



2018

It All Comes Down to This

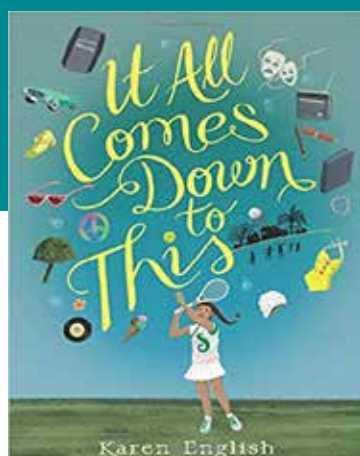
Emma Patton

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Book Review

It All Comes Down to This

Author

Karen English

Illustrator

Reviewer

Emma Patton

Rating

Outstanding

Level

Intermediate, Young
Adult

Pages

368

Year

2017

Publisher

Clarion Books

ISBN

9780544839571

Twelve-year-old Sophie starts off her summer with everything she could want: a best friend right across the street, a beautiful and confident sister, and a house in one of the nicest neighborhoods in Los Angeles. But, as the day her sister has to leave for college approaches, Sophie notices that things aren't that perfect. Her father moves out and her mother becomes more emotionally distant. She notices that white people see her differently because she's black, but her housekeeper scolds her for not having any black friends and for pretending to be white. As she spends the summer days preparing to audition for a local play, writing a story, and trying not to listen to the things the neighborhood kids say about her, she realizes that the more she sees of the world, the less welcoming it seems. The trick is to learn how to fit in without sacrificing the things that make her who she is.

It All Comes Down to This is a vulnerable story about the struggle to belong. The book, set in 1965, covers heavy topics, like extramarital affairs and racism, that may be sensitive to some readers. These issues are viewed through the eyes of a twelve-year-old girl who is trying to navigate the complexities of an increasingly adult world. This is a book about transitions: from girl to woman, insecurity to self-acceptance, and shelter to independence. So many of the emotions that come up for an adolescent girl are never openly discussed, and she may wonder whether she is the only one feeling these things. After reading this book, a girl doesn't have to wonder anymore because she will see her own complicated thoughts and feelings echoed in Sophie's life. Readers on the cusp of adolescence or old enough to look back at this time in their life would be the most suited this book. It All Comes Down to This does what all great literature should do. It reassures the reader, whether adult or adolescent, that they are not alone.

*Contains moderate language and mild sexual content.