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George

Emma Patton

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Book Review

George

Author

Alex Gino

Illustrator

Reviewer

Emma Patton

Rating

Excellent

Level

Primary, Intermediate

Pages

195

Year

2015

Publisher

Scholastic Press

ISBN

9780545812542

George has a boy's body so everyone thinks she must be a boy, but her dream is to one day live life as the girl she knows she is. Her class at school is doing a performance of *Charlotte's Web* and, even though the role of Charlotte is a girl's part, George knows that she is meant to have the part. It could be the perfect way to show her family and friends who she really is and that it's not as strange as they might think. But even if she doesn't get the part, George knows that she can't hide the truth of who she is forever. If she ever wants to be more than a not-quite-right boy, she needs to speak her truth and hope that the people she loves will hear her and help her to become who she dreams of being. With the help of her best friend, George finds the strength to fight to be who she knows she is inside.

Gender identity is a difficult issue to understand, but George does an excellent job of helping a reader to comprehend and empathize with an individual who identifies as transgender. It is important for parents to note that the eventual resolution in this book is not about helping George to realize that she is just confused. Rather, her gender identity is treated as something that is a permanent part of her and must instead be accepted with love. Though George deals with tricky subject matter that could be seen as controversial, the book is not written in a way that feels incendiary. This book could be a great introduction for younger readers to the intricacies of gender identity. For example, though George is biologically a boy, she uses the pronouns "she" and "her" in reference to herself, which could be confusing to a younger reader but serves as a great way to discuss the use of pronouns that feel the most comfortable to the actual individual rather than pronouns that just correspond to biological sex.