

## Patrick Ness

is the author of eight novels and a short story collection. He's best known for his books for young adults, including the Chaos Walking trilogy and *More Than This*. He won the Carnegie Medal—

the highest award for children's books in the UK—twice in a row, for *Monsters of Men* and *A Monster Calls*. *A Monster Calls* was also the first book ever to simultaneously win the Kate Greenaway Medal for illustration and the Carnegie Medal. Patrick has taught creative writing at Oxford University and is a literary critic for the *Guardian*. Born in Virginia, he lives in London.



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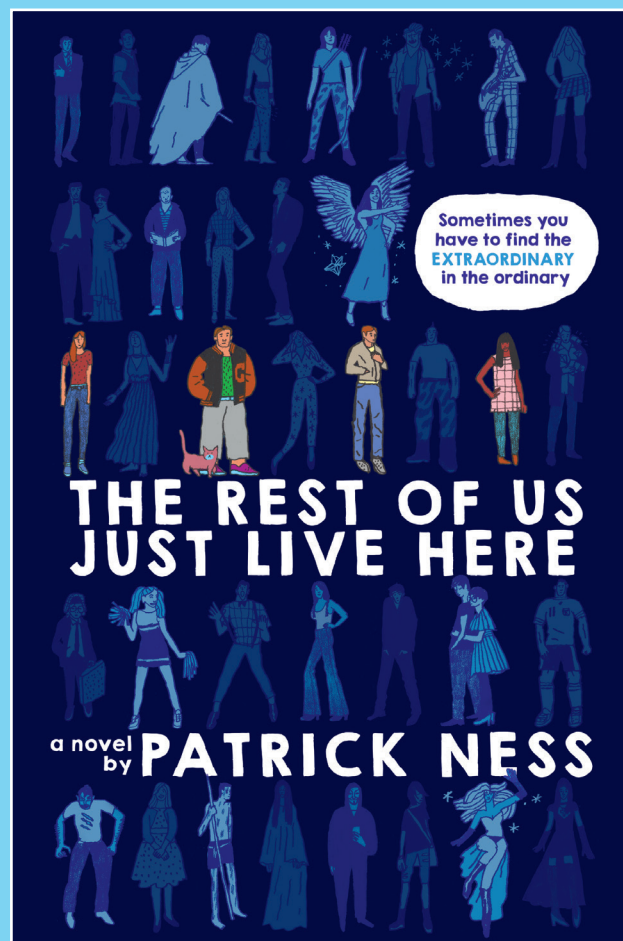
Also available as an ebook.

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# THE REST OF US JUST LIVE HERE

BY **PATRICK NESS**



## DISCUSSION GUIDE

**ALIGNS WITH COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS  
FOR GRADES 9-12**

## About the Book

What if you aren't the Chosen One? The one who's supposed to fight the zombies, or the soul-eating ghosts, or whatever the heck this new thing is, with the blue lights and the death?

What if you're like Mikey? Who just wants to graduate and go to prom and maybe finally work up the courage to ask Henna out before someone goes and blows up the high school. Again.

Because sometimes there are problems bigger than this week's end of the world, and sometimes you just have to find the extraordinary in your ordinary life.

Even if your best friend is worshipped by mountain lions.



## Discussion Questions

1. Mikey and Mel (brother and sister) have two close friends: Henna and Jared. All four are looking forward to graduation and have plans for their futures. What event do they witness at the beginning of the story, and how does this event set the tone for the rest of the story? Do others believe them? Why or why not? What fears does this event trigger?  
[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-12.1](#)
2. Who is Nathan and how does he impact their group? What role does he play in the story? Why does Mikey not like him? How does the author present him as a mysterious character? What surprise awaits Mikey at the end? Why is he the last to know?  
[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-12.1](#)
3. Describe Mikey and Mel's parents and their relationships with Mikey and Mel. In what way have events in their childhood negatively impacted their mental health? Is their mother a person to be admired? Why or why not? Support your response with evidence from the text.  
[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-12.1, 3](#)
4. Who are the indie kids? What mysterious events occur and how do they impact the four friends? What role do the police seem to play in these events? What does the blue light represent?  
[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-12.1](#)
5. In what way is Jared different from the group? Jared and Mikey have a potential relationship-ending argument. What do they argue about? Discuss how the argument impacts their relationship.  
[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-12.1, 3](#)
6. Mel starves herself until she has a heart attack and dies, and then is revived; Mikey has OCD and anxiety. What events in their childhood might have impacted their mental health?  
[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-12.1](#)
7. The author begins each chapter with a vignette that details events surrounding the Messenger of the Immortals, who has come to prepare the way for the Immortals. Discuss how these events tie into the primary narrative. Why do you believe the author chose this structure?  
[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-12.1, 5](#)
8. Mikey and Henna are involved in an accident. Why does Mikey return to the car? What happens upon his return? Mikey's mother goes to the hospital to be with her son. What does her behavior in the hospital suggest about her? Choose any two characters in the story and discuss how their relationship develops and changes as the story progresses. Identify key events the author uses to shape and change their relationship and discuss the impact these events have on their relationship.  
[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-12.1, 3](#)
9. Identify a theme from the story and discuss how this theme develops over time. In what ways does the author develop this theme? How does the theme impact or advance the plot?  
[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-12.1, 5](#)
10. At the end of the story Henna says, "Do you really believe in fate that much, Mikey? Do you really believe it exists only to punch you in the face?" (p. 289). Discuss why Henna asks Mikey this question. Do you agree with Henna's viewpoint? Why or why not?  
[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-12.1](#)
11. The story is told from Mikey's point of view. Choose any of the three other main characters: Mel, Henna, or Jared. Using several key scenes from the story, explain how key events would look different if told through that person's perspective as opposed to Mikey's.  
[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-12.1, 3, 5](#)

