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Suggested Reads

The Sea in Winter

Christine Day

Indian No More

Charlene Willing McManis and Traci Sorell

Ancestor Approved

Intertribal Stories for Kids

We Are the Water Protectors

Carole Lindstrom

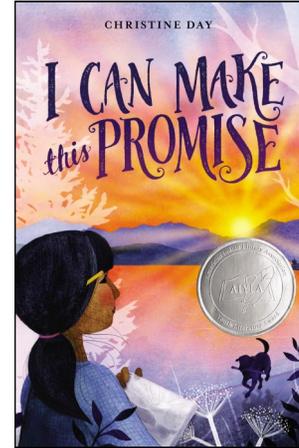
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Discussion Guide

I Can Make This Promise by Christine Day



From Booklist

It's summertime in Seattle for 12-year-old Edie, and between animating a short film with her best friends and adjusting to new braces, she is keeping busy. Nothing could have prepared her for a discovery in her parents' attic: a box full of photographs and letters belonging to a woman named Edith Graham, someone whose likeness is uncannily similar to Edie's. Edie always knew her mother was both Native American and adopted, but who was Edith Graham? As we follow Edie in unraveling this mystery, Day (herself having ties to the Upper Skagit tribe) offers readers a rich story that is both powerfully genuine in its conflicts and delightfully imaginative in its resolutions. The narrative explores issues relevant to tween readers, such as maneuvering through a friendship that is changing, coping with painful braces, and confronting family secrets. If that weren't enough, this debut also offers compelling historical knowledge about the Pacific Northwest Native American tribes, the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978, and what it means to find one's heritage.

--Stephanie Harper, Booklist (2010)



Discussion Topics

1. “There are countless tribal nations throughout this land.” (pg. 187) How many federally recognized tribes currently exist within the United States of America? Does this number accurately represent the diversity of Native peoples? Why or why not?
2. Edie and her family live in ancestral Suquamish and Duwamish territories (Seattle, Washington). Who are the Native peoples of the area where you live (visit Native-Land.ca for more information)? Did they sign any treaties? What happened to them? What are they up to now? In what ways are they represented in your community?
3. Where might you learn more about the land you inhabit, the history of those lands, and how to actively be part of a better future going forward together? How might you share what you learn with your community?
4. After finding the box in the attic, Edie asks her parents, “Why am I Edith?” and “Where did my name come from?” (pg. 49) What is the story behind Edie’s name? By the end of the book, how does she feel about her name?
5. Why are our individual names important? How do our names connect us to the places and people we come from? What is the story behind your own name?
6. “The recognition dawns on me slowly. I do know this landscape. I do know this place.” (pg. 236) What are some significant locations throughout this story? What are the histories behind these places? How do these histories impact Edie’s journey? How do these settings connect Edie to the other characters? Are there locations that are significant to you around your own home? How do they impact you?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM AUTHOR’S WEBSITE

Author Biography



Christine Day (Upper Skagit) grew up in Seattle, nestled between the sea, the mountains, and the pages of her favorite books. Her debut novel, *I Can Make This Promise*, was a best book of the year from *Kirkus*, *School Library Journal*, NPR, and the Chicago Public Library, as well as a Charlotte Huck Award Honor Book, and an American Indian Youth Literature Award Honor Book. Her second novel, *The Sea in Winter*, was an Indie Kids’ Next List selection, a Junior Library Guild selection, and the recipient of three starred reviews. She also wrote the forthcoming *She Persisted: Maria Tallchief*, an early reader biography in a new series inspired by Chelsea Clinton’s bestselling picture book. Christine lives in the Pacific Northwest with her family.

FROM THE AUTHOR’S WEBSITE
PHOTO FROM THE AUTHOR’S WEBSITE
