to abandon him. Rumors abound regarding Jake's whereabouts. Was he abducted? Is he off trying to take his game to the next level? Or is it something else, something darker--something they should have seen coming?

Told from the points of view of those closest to Jake, this gripping, suspenseful novel reminds us that the people we think we know best are sometimes hiding the most painful secrets.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

E.B. Vickers grew up in a small town in the Utah desert, where she spent her time reading, playing basketball, and exploring. Several years and one PhD later, she found her way back to her hometown, where she now spends her time writing, teaching college chemistry, and exploring with her husband and three kids. She is the author of *Thankful, Like Magic* and *Paper Chains*. *Fadeaway* is her first novel for young adults. Visit her online at [ebvickers.com](http://ebvickers.com).

## PRAISE FOR FADEAWAY

### An Amazon Best Book of the Year So Far

"*Fadeaway* is a compelling, propulsive read, filled with dark twists and turns and buried secrets. If you start reading, clear your schedule for the day."

—Jeff Zentner, Morris Award winning author of *The Serpent King* and *Goodbye Days*

"*Fadeaway* is a tightly-woven web of mystery, danger, betrayal, and romance, where nothing is what it seems. Once you start, you can't stop; you need to read this book."

—Julie Berry, NYT Bestselling author of *Lovely War*

"A compassionate look at the opioid crisis with a compelling opening that will hook readers right away. Jake's brother's pages are written in eloquent verse, propelling the story and slowly unraveling Jake's, and his own, dark secrets. This timely novel has a place on most high school library shelves."

—*School Library Journal*

"Good storytelling... a gripping final sequence of events... quick and engaging... Will keep readers on the edges of their seats."

—*Kirkus Reviews*

FADEAWAY

## **“The Ways We Lie” & Fadeaway Chart**

Based on works by Stephanie Ericsson & E.B. Vickers

<b>Kind of Lie</b>	<b>Brief Summary Based on Ericsson’s article</b>	<b>Example from <i>Fadeaway</i></b>
The White Lie		
Façades		
Ignoring the Plain Facts		
Deflecting		
Omission		
Stereotypes and Clichés		
Groupthink		
Out-and-Out Lies		
Dismissal		
Delusion		