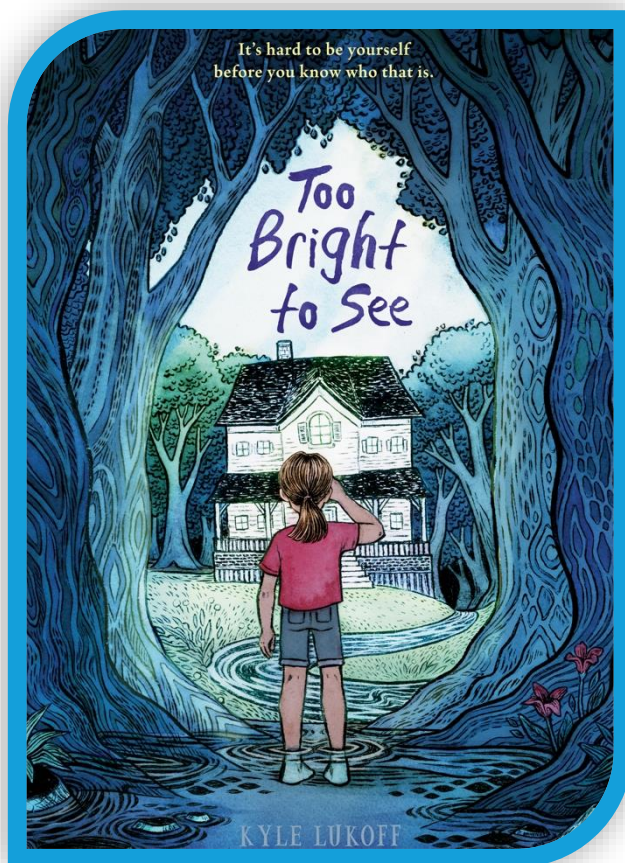




Book of the Month

Presented by ADL's Education Department

About the Book of the Month Parent/Family Discussion Guide: This collection of featured books is from Books Matter: The Best Kid Lit on Bias, Diversity and Social Justice. The books teach about bias and prejudice, promote respect for diversity, encourage social action and reinforce themes addressed in education programs of [A World of Difference® Institute](#), ADL's international anti-bias education and diversity training provider. For parents, guardians and family members, reading the books listed on this site with your children and integrating the concepts into your interactions with them is an excellent way to help children grapple with and learn about these important principles.



Too Bright to See

Kyle Lukoff (Author)

ISBN: 978-0593111154

Publisher: Dial Books

Year Published: 2021

Age Range: 9–12

Book Themes

Acting as an Ally, Death and Grief, Identity, Transgender Identity

About the Book

It's the summer before middle school, and eleven-year-old Bug's best friend Moira has decided the two of them need to use the next few months to prepare. For Moira, this means figuring out the right clothes to wear, learning how to apply makeup, and deciding which boys are cuter in their yearbook photos than in real

life. But none of this is all that appealing to Bug, who doesn't particularly want to spend more time trying to understand what it means to be a girl. Besides, there's something more important to worry about: A ghost is haunting Bug's eerie old house in rural Vermont...and maybe haunting Bug in particular. As Bug begins to untangle the mystery of who this ghost is and what they're trying to say, an altogether different truth comes to light—Bug is transgender.

Conversation Starters

Whether you read the book along with your child or your child reads it on their own and you discuss it later, use these open-ended questions to deepen the conversation. Remember not to judge their responses and to listen thoughtfully and engage in a conversation that helps them expand upon their understanding of the book and its themes.

- What happens in the book?
- What do you think about Bug when you first meet them, and how does your understanding of them change throughout the book?
- There are several times in the book when Bug looks in the mirror, and they don't feel like it's them in the mirror; they don't see themselves. Why do you think this happens? How is this different for Bug towards the end of the book?
- Why do you think the author made this book a ghost story? What is the underlying message that the ghost is trying to communicate to Bug?
- What was it like when Bug and Mom meet with the principal, Mrs. Campbell? How do you think Bug felt to hear about the rules and policies that will help them feel safe and included? Do you think there is something else that Bug needs?
- What is Moira and Bug's friendship like? How did it change throughout their lives, and what do you think it will be like in middle school? Have you ever had a friendship that changed?
- How do you think middle school will be for Bug, and what do you think they will need to feel safe and included?
- In what ways is this book about identity? Does the book make you reflect on your own identity and the identity of others around you?
- Why do you think the book is called *Too Bright to See*?
- What do you think is the author's message of the book?

Talking Points

Below are some important considerations that will make this a learning opportunity for your child and your family.

1. Transgender People and Topics

Talk with your child about what it means to be transgender, which is one of the book's main themes. Remind them about how Bug came to realize they are transgender. Elicit and explain that transgender is a term for people whose gender identity differs from how they were assigned at birth (e.g., assigned boy or girl). Tell your child that even though people are assigned a sex at birth, that gender is an internal sense of who one is and can't be known by just looking at someone. In Bug's case, this means that when Bug was a baby and young child, people thought Bug was a girl because of their body but later Bug realized and told people they are actually a boy. Talk with your child about whether they know any famous people who are transgender or non-binary such as Laverne Cox, Janet Mock, Jazz Jennings, Demi Lovato, Elliott Page, Isis King, Amandla Stenberg, Caitlyn Jenner, etc. Discuss some of the challenges that people who are transgender face like bullying, discrimination, being made fun of, harassment and violence. Talk with them about the rules and policies that the principal of Bug's middle school shared with Bug and Mom to help transgender students feel safe and included and discuss whether your child's school has rules and policies like

these. If not, talk about what you can do in school to advocate for these rules and policies and other ways to support students who are transgender.

2. Acting as an Ally

Talk with your child about some of the challenges Bug faced or that they (or other transgender people) might face in school and in the world such as bias, bullying, exclusion, ridicule, discrimination, violence, etc. Then, talk with them about what it means to act as an ally to someone who is being bullied or the target of bias. Define **ally** as someone who helps or stands up for someone who is being bullied or the target of bias. Talk about whether anyone in the book acted as an ally to Bug and if so, who acted as an ally and how. Ask your child if they've ever acted as an ally to someone who was targeted based on their identity and share experiences you've had with engaging in ally behavior, and what difference acting as an ally made in those situations. Emphasize that there are many ways you can act as an ally; use ADL's [6 Ways to Be an Ally](#) to explore those various ways. Talk with them about ways they have in the past and can act as an ally in the future.

3. LGBTQ Pride

Talk with your child about how the month of June is LGBTQ Pride Month—an annual celebration of the history, achievements and contributions of LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer) people in the U.S. Explain to them that the reason a month is dedicated to honoring the LGBTQ community is because sometimes LGBTQ people are not well represented (in media, books, curriculum, etc.) or included when we discuss and teach history; this is due to exclusion and bias. This is also true for other themed months such as Black History and Women's History Month. Talk with your child about the importance of being represented and seeing yourself reflected in media, curriculum, etc.—and not only represented but represented well and in complex, diverse ways and without stereotypes (the false idea that all members of a group are the same and think and behave in the same way). Discuss why stereotypes are unfair and explain that it is important we work to challenge stereotypes and encourage all people to express themselves, explore their interests, and follow their dreams. Elicit and explain that while these themed months are important because they increase visibility to the people in these groups and the struggles they've had to face, it is equally important that LGBTQ people are represented and included throughout the year

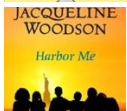
Other Books You May Like

The book cover for 'George' features the title 'GEORGE' in large, colorful, block letters. The background is white.

George by Alex Gino, www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/childrens-literature/george

The book cover for 'Gracefully Grayson' has a yellow background with the title 'Gracefully' in a small font at the top and 'Grayson' in a larger font below it. There are three white t-shirt icons arranged vertically.

Gracefully Grayson by Ami Polonsky, www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/childrens-literature/gracefully-grayson

The book cover for 'Harbor Me' has a black background with the title 'Harbor Me' in white at the bottom. Above the title, the author's name 'JACQUELINE WOODSON' is written in white. There are silhouettes of people at the bottom.

Harbor Me by Jacqueline Woodson, www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/childrens-literature/harbor-me

ADL Additional Resources

The following are curriculum and resources on transgender people and topics, identity, and ally behavior.

Curriculum Resources

Identity-Based Bullying, www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/lesson-plans/identity-based-bullying.

Who Am I? Identity Poems, www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/lesson-plans/who-am-i-identity-poems.

Websites

6 Ways to Be an Ally

www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/6-ways-to-be-an-ally-en-espanol

Some simple things a student can do to be an ally to targets of name-calling and bullying. (Also in Spanish.)

Beyond the Binary: Discussing Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Identity in K-12 Schools

www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/beyond-the-binary-discussing-transgender-and-gender-non

To provide a safe and welcoming learning environment for all students, it is important to discuss transgender and gender non-conforming identity and issues in schools. This guide provides suggestions and resources.

Let's Get it Right: Using Correct Pronouns and Names

www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/lets-get-it-right-using-correct-pronouns-and-names

Educator resource about using accurate pronouns and names to convey understanding and respect for all people, especially for those who are transgender, gender non-conforming and non-binary.

Parent, Family and Caregiver Resources

www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/parent-family-and-caregiver-resources

Strategies, tips, guiding principles and resources to help parents, family members and caregivers impart values and principles to the children in their lives.

Safe and Inclusive Schools for All

www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/safe-and-inclusive-schools-for-all

Tips to foster a safe, respectful and inclusive learning environment.

Table Talk: Family Conversations about Current Events

www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/table-talk

Provides the tools parents and family members need to engage their families in conversations about important news stories and other timely discussions about societal and world events. Includes discussion guides containing a topic summary, questions to start the conversation and dig deeper, ideas for taking action and additional resources.

Children's Books

Below are links to lists of recommended anti-bias and multicultural books for the indicated category.

LGBTQ People & Homophobia/Heterosexism, [www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?childrens-lit-select-all-6=1&tid\[194\]=194&tid\[195\]=195&tid\[196\]=196&tid\[197\]=197&tid\[198\]=198&tid\[199\]=199](http://www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?childrens-lit-select-all-6=1&tid[194]=194&tid[195]=195&tid[196]=196&tid[197]=197&tid[198]=198&tid[199]=199)

LGBTQ People & Homophobia/Heterosexism: Transgender and Gender Non-Conformity Identity, [www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?tid\[199\]=199](http://www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?tid[199]=199)