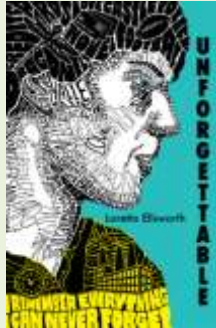


## Discussion Guide for *UNFORGETTABLE*



*“Ellsworth has created a genuinely sympathetic character in Baxter. His trials are unique, yet realistic.” – VOYA*

*“Ellsworth has hold of a fascinating premise.”- Publisher’s Weekly*

*“It’s a sweet love story.” Kirkus (starred review)*

- ❖ Before you start reading: Would you like to have a perfect memory, to be able to remember every detail of your life? Why or why not?
- ❖ After you’ve read Unforgettable: What are some of the drawbacks of remembering everything? If you could pick one day of your life to remember in perfect detail, what day would you most like to remember?
- ❖ What problems does Baxter experience because of his memory? How does he use his memory in positive ways?
- ❖ Baxter has synesthesia – a combining of the senses. He associates sounds with images - Halle sounds like yellow daffodils. How might synesthesia help a person remember details?
- ❖ What is your earliest memory? What sensory details does that memory bring to mind?
- ❖ Describe Baxter’s friendship with Halle in the novel. What brings them together and how does their friendship change and grow throughout the novel?
- ❖ How significance does Pi play in the novel?
- ❖ Baxter identifies with Jay Gatsby from *The Great Gatsby*. Is there a character in a book that you identify with? What characteristics do you share, or wish you did share?
- ❖ Why does Baxter want to create a new persona when he moves to Minnesota? How does it conflict with his desire to be true to himself?

- ❖ Baxter moves to a mining town on the Iron Range where many have died from Mesothelioma, a cancer known to be caused by taconite, a by-product of iron ore mining. Can you name ways in which harmful work environments exist today?
- ❖ What are ways that teens can promote an awareness of environmental safety in their own communities?



## Interdisciplinary Connections

### Language Arts

#### Identifying With Characters in Books

Beginner: Choose a character from a book who most represents you or who you most identify with. How are you similar? What characteristics do you share? Describe each of your best/worst qualities. How does the character differ from you?

Advanced: Baxter identifies with Jay Gatsby while reading *The Great Gatsby*. After reading *The Great Gatsby*, compare Baxter with Jay Gatsby. How do they both try to reinvent themselves? Describe each of their best/worst qualities. Choose a quote that you think best represents each character. How do Baxter Green and Jay Gatsby compare on moral issues?

#### Additional Resources:

[www.sc.edu/fitzgerald](http://www.sc.edu/fitzgerald)

The F. Scott Fitzgerald Centenary website celebrates his writings, his life, and his relationship with other twentieth-century writers.

### Math

#### Using Pi

Celebrate National Pi Day (March 14) by conducting your own Pi memorization contest or check out some of the activities for Pi Day from the following websites:

<http://www.piday.org/>

<http://www.nctm.org/resources/content.aspx?id=2147483830>

## **Science**

Have students explore ways in which water, land, and air pollution have an impact on living organisms. How do environmental issues such as global warming affect our lives? Brainstorm ways in which your class can either as a group or individually work to make a difference in their environment.

### **Additional Resources:**

<http://www.epa.gov/students/>

## **Social Studies**

### **Investigating Environmental Legislation**

**Beginning:** Identify local and state legislators. The activity can be introduced with a general group discussion on how laws are made at the state and national level, as well as how legislators are elected, the kind of laws recently passed, and the relationship between laws and environmental issues.

**Advanced:** Students use the Internet to identify and review pending environmental legislation that might impact their local community. The rich variety of Internet resources available allows students to search for legislation of interest on environmental issues.