

# Title: *The Rules for Disappearing* by Ashley Elston (Published in 2016)

## Approved for use in High School Reading Intervention Setting

Summary of the Work: Witness Protection has taken nearly everything from Meg. But for now, they've given her a new name, Megan Rose Jones, and a horrible hair color. For the past eight months, Meg has begged her father to answer one question: What on earth did he do-or see-that landed them in this god-awful mess? Meg has just about had it with all of the Suits' rules-and her dad's silence. If he won't help, it's time she got some answers for herself.

This suspenseful adventure story will have readers on the edge of their seats as Meg realizes the truth right along with the reader.

### Professional Reviews and/or Critical Essays:

Gr 9 Up—Meg Jones and her family have been under Witness Protection for eight months and have been relocated six times. Any day it might happen again: U.S. Marshals will arrive with no warning to shut down their lives and transfer them. The family will be given new personal histories to memorize, new names, and new appearances. They must never make a mistake. They must always stay in character. It's no wonder that Meg has nightmares, her little sister barely speaks, and her mom drinks. As for Mr. Jones, Meg blames him for all of it. Whatever he's done or seen to land them in this predicament has destroyed the family forever. The novel's first half is tense and captivating, as the Joneses adapt to a new home in rural Louisiana. The characters struggle under severe uncertainty and dysfunction. Their new home is dreary, they have very little money, and every bump in the night could mean trouble. Some rules of Meg's new life: Don't make friends, don't trust anybody, don't use the Internet. Again and again, she tries to discover who is after them and what happened last June, but her father won't discuss it. Elston then breaks the tension when Meg falls in love, confronts a repressed memory, and hits the road with her new boyfriend to free her family for good. From there, the plot loses emotional resonance and becomes implausible, but readers will likely enjoy the action. Everything works out in the end, of course, but a single unfinished story line suggests a forthcoming sequel.—Denise Ryan, Middlesex Middle School, Darien, CT

*School Library Journal*

\* Print resources are available from the library media center and libraries in the district. Contact any library media specialist to view the scholarly sources.

\* Scholarly reviews are also available online through Books in Print and Gale. Contact the library media specialist to obtain username and password information to access the subscription database of full-text reviews.

### Notes on the Text:

Striving readers will find this story accessible and relevant. The low Lexile and high interest nature of the story will boost reading comprehension in the intervention setting.

### Rationale:

Students will draw parallels between the Read 180 U workshop, "At First Sight" and this novel. Reinforcement of the lessons learned in the workshop regarding perception and reality will be enhanced through this literary text.

Students in the reading intervention setting will also find the high-interest and low readability of the novel appealing.

### Noted Distinction:

"Chilling and suspenseful, with just the right number of twists." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"[H]ard to put down."--*The New York Journal of Books*

"Elston has crafted a gripping tale that immediately captures the reader's attention."--*VOYA*

"The realistic setting, believable romance and spunky protagonist will make this one worth the trip for mystery and romance fans." —*Kirkus*

### Readability

- Lexile Score: 620
- Readability Level: 4.5

### Learning Resources Guidelines

- The novel meets the [Learning Resources Guidelines](#).

**Standard Alignment:** CCSS 9-10.1, 9-10.2, 9-10.3, 9-10.5, 9-10.6, 9-10.9

### Approval:

Submitted to Committee:

Approved for Adoption:

### Connection to the Curriculum:

ALIGNS TO READ 180 UNIVERSAL WORKSHOP 1. The novel demonstrates elements of literary techniques such as foreshadow, flashback, metaphor, symbolism, and multiple points of view.

## Additional Connections:

*Read 180 Universal Workshop 1 Curriculum*