



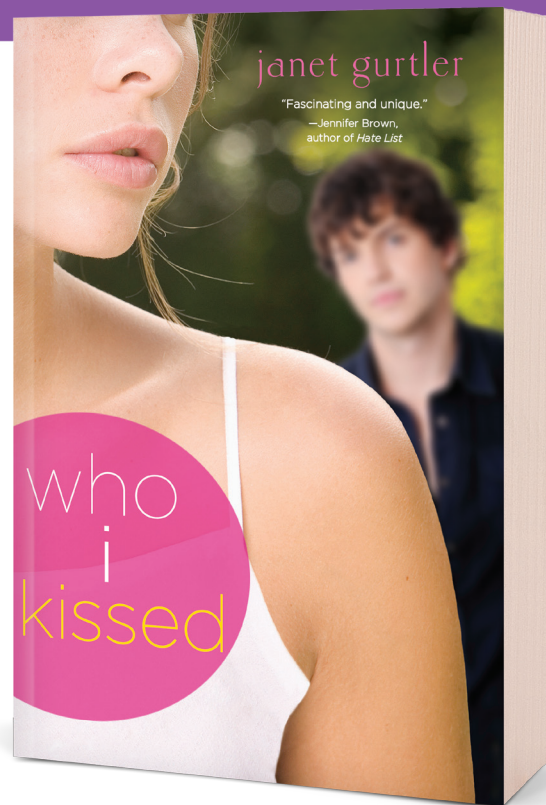
Who I Kissed by Janet Gurtler

Discussion Guide

She never thought a kiss could kill...

Samantha didn't mean to hurt anyone. She was just trying to fit in...and she wanted to make Zee a little jealous after he completely ditched her for a prettier girl. So she kissed Alex. And then he died—right in her arms.

Was she really the only person in the entire school who didn't know about his peanut allergy? Why did she have to eat that peanut butter sandwich right before the party? Overnight Sam turns into the school pariah and a media sensation explodes. Consumed with guilt, abandoned by her friends, and in jeopardy of losing her swimming scholarship, she'll have to find a way to forgive herself before anyone else will.



About the Author

JANET GURTLER lives in Calgary, Canada with her husband and son and a chubby Chihuahua who refuses to eat dog food. Janet does not live in an Igloo or play hockey, but she does love maple syrup and says “eh” a lot. Visit Janet at www.janetgurtler.com

Enrich your book discussion group with these discussion questions and delve deeper into the issues presented in *Who I Kissed*. The guide is free and may be printed out for or photocopied for use in the classroom, library, bookstore, or at home.

Praise for Janet Gurtler

- “Rich in characterization, Gurtler’s novel wrestles with some serious issues... Just right for fans of Sarah Dessen and Jodi Picoult.” — *Booklist*
- “Cute and quirky, with sentimentality reminiscent of Judy Blume, this is a book for the keeper shelf — one that readers will devour again and again!”
— *RT Book Reviews*, 4.5 stars
- “Subtle, believable, and satisfying...[a] quick and heartbreaking read...”
— *School Library Journal*
- “[You] will find yourself inspired.” — *Girl’s Life*



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Discussion Questions

- 1 This story is told from the point of view of Samantha Waxman, an avid competitive swimmer who has moved to a new town. Kids at her old school spread false rumors about her and she is happy to have a chance to start over.

How would you feel if you had to move to a new school this year?
- 2 Taylor, another swimmer on Sam's team hosts a party where Sam meets and kisses Alex. Why do you think she kissed Alex? How do you think the kiss makes Zee feel? Have you ever done something to make another person jealous? What happened?
- 3 Describe how Taylor changes by the end of the story.
- 4 Do you think Sam was to blame for Alex's death? How might his death have been prevented? How would you treat Sam if she went to your school? What would you say to her?
- 5 Do you know anyone with a fatal food allergy? Do you think that your school should be peanut free? Why or why not?
- 6 Why do you think that the media left Sam's name out of the news? Do you think the public had the right to know her name? Explain your answer.
- 7 As Sam is dealing with the death of Alex, she is hit hard by the loss of her mom who died many years before.

Why do you think she reacts the way she does? How have her and her dad dealt with her mom in the past? How does she start to come to terms with her mom's death throughout the story?
- 8 Why do you think that Sam refuses to go back to swimming? How does not swimming affect her life?



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- 9 Sam wants to go to Alex's funeral but finds she is unable to get out of the car. What would you do if you were in Sam's place?
- 10 Sam is afraid of confronting Chloe, Alex's sister. What would you say to Chloe if you were Sam?
- 11 Aunt Allie is a quirky loving Aunt who longs to be a bigger part of Sam's life. Why do you think Sam's dad had not included her more? How do you feel about psychic phenomena?
- 12 Aunt Allie says this to Sam: *"Before we speak with your angels, before they will be willing to reveal anything, you'll need to confront your feelings. You need to look deep in your heart. There are things you need to do."* What things does Aunt Allie want Sam to do? Why?
- 13 Discuss why you think Sam got so upset after she saw Zee at the school doing Parkour.
- 14 What do you think Sam's mom's necklace symbolizes in the story?
- 15 Sam reads some nasty things being posted about her on Facebook. How is cyber bullying defined? Why do you think people use social media to bully others? What can be done about it?
- 16 How did you feel when Zee took Samantha to "meet" Alex? Do you want Zee and Samantha to be a couple?
- 17 How do you think that Samantha was treated when she returned to school after the news broadcast that Alex died from an asthma attack and not from his peanut allergy?