

### Discussion Questions Suggested by *Mind-Rain*

1. Scott Westerfeld says in his introduction that it takes a “village” to read a book—something the internet has made easy. How do you think the experience of reading books was different before you could go online?
2. Did you enjoy the slang in the Uglies series? Have you found yourself using any of it in your everyday conversations?
3. What did you think of Shay when you first read the Uglies series? Did Robin Wasserman’s essay change the way you see her? If so, how?
4. Diana Peterfreund suggests that Shay is actually *in love* with Tally. Do you think it’s possible?
5. Have you ever had a relationship with someone (whether romantic or not) that was so intense it changed your life, the way Tally and Shay did?
6. Who do you think was the best guy for Tally, David or Zane?
7. What important boyfriend characteristics do you think Sarah Beth Durst left out when she evaluated David and Zane in “Two Princes”?
8. Gail Sidonie Sobat says Zane *had* to die for Tally to truly become the hero of the story. Do you think she’s right? How do you think the story would have turned out if Zane *hadn’t* died?
9. What did you think of Tally when she returned in *Extras*? Did she seem different to you? How?
10. In “Challenging the Gods,” Rosemary Clement-Moore gives some real-life examples of what we already know from the Uglies series: that breaking the rules can be a good thing. What rules in your life do you think would be better off broken? Why?
11. In the Uglies series, pretties give up their ability to think in order to be pretty. What would you give up, or pay, to be pretty? A few years of your life? \$1000? What about \$1,000,000?
12. Do you ever find yourself judging people based on what they look like? In what ways? Do you think there’s anything you *can* tell about a person, based on the way they look?

13. Are you someone who prefers to fit in or someone who prefers to stand out? What do you think are the benefits (and drawbacks!) of each?
14. On the surface, “The Beautiful People” and the Uglies series have a lot in common. But underneath they have very different ideas about identity. “The Beautiful People” suggests that one’s body is an essential part of who one is—Mary is afraid she will not be *her* without it. In the Uglies series, Tally and her friends change their bodies the way we change clothes, without ever changing who they really are. Which idea do you agree with more?
15. If you lived in the universe of Ted Chiang’s “Liking What You See,” would you want to get calli? Why or why not?
16. Will Shetterly gives multiple definitions for “natural” . . . even just in the Uglies series! What’s your idea of natural? What does someone who is “natural” look like?
17. The Uglies series suggests that love can make someone pretty even if biology says they aren’t. But so, argue Will Shetterly and Jennifer Lynn Barnes, can *society*. Can you think of anything we consider pretty that science would say should actually be ugly?
18. Is having more information always better than having less, as Jennifer Lynn Barnes suggests? Is there a point where too *much* information can also pose a risk?
19. Are you more motivated by carrots (the promise of reward) or by sticks (the threat of consequences)?
20. In “Lies and Consequences,” Delia Sherman explains that all governments use propaganda. What are the carrots and sticks that your government uses to get you to do things (like go to school, or vote, or obey the law)?