



## FOREIGN EXCHANGE: Reader Guide

### **About the Book:**

Jamie Monroe has always played it safe. That is, until her live-for-the-moment best friend, Tristan, jets off to Italy on a student exchange program. Left alone with her part-time mother and her disabled brother, Jamie discovers that she is quite capable of taking her own risks, starting with her best friend's hotter-than-hot older brother, Sawyer. Sawyer and Tristan have been neighbors for years, but as Jamie grows closer to the family she thought she knew, she discovers some pretty big secrets—not only from her, but from each other. As she sinks deeper into their web of pretense, she suspects that her best friend may not be on a safe exchange program at all. Jamie sets off to Europe on a class trip with plans to meet up with Tristan, but when Tristan stops all communication, suddenly no one seems trustworthy, least of all the one person she was starting to trust—Sawyer.

### **About the Author:**

Denise Jaden's novels have been short-listed or received awards through the Romance Writers of America, Inspy, and SCBWI. The first draft of her debut novel, *LOSING FAITH* (Simon & Schuster), was written in 21 days during NaNoWriMo, and she loves talking with writers and students about her fast drafting process. Jaden's other young adult novels include *NEVER ENOUGH* (Simon & Schuster) and *FOREIGN EXCHANGE* (an Editor's Pick from Evernight Teen). Her non-fiction books for writers include *WRITING WITH A HEAVY HEART* and *FAST FICTION*. Find her on Facebook, Twitter, or on her website at [www.denisejaden.com](http://www.denisejaden.com).

### **For Discussion:**

1. Themes found in *FOREIGN EXCHANGE* include adolescence/growing up, identity, and peer comparisons. List three other novels that address these themes.
2. Jamie draws many of the places she wants to see in her life. What are some places you would like to travel to, and what, specifically, draws you to those areas?
3. Jamie compares herself and feels inferior to her friend Tristan in many exterior/lifestyle ways. Compare and contrast Jamie and Tristan's inner qualities. Who do you think comes out ahead?
4. What obstacles get in the way of Jamie and Sawyer's relationship? Are their conflicts internal or external? Are there any problems that you feel could have been overcome easier than they were?
5. How does Jamie's perception of herself or the world change because of her journey?

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### Activities:

#### **Art:**

- Create an image through sketching, painting, or collage, with the intent of representing either one or more of the places Jamie travels to in *Foreign Exchange*, or one or more of the places you hope to travel to in the future.

#### **Music:**

- Create a playlist for the novel. Which of your chosen songs represent which characters? Which songs fit specific scenes or themes?

#### **Social Studies:**

- Sketch a map of Jamie’s journey, from the start of the book through the end.
- List the cultural differences Jamie encounters in the places she travels to.

#### **Writing/Journalism:**

- Collect about a dozen words or phrases from novel, and then organize/rearrange them to create a “found poem”—like a literary collage.
- Create an interview with one of the characters in *Foreign Exchange* about his or her experiences throughout the book and how he or she was affected.
- Choose an existing news story or blog post (or create your own) and re-write it, incorporating the conflicts and resolutions from *Foreign Exchange*. (Option: also include an allusion to another book or significant event)

**Publisher:** Evernight Teen (October 10, 2014) YOUNG ADULT CONTEMPORARY FICTION

**Paperback:** ISBN-10: 1772330485 ISBN-13: 978-1772330489 USD \$14.99

**eBook:** ASIN: B00N2VQRRY USD \$5.99

<http://www.evernightteen.com/foreign-exchange-by-denise-jaden/>

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Denise Jaden is available for classroom presentations, book club discussions, or Skype visits for those who have read one of her books. Contact her through her website at [www.denisejaden.com](http://www.denisejaden.com) . She also enjoys interacting with teen readers on Twitter (@denisejaden) or Facebook (denisejadenauthor).

This Reader Guide may be reproduced for school groups and book clubs.