

Children and Young Adult Book Review
Middle School
Anything Could Happen

Educator Reviewer: Margaret Robbins
Student Reviewer: Stacey Dillard



Walton, W. (2015). *Anything Could Happen*. New York, NY: Scholastic.

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Pages: 288

Educator Review:

Tretch Farm is a teenager who lives in a small town where everyone knows each other. He has a kind family and steadfast friends who support him through tough times at school where not everyone is kind to sensitive kids. However, his family and friends do not know his biggest secret: he's gay and in love with his best friend, Matt Gooby. Both Tretch's parents and Matt make well meaning, but misguided attempts to encourage his romance with fellow bibliophile Lana Kramer, but really, Tretch's heart belongs to Matt. But how will Matt react when he finds out? How will Tretch's world change when people learn his secret? Eventually, Tretch becomes more comfortable in his own skin and even manages to save the school dance with moves that he used to dance only with himself. He comes to realize that not everything in life gets resolved the way we want it to, but he will still continue to be happy.

Tretch is an interesting and multifaceted character with a voice that is charming, believable, and sincere.

This book is a heartwarming and refreshing story about a gay teenage boy who enjoys his small town life, but who is learning how to articulate his true thoughts and feelings. He faces struggles, such as getting bullied at school, but he finds solace in his grandparents' farm, the local bookstore, and his loyal friends. This book will appeal to all pre-teens and teenagers, as all people can relate to the feeling of loving someone and knowing it will never be fully reciprocated. In particular, it will appeal to LGBTQ young people who are learning to appreciate their identities and who are searching for true friends. Tretch is an interesting and multifaceted character with a voice that is charming, believable, and sincere.

Margaret Robbins
The University of Georgia, Athens, GA

Student Review:

Anything Could Happen was about a teenage boy who was dealing with the situation of being gay with no one knowing and having a crush on his best friend. This book is significant to me because it told a romance story that did not end in the traditional guy getting the girl, the girl getting the guy, the girl getting the girl or the guy getting the guy. It was different. In the end, Tretch did not end up in a relationship with Matt, his best friend, that was more than friends. Instead, he lost his romantic feelings for him. In the end, Tretch cared for Matt the way Matt cared for him.

I would not recommend this book to anyone who has something against homosexuality or to someone who is in the seventh grade or below. Perhaps people who have lived through this same situation or someone who enjoys a different type of romance story would enjoy this book. What I liked most about this book was the quirky humor of it. It had this way of making you giggle at the simplest moments.

Stacey Dillard
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8th Grade