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# The Thing About Jellyfish

Phyllis Rosen

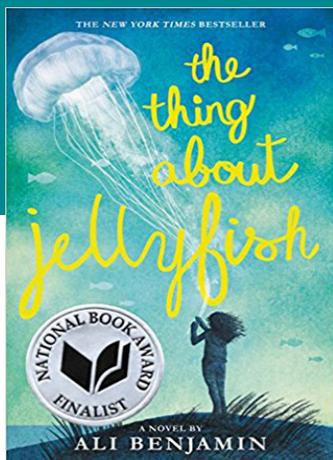
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## Book Review

# The Thing About Jellyfish

### Author

Ali Benjamin

### Illustrator

Terry Fan and Eric Fan

### Reviewer

Phyllis Rosen

### Rating

### Level

Intermediate, Young  
Adult

### Pages

334

### Year

2015

### Publisher

Little, Brown and Com-

### ISBN

9780316380867

Twelve-year-old Suzy Swanson experiences profound grief when her ex-best friend drowns. She learns that jellyfish sting multiple people every day and comes to believe that her friend died because she was stung by a jellyfish. She determines to prove this, but, in the process, creates numerous problems for herself. Her family tries to help her, but she refuses to talk and holds everything inside. Eventually she tries to fly to Australia to meet with a jellyfish expert and prove her theory. She is not allowed on the plane and her mother comes to collect her at the airport. Suzy finally realizes that sometimes things just happen, and those left behind have to accept this and move on.

This book is well written. The storyline is in flashbacks, allowing readers to see what happened. Suzy is dealing with realizing that she did some pretty stupid things to her friend, even though she was trying to reach out and resurrect a friendship that had died. The characters are developed well. Readers will realize that growing up happens at different times for different personalities and that not all kids learn at the same speed or even learn the same lessons or develop the same values. Readers can also feel the pain that Suzy is going through, desperately trying to understand and come to grips with both her friend's untimely death and her own childish behavior.