

- Could more than one of the characters be the *Jerk* of the title? Which ones & why?
- Were your ideas of what a scientist is like altered by the story? Do you think of graduate students and scientists differently now?
- Was the back-channel communication between governments believable? Do you know of any instance in modern history that this was done?
- As the main conflict develops in *A Jerk, A Jihad, and a Virus*, how does it begin to resemble a conflict between the outlook of Ayn Rand and the evolutionary psychology theory that altruism and cooperation were selected for in human evolution?
- How is character revealed in *A Jerk, A Jihad, and a Virus*?
- What themes did you find in the story? How do they relate to the plot and characters?
- How and when are descriptions of the landscape used as symbols? How do they relate to the plot and characters?
- Which characters change in the story? What happened to bring about the change? Is there a character who you expect to undergo yet more changes?
- Which characters from the book would you want to have dinner with?
- Does the novel end the way you expected? How? Why?
- Was there anything in the novel that you strongly felt as though “here is wisdom?” Did you learn anything from the novel and did the novel change an opinion or outlook in a meaningful way?
- In ideas or outlook, stated or implied, in the story, did you hear echoes of past writers?
- What surprised you most about the book?