

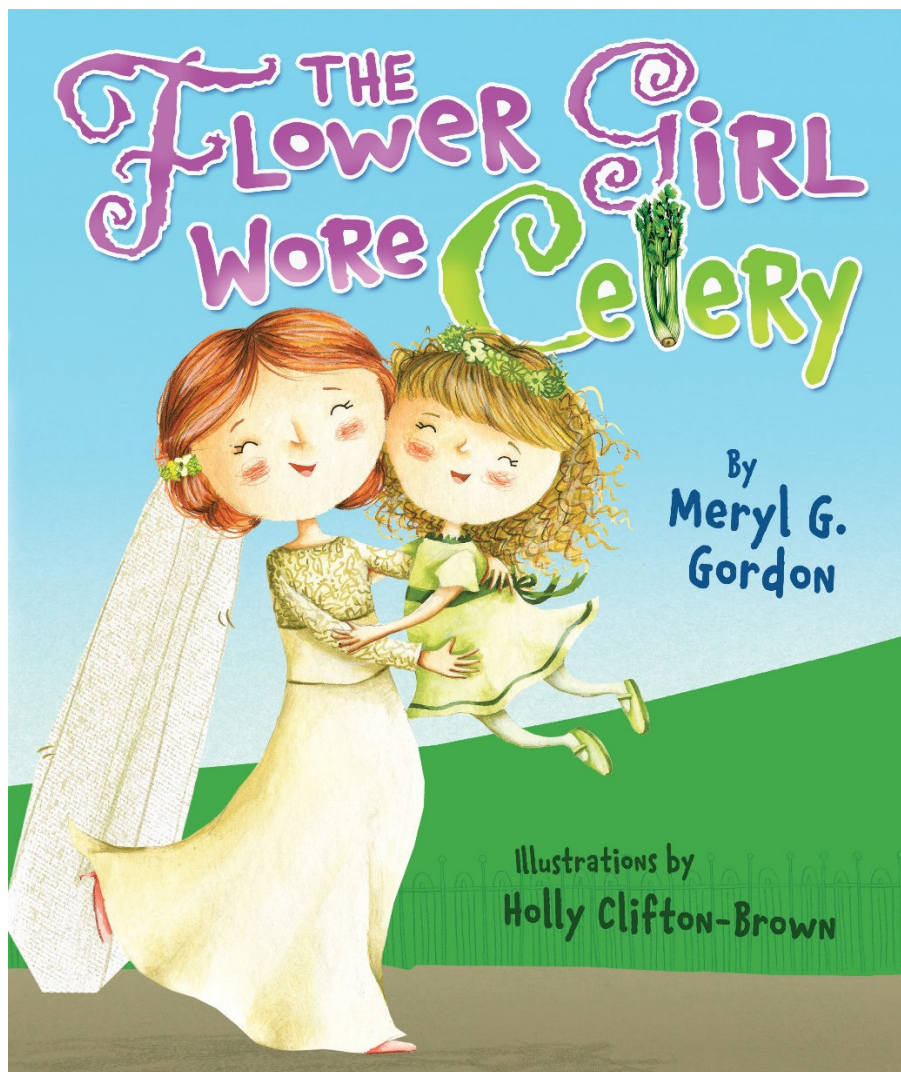
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Reading and Activity Guide



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Ages 4-9 | Grades PreK-4
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About the Book

Emma can't wait for her cousin Hannah's wedding. She's going to be the flower girl. That means she'll wear a celery dress and walk down the aisle with the ring bear, leading the way for the happy bride and groom. Or at least, that's what Emma assumes. But nothing turns out to be quite what she's expecting, as Hannah's new spouse turns out to be another bride!

With the striking down of DOMA and the broad acceptance and welcoming of same sex marriage in the non-Orthodox Jewish community, this is the first book in the marketplace about a lesbian Jewish wedding. Jewish wedding customs are woven into the story, making this book not just about same sex marriages but about all Jewish weddings.

About the Author

Meryl G. Gordon was raised on the south shore of Long Island near the beach, which is her favorite place in the world. She graduated from Yale University with a B.A. in Mathematics and Philosophy. She holds an M.A. in Computer Science from Iona College. Her lifelong passion is supporting, promoting and advocating for lifelong Jewish education. Meryl and her husband live in Stamford, Connecticut, where they raised their three children.

About the Illustrator

Holly Clifton-Brown was born in London and attended Chelsea School of Art, Media, and Design and Bristol UWE Faculty of Art, Media and Design, where she attained a B.A. in Illustration. Her work has been exhibited at The London Transport Museum. She is the author and illustrator of *Annie Hoot and the Knitting Extravaganza* and has illustrated other picture books including *Big Bouffant* and *Big Birthday*.

"The entire affair is oyl - such a joy. Clifton-Brown's colorful and humorous illustrations of the white family with round faces and rosy red cheeks depict a most happy assembly. A wedding of the new century joyously wrapped in tradition." -- *Kirkus Reviews*

Questions:

For before reading:

1. Have you ever been to a wedding before? If yes, what was it like? If no, what do you imagine a wedding is like?
2. Have you ever been confused by a new word? How did you learn what it meant?
3. What does it mean to have an imagination?

For reading together:

1. What does Emma imagine while she is talking to Hannah on the telephone?
2. In Emma's imagination, what does Jacob look like?
3. Why does Emma cry about her dress?
4. What is the difference between a "bear" and a "bearer"?
5. Did Emma have fun at the wedding? What does she think about it?

For post-reading discussion:

1. What about the story did you like?
2. Name a few ways that the wedding was different than how Emma imagined it would be.
3. Did you ever expect something that turned out different than what you expected?
4. A Jewish wedding has many customs. What are some customs that are included in Hannah and Alex's wedding?

Suggested activities:

Flower Girls and Ring Bears:

Emma's imagination is very literal. Use tag board circles or paper plates to make masks to transform yourself into a flower girl or ring bear. Use bits of construction paper, crepe paper and pipe cleaners to embellish masks. Have a parade to show off your creations.

Silly Sayings and Misunderstood Idioms:

Explain that the English language includes phrases which have (figurative) meanings that we understand differently than their (literal) dictionary definitions.

Some examples: small talk, piece of cake, break the ice, on the tip of your tongue, play it by ear. Use an idiom dictionary to find more.

Ask students to get out a piece of paper and to number it, 1-5. Read them five idioms aloud and ask them to write down the meanings (or to guess if they don't know). Go over your answers together. For more fun, ask students to make up their own idioms.

Homonym Guessing Game:

Emma is confused by the phrase “ring bearer” in the story. Bear is a word that has two meanings—an animal (like a grizzly or a polar bear) and to support or carry (like to bear weight). This kind of word is called a homonym.

Together make a list of homonyms (bat, address, bow, change, duck, foot, fall, seal, sink, rock, jam, iron, groom, trip, tear, tire, etc.). Then, write the word and definitions on individual scraps of paper (for example, one would say ‘bear – an animal’ and another would say ‘bear – to carry’). Fold the slips and put them in a small basket or box. Divide group into teams and play Pictionary or Charades using the slips.

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