Discussion Questions

*A Head Full of Ghosts* by Paul Tremblay


1. Did you think this book was scary? How scary – merely unsettling or totally frightening? What contributed to this atmosphere? Which parts were particularly disturbing? Did you enjoy reading them, or did you skim through them?

2. Is Merry a reliable narrator? Why or why not? Do you think she’s giving an accurate portrayal of the events that occurred in her past?

3. Talk about the writing style. Did you think the author did a good job of creating the characters and setting? How does the format influence the story, in particular the inclusion of Karen Brissette’s blog?

4. Discuss the idea of demon possession. What are some of the stereotypical signs of demon possession in horror novels and/or films? Does Tremblay’s interpretation use these tropes? Which characters showed signs of possession?

5. Mental illness is another theme that runs through the book. How does your interpretation of the novel change if you believe Marjorie was mentally ill rather than possessed? Do you think there’s a supernatural or rational reason behind her behavior?

6. What is the role of religion in the story?

7. How does the media involvement in the story affect the family? Would things have happened differently if the family wasn’t on TV? How does pop culture influence the book?

8. What role does gender play in the novel?

9. How did you feel about the ending? Did you want more closure, or were you satisfied with the way the book ended?