

Title: *You're Welcome, Universe*
Author: Whitney Gardner
Category: Different Abilities

Respondent's Name and Grade: Danil P., 9th Grade

Date Responded: July 20, 2021

1) *What is the main plot of this book?*

The main plot of *You're Welcome Universe* is about a deaf teen named Julia. Julia got kicked out of her old all-deaf school for painting a wall with graffiti, causing her to transition to a school for hearing people for the first time in her life.

2) *Which character do you most identify with and why?*

Throughout the book, I did not connect with any of the characters, they did not seem relatable to me.

3) *What do you believe is the main message of this book?*

I believe that the main message of the book is to not put yourself above others. I believe that this is the message because throughout the book, Julia always did put herself above others,, which caused her to not have any friends. However, when she started treating other people better, she got a friend, and her life got better.

4) *Do you think the main message of this book was effectively integrated into the story?*

The message was effectively integrated into the story.

5) *If two or more perspectives on an important topic were explored/presented in this book, which one did you agree with and why?*

I could not find a topic where 2 or more perspectives were represented.

6) *In what ways (if any) were your beliefs about a topic changed or reaffirmed through reading this book?*

From reading the book, I realized how difficult it must be for a deaf person to communicate with someone who does not understand sign language.

7) *What perspective, if any, do you think was missing from this book?*

I can not think of a perspective that is missing from the book.

8) *Did this book encourage you to pursue any topics further through more reading, research, action etc, and if so, how?*

This book encouraged me to learn more about sign language and lip reading.

9) *What type of reader (based on age, interests, perspectives, etc.) would you suggest this book to?*

I would suggest this book to someone between the ages of 12-18, who is interested in learning more about the struggles of deaf people

10) *What other book(s) have you read that you think would make a good addition to this category of the perspectives bibliography and why?*

I do not know of a book that would make a good addition to the category.

Respondent's Name and Grade: Name: Julianna V., 10th Grade

Date Response Submitted: August 3, 2021

1. *What is the main plot of the book?*

In the book *You're Welcome, Universe*, the reader follows the main protagonist, 16 year old Julia. However, Julia is unique because she is deaf and she lives with her two moms who also happen to be deaf. Recently, Julia's so-called "best friend" ratted her out, and got Julia expelled by exposing the graffiti Julia made on school property. Julia is forced to be transferred to a new school where she will face many new challenges because she is the only deaf girl. However, Julia makes a new friend, and suddenly becomes entangled into an all-out graffiti war with an unlikely rival.

2. *Which character did you most identify with and why?*

I would say I most likely identify with Julia's new friend, who is nicknamed YP. YP has dealt with a great deal of drama and heartache in her life, especially with her journey of weight loss and weight gain. However, YP does whatever she can to help and look out for those who she loves and cares for. I feel the same way when it comes to caring for others; I try my best to help my friends/family in times when they need assistance or comfort and I have their backs.

3. *What do you believe is the main message of this book?*

I believe the main message of the book has to do with dishonesty. There were many instances in the book where the characters (and mainly the protagonist) had lied and gone against the other characters' backs. This book showed some of the severe consequences that come with lying. This book is teaching the audience that lying is not always the solution to get out of a difficult situation and that honesty is better than deception.

4. *Do you think the main message of this book was effectively integrated into the story, or did it come across as too "preachy"?*

I believe that the main message was effectively integrated into the story. As I previously mentioned, there were instances throughout the story where all the characters at one point or another were telling a lie. I believe the author did this on purpose because she strongly wanted to convey her message to her audience, and she did this effectively by writing different scenarios that explain the message.

5. *If two or more perspectives on an important topic were explored/presented in this book, which one did you agree with and why?*

The perspective told in this book had to do with Julia being deaf. Some characters in the story supposed that Julia may not be the smartest person because she is deaf. However, I disagree with their perspective because Julia has proved in many instances throughout the book that she is indeed smarter than what people perceive her to be.

6. *In what ways (if any) were your beliefs about a topic changed or reaffirmed through reading this book?*

To be honest, going into this book, I did not have a great understanding about deaf people and how they feel since I am not deaf, nor have I talked with a person who is deaf. This book has truly educated me more in an important topic that I feel needs to be discussed more often. I don't really hear much about the perspectives of deaf people, that is why I had such little understanding about this topic going into this book. This book taught me that being deaf is harder than what it seems.

7. *What perspective, if any, do you think was missing from this book?*

I wish the author incorporated the perspective of Julia's new friend, YP. Since YP is kind-hearted, she decided to learn sign language so it would be easier for her to communicate with

Julia, rather than communicate via text. I would have liked the author to incorporate the perspective of YP, and the process that she had to go through to learn sign language because I'm sure it must have taken her practice.

8. *Did this book encourage you to pursue any topics further through more reading, research, action, etc., and if so, how?*

This book interested me into reading more YA fiction books about this topic. For example, I am considering reading *The Silence Between Us* written by Alison Gervais, and this book also deals with the topic regarding deaf people.

9. *What type of reader (based on age, interests, perspectives, etc.) would you suggest this book to?*

I feel that this book is good for any reader. It is an easier read, however, I would recommend this book for any teens ages 14+ due to some mature language throughout the book.

10. *What other book(s) you have read that you think would make a good addition to this category of the Perspectives Bibliography, and why?*

Previously this year, I read a book called *We Are Not Free* written by Traci Chee. This was a historical fiction book that had many different perspectives of Japanese-Americans. This book takes place right after the Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor. Throughout this book, the reader follows the different perspectives of the many Japanese-Americans and their journeys living in multiple concentration camps for the duration of WWII. This is one of my favorite books I read this year, and I rated it 5 out of 5 stars. It was a true eye opener about how these people were treated, and I feel that this book would be great in the Race and Ethnicity category of the Perspectives Bibliography.