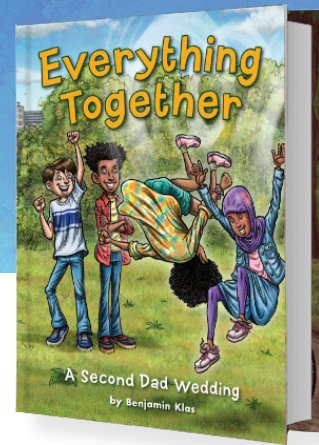


Everything Together

by Benjamin Klas



Discussion Guide

1. In the first chapter Jeremiah says, “Sometimes it felt like Michael was a collection of quite a few ... stereotypes.” What are some common stereotypes about people of your age, gender, race, etc.? In what ways do you fit —and not fit those stereotypes?
2. What are some examples in the book of someone making an assumption about another person or people based on stereotypes? Have you ever made assumptions about a person based on stereotypes? Were those assumptions correct?
3. Throughout much of the book, Jeremiah feels jealous of Sage’s friendship with Asha. Why do you think he feels that way? Have you ever felt jealous or left out when one of your friends made a new friend?
4. Jeremiah’s dad’s friends care a lot about the rights of refugees and undocumented people. Why? In what ways might they relate to these people?
5. Jeremiah’s dad tells him, “Identity is like a river. It can change and flow, but all the time you’re still you.” How does Jeremiah change and flow by the end of the book?
6. Sage says, “I think your family of choice is more important than the people you just happen to share DNA with.” Do you agree? Why or why not? Who would you consider your family of choice?
7. How did you feel when you read that people had destroyed the Bridge garden? Have you or anyone you know been the victim of a hate crime or bullying due to race, religion, sexual identity, etc.? How did that make you/them feel?
8. Jeremiah’s dad tells him that hate comes from people who are afraid of things that are different. Do you agree? What are some things we can do to help combat hate?
9. Robi tells Jeremiah, “Plants can be like people: not much on their own, but everything together.” What does Robi mean by that statement? In what ways does the book prove it to be true?



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About the Author

Benjamin Klas knows a lot about Jeremiah and his family. The author lives in Saint Paul, Minnesota with his partner and their son. He spends his days playing the ukulele, block printing, parenting, and writing although not necessarily in that order. After graduating from North Central University (MN), Benjamin earned a Master of Library and Information Science from St. Catherine University. His work has appeared in several literary magazines and a collection by LGBTQ authors. *Second Dad Summer* was his first novel.

Synopsis of the Book: Everything Together

When Jeremiah arrives in Minneapolis to spend the summer with his Dad, everything feels odd. His dad's fiancé, Michael, has buried the apartment in piles of DIY wedding decorations. His best friend Sage now spends all her time with a new girl as quirky and bright as Sage ever was. Everywhere he goes, Jeremiah feels like the odd one out. Eager for something to get him away from all this, he starts volunteering in an English class for refugees. As the summer goes on, Jeremiah finds community in new places and with unexpected friends. *Everything Together* is about exploring your place in the world and the tangled ways we connect and is a sequel to *Second Dad Summer*.

Praise for *Second Dad Summer*

"*Second Dad Summer* engages young readers in a story that touches on a number of complex issues surrounding non-traditional LGBTQ families. The honest personal thoughts, questions, reactions, and growth of the young man in this story are likely to resonate strongly with many in our society. It is my hope that Jeremiah's struggles and revelations will offer peace, compassion, and voice to the voiceless."

—Michelle Herczog, former President, National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)

"*Second Dad Summer* is a fun, tender, and important story about all the best things in life: family, friends, community, and all the ways they intersect. Jeremiah takes readers along on his journey where he opens his heart, and ours, to new people and new places."

—Amy Oelkers, Librarian, Youth Services, Washington County, MN

"Touching and unforgettable."

—Kirkus

"...an array of positive role models..."

—starred review *Booklist*



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