



OPIOID, INDIANA

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Riggle has moved from the Texas/Mexico border to Indiana. Which of these two places does he consider to be more affluent and educated? How does this reaffirm or disturb our nation's notions of place? In our society, which place is it better to be from?
2. Through an invented mythology, Riggle's mother has created an explanation for how the days of the week got their names. Is this mythology less legitimate than the Babylonian, Roman, and Norse mythology that gave us the day names we use now? Is Remote less real than Thor? Less real than Zeus? Less real than God?
3. Riggle's uncle is a drug addict. What is addiction? What other types of addiction are displayed in the book? What could you not quit?
4. Of all the characters in this book, which ones are most confident? What does that tell you about the author and the narrator?
5. Opioid, Indiana, is not a real place. Even in the book, Riggle admits that the town's name differs from Opioid, Indiana. Based on what is revealed in the book, what are some other names he could have given to the town?
6. Riggle is seventeen years old. He is raised by druggies and is being educated in an environment that feels unsafe. How does his reality differ from the reality of other teenagers in America? If Riggle's issues are common, what does that say about our society?
7. Who are the happiest characters in the book? What makes them happy? What makes people happy in general?
8. When Chef asks Riggle to become a cook, Riggle refuses. Why? Is his decision to not take the promotion anti-American? Which philosopher discussed in the book most likely influenced his decision to remain a dishwasher?
9. Race is a central issue in the novel. How do the issues regarding race in the book make you feel? What race do you consider yourself? Which characters from the book do you most identify and sympathize with? Does a character's race change the way you view them?
10. Have you played Farmer, Garlic, Vampire yet? If not, why not?

