



2018

Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret

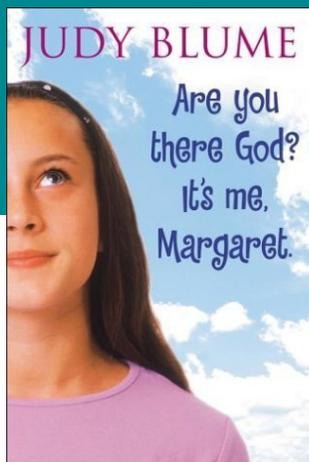
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Book Review

Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret

Author

Judy Blume

Illustrator

Reviewer

Emma Patton

Rating

Dependable

Level

Intermediate, Young Adult

Pages

153

Year

1970

Publisher

Atheneum Books for

ISBN

9781481409940

Margaret just wants to be like everyone else. After her family moves from New York City to a suburban town in New Jersey, Margaret is confronted with questions she's never had to face before. In her new town, every family is heavily involved in their respective church communities, but Margaret's family is not religious. Margaret is also entering a new phase of her life. Her new friends talk about boys and the development of their bodies, and they seem to demand that Margaret do the same. Once she sees how far along these girls are, she suddenly feels so immature and fears that they will see how childish she is. As Margaret grapples with these issues that feel so personal and often feels alone, she reaches out to God. She doesn't know what religion she is or what she believes, but she knows that she is feeling lost and confused, and, at the very least, prayer gives her someone to talk to.

Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret is a classic book about a tricky phase of life. Judy Blume does not shy away from the more detailed aspects of physical and emotional development in adolescence, unlike other authors, and this honesty could make some readers uncomfortable. While some could see the details as inappropriate to discuss in a novel, all are realities that female readers will have to face in their development, so reading the characters discussing it all so openly could actually normalize those topics for readers. Because physical attraction is a large part of development, there is some sexual content, but it is only ever hinted at and never directly addressed. This book could be a great way for a parent to start conversations with readers about their experiences with peer pressure, as well as their feelings about their developing body or complex issues like religion. Though this is not exactly a comfortable read, it could be an important one and may help a reader in this period of development feel less alone.

*Contains mild sexual content.