

# Second Dad Summer

by Benjamin Klas

## Discussion Guide



1. At the start of the story, Jeremiah doesn't like Michael. By the end of the story, he wants Michael to be one of his Dads. When does that change? Why does Jeremiah change his mind?
2. Why is the Uni-cycle so embarrassing to Jeremiah? What does it mean that he rides it at the end of the story?
3. Why does Michael think it's important to take care of cranky Mr. Keeler? What does that tell us about Michael's values?
4. After buying petunias from Robi, the characters talk about pronouns. Why do you think Robi uses *they/them* pronouns to describe who they are? What pronouns do people use when they talk about you? Are there pronouns you wish they would use instead?
5. Why didn't Jeremiah want to tell Sage about Michael? How did telling Sage change their friendship?
6. Jeremiah feels uncomfortable at the Pride parade. Have you ever been in an unfamiliar culture or situation? What did you learn? Did you discover something that helped you feel more comfortable?
7. Jeremiah assumes his parents split because of his Dad's bisexuality, but his Mom says that's not the real story. Have you ever thought you knew someone's real story only to find out you were wrong? Why is it important to learn a person's real story?



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### Book Details

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## About Benjamin Klas

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 block printing, playing the ukulele, 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.

## Synopsis of the Book

Jeremiah wants a normal summer with his dad. His dad just moved into an apartment to live with his new boyfriend, Michael. It's soon clear that Jeremiah's dad is getting closer to Michael's group of friends, something that would be good if it wasn't making Jeremiah feel invisible. Fortunately, there's Sage, the only other kid in their hipster neighborhood. Although Sage is quirky, their friendship is cemented at the Pride festival when Jeremiah finds out Sage has two moms. Two moms –like he might have two dads if he doesn't put a stop to Michael. Enter Mr. Keeler, the grouchy old smoker from downstairs who has an ongoing feud with Michael. Before summer ends, Jeremiah says goodbye to one friend and embraces a growing family.

## 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."

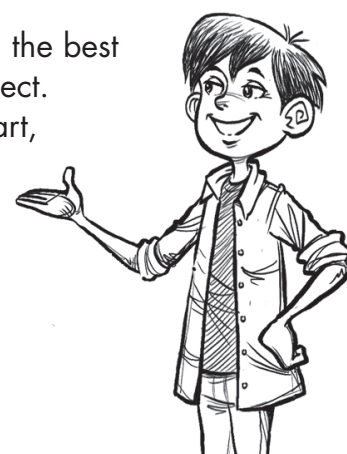
—Michelle Herczog, former President, National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)

"I was hooked on *Second Dad Summer* from page one...this is a fun and riveting story about a modern family grappling with an array of 21st-century issues. It's moving, honest, and full of surprises."

—Bennett Singer, co-director of *Brother Outsider: The Life of Bayard Rustin* and co-author of *LGBTQ Stats*

"*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



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