

## Book Clubs

If you'd like to read *Crossing the Line* with your Book Club, I'm happy to provide discounted copies. I'm also available for Skype or phone interviews with your club.

Contact me at [ellen@ellenvalladares.com](mailto:ellen@ellenvalladares.com) for more information!

## Discussion Questions

1. In what ways are Laura (the Spirit) and Rebecca similar? In what ways are they different? Did you relate to one more than the other? Did you feel differently about Laura as a Spirit and who she was when she was alive?
2. We learn that "Crossing the Line" for the Spirits at The Academy means going back into the physical world, something they are forbidden from doing. What other parts of the story could "crossing the line" also be referring to?
3. What did you think about the world of The Academy?
4. The book deals with some heavier issues, such as bullying and suicide. Do you think these are realistic challenges teens face? How do you feel about the way the author handled them? Have you ever been confronted with or had to deal with these kinds of issues? Did the characters in the story make you think or feel differently about how you might handle them?
5. Everyone has different beliefs and ideas about what happens when we die and whether or not there is some kind of life after death. What do you think about the way that theme was presented in the book? Did you find it believable? Comforting? Have you ever had a personal experience that made you believe one way or another?
6. Rebecca is quite resistant and skeptical about Spirits and the notion that she has a "gift" for communicating with them. How has she changed by the end of the book and what are the main factors that contribute to those changes?
7. What was your favorite friendship/relationship in the book? Why?
8. For much of the story, we hear Laura's and Rebecca's points of view. Then later, we get to hear from Katie as well. Did Katie's perspective add to or change the way you felt about the characters and events? If so, how?
9. The author has said that one of the main themes in the book is that there is more to people – and to our world – than what we see on the surface. In what ways, if any, did that theme

emerge for you? What other takeaways, emotions, or themes did the story evoke from you?

10. With the alternating perspectives of Laura and Rebecca, we get to experience teen life in the early 1980s and in 2013. Based on what you read and/or your own experiences, what would you say are the biggest similarities and biggest differences between the two generations of teens? If you had a choice, would you rather be a teen then or now? Why?
11. The author intersperses references to songs throughout the book. At the very end, we find the complete lyrics to the song “Don’t Stop” by Fleetwood Mac. Why do you think the author chose to use these song references and in particular, the final song? What role does music play for you as far as evoking memories or sending messages? How does “Don’t Stop” fit in with the themes in the book?