

# Prince and Knight by Daniel Haack, illustrated by Stevie Lewis

## Identities & Themes

- White/European American
- Family structure: Same-gender relationships
- Identity affirmation

## Teacher Reflection Questions

1. Thinking back to your childhood, what did you learn about sexual orientation and same-gender relationships? How has this understanding changed as an adult?
2. How has your understanding of gender stereotypes changed as you've gotten older?
3. What might you need to consider before having conversations about gender stereotypes and sexual orientation with your students in this class?
4. As your students move through their own journeys of gender identity and expression and sexual orientation, which can be both deeply personal and very public, what support do you think they might need from you and the larger school community?

## Background Information for Teacher

This book offers an alternative to the common story of the prince needing a bride. Books that show positive representation of same-gender relationships like this one are important tools in an anti-bias classroom. By sharing books like this, you can help normalize same-gender relationships, provide a space for questions and discussion, and introduce the concept of counter-narratives (books that tell familiar stories from a non-traditional character). These discussions can give children tools to respect differences and be able to notice, name, and reject bias.

While this book includes a positive representation of same-gender relationships, it also includes many gender stereotypes that are important to discuss with your students. Gender stereotypes ascribe oversimplified, generalized characteristics or attributes to a certain group based on gender. Gender stereotypes create assumptions for how an individual should think, look, speak, or act based on their perceived gender. This can cause judgment and bias towards individuals who don't hold these characteristics and unfair expectations for individuals to fit into these stereotypes.

To learn more about the difference between gender stereotypes, gender expression, and gender identity, please see the **Gender Diversity Primer**.

### Anti-Bias Education Tenets

- ☐ Empathy & Understanding
- ☒ Healthy Complex Identities
- ☒ Respect Across Differences
- ☒ Notice, Name, & Reject Bias
- ☐ Responsiveness & Action

### Social-Emotional Learning Competencies

- ☒ Self-Awareness
- ☐ Self-Management
- ☒ Social Awareness
- ☒ Responsible Decision Making
- ☒ Relationship Skills

## Read this to the students before reading the book:

*In a far away kingdom, a king and queen are preparing for their son to take the throne and want to help him find a bride. They travel far and wide in search for the perfect partner, but the prince is looking for something different. Listen to find out who he's looking for.*

## Discussion Questions (essential questions bolded)

1. **How is this book similar to other stories about princes and knights that you know about? How is it different?**
2. What did the prince mean when he told his parents, "I appreciate that you tried, but I'm looking for something different in a partner by my side."
3. How might someone feel when they realize their sexual orientation is not what others thought it might be or expected it to be?
4. **Describe how the prince and knight slayed the dragon.**
5. **How did the prince's kingdom and parents react when he finally found his partner, the knight?**
6. **Everyone in the prince's life assumed that he was heterosexual (attracted to people of the opposite gender). Why might it be a problem to make this kind of an assumption about others?**
7. **What are gender stereotypes? What gender stereotypes can you identify in this book?**

## Journal Prompts & Extension Activities

1. What gender stereotypes do you notice around you? What are some gender stereotypes you'd like to change or disagree with?
2. Collect a variety of fairytales and other stereotypical stories for your students to examine. Have them choose one and write an essay about the stereotypes they notice.
3. Invite students to take a fairytale or other stereotypical story and rewrite it in a way that counters a stereotype.



## Literacy Connections

- Fantasy
- Identify details in the text
- Identify theme or main message
- Describe setting
- Describe characters/  
Character development
- Character point of view
- Use illustrations/pictures/  
photos to gain information
- Make predictions
- Make inferences
- Make text connections (to  
self, text, the world)
- Describe major plot events
- Sequence events