

• THE GIRLY BOOK CLUB •
DISAPPEARING EARTH
BY JULIA PHILIPS

1. Did you enjoy this book? Rate it out of 5.
2. In the first chapter, Alyona tells a story about a town that suddenly disappears when a wave washes it away. How is the theme of disappearance explored throughout the rest of the novel? How does this opening story relate to other examples of disappearances in the book? What does the title, *Disappearing Earth*, mean to you?
3. Before Alyona and Sophia went missing, another young woman, Lilia, disappeared too. How are these two crimes treated differently in their communities? How are they similar? How does the social, political, and economic climate of Kamchatka affect the way these victims are viewed and discussed? Do you see any similarities to the way people talk about crimes in your own community?
4. How do you think the sparsely populated Kamchatka setting informs the plot and characters? How do you think the story would be different if it were set somewhere else?
5. Discuss the theme of violence against women in the novel. What kinds of violence are represented in the book? What role does violence play in these women's lives? What forms of violence are seen in public, and which take place in private?
6. The book is centered on one specific act of violence—the disappearance of the Golosovsky sisters. How does this crime affect the rest of the characters in the novel and the community of Kamchatka in its entirety?
7. In addition to the white Russians, many indigenous communities and migrants live in Kamchatka. Discuss how the indigenous and migrant communities are viewed and treated. How does this affect how the police investigate the disappearances? Discuss Zoya's attraction to the migrant construction workers. How does this compare to the other perspectives of migrants in the book?
8. The novel is written from the points of view of many different women. How are these women connected, and what draws them apart? Which woman's story was the most memorable to you?
9. The final chapter of the book reveals a shocking ending. Why do you think Phillips chose to end the novel in this way? When the story of the disappearing town resurfaces, how are we reminded of the theme of disappearing? How is it symbolic of the missing girls' fate?