Reluctant Fundamentalist Character List:

<https://www.gradesaver.com/the-reluctant-fundamentalist/study-guide/character-list>

The RF vocabulary:

<https://quizlet.com/20498890/the-reluctant-fundamentalist-vocabulary-flash-cards/>

**Discussion Questions:** Please answer each part of the question, and use full sentences. We will use these for class discussion when you return from your holiday.   
1. At the beginning of the book, Changez says that his companion's "bearing" gives him away as an American. What does Changez mean by this? What are his deeper implications?

2. What do we learn about the American who sits across the table from Changez? How does Hamid convey this information? What do we never learn about the American? Consider how what we don't know about him influences our understanding of both Changez's monologue and the author's intent.

3. Who is Jim, and why does he take such a liking to Changez? What do they have in common? Is his sympathy for Changez genuine?

4. In Chapter 5, Changez is in a hotel in Manila, packing his suitcase and watching television, when he sees the towers of the World Trade Center collapse. "And then I smiled," he confesses. Explore this scene as the turning point of the novel — in terms of plot, character, scope, and tone.

5. In Chile, Changez befriends the head of the publishing company his firm is there to value. Why are the two men drawn to each other? Why has Changez suddenly become so disinterested in his work? Who were the janissaries? Why does their history resonate so strongly with Changez?

6. Discuss the two meanings of "fundamentalist" Hamid's title plays on — the first religious, the second suggested by Underwood Samson's business commitment to "Focus on the fundamentals." What do the different meanings suggest about the novel's themes?

7. The Reluctant Fundamentalist turns out to be quite a page-turner — a political thriller that builds to a memorable conclusion. What exactly happens at the end of the novel? What clues or foreshadowings tipped you off as to how the book would end? Why does Changez tell this stranger his story?

8. Since 9/11, there has been a growing trend in contemporary fiction to write about the tragedy of that day and its aftermath. What devices in this novel do you think make it unique in its approach to the 9-11 tragedy?   
(Questions issued by publisher.)

9. Find any passage in the book that you particularly enjoyed, and write a short analysis of it. Be sure to include the chapter and page number.