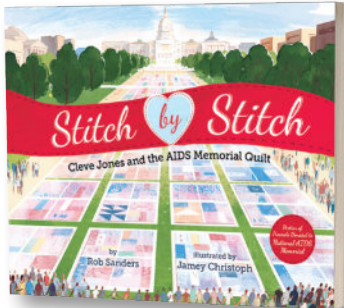




Celebrate LGBTQ+ History with *Stitch By Stitch*



From the blanket that his great-grandmother made for him as a boy, to the friends he gathered together in San Francisco as a young man, to the idea for a monument sewn of fabric and thread, Cleve Jones' extraordinary life seems to have been stitched together bit by bit, piece by piece.

Mentored by Harvey Milk, Jones first had the vision for what became the AIDS Memorial Quilt during a candlelight memorial for Milk in 1985. The AIDS Memorial Quilt grew to be one of the largest public arts projects ever and helped grow awareness of HIV and AIDS.

The picture book biography, *Stitch by Stitch: Cleve Jones and the AIDS Memorial Quilt* by Rob Sanders, is a touching tribute to Jones' life of advocacy and the positive effects of a community working towards a common goal. The book includes a discussion guide, glossary, more information about Cleve Jones and Gert McMullen, and a timeline.

An excerpt from the discussion guide provides strategies for sharing nonfiction with children and sample answers to questions that children may have after reading the book.

When reading any book of nonfiction, questions may arise. It is also to be expected that children's questions will go deeper and deeper with each reading of a book. Create an atmosphere where children feel their questions are welcome by being honest, succinct, and by providing answers based in fact.

Feel free to ask the child, "What do you think?" or "How are you feeling?" Remember, you don't have to have the answers to every question. There's nothing wrong with saying "I don't know." or "Let me think about that."

The following are some sample answers to questions that children might have after reading *Stitch by Stitch*.

Q: Is there a cure for AIDS today?

A: Since the 1980s, thanks to medical advances, medication has helped people living with HIV live full lives. However, people who aren't treated can still die of complications from AIDS.

Q: How do people get HIV/AIDS?

A: HIV/AIDS is hard to get. It's not like a cold or the flu. HIV/AIDS can be passed from person to person through unprotected sex, sharing needles, and in other ways. The most important things to know is that transmission HIV/AIDS can be prevented, that there are treatments if someone is diagnosed with HIV/AIDS, and that you can be friends with someone with HIV/AIDS and not worry.

Q: Was HIV/AIDS just a disease that gay men got?

A: It may have seemed that way at first, but over time doctors and scientists realized that anyone could contract the disease. The doctors and scientists also discovered that the disease could be prevented and treated.

Q: Why didn't the government do anything about HIV/AIDS?

A: At the time, people who got HIV/AIDS were seen as living on the fringes of society, like Cleve and his friends. Members of the LGBTQ+ community were already being discriminated against and treated unfairly. Ignoring their illness was another form of discrimination.

Q: What is discrimination and why does it happen?

A: Discrimination is unfair treatment of people based on who they are. People are discriminated against based on race, gender, age, sexual orientation, and other characteristics. Discrimination is often caused by fear, misunderstanding, anger, and/or hate.

This Article's Author

Rob Sanders is a former elementary school teacher who writes funny and fierce fiction and nonfiction. He is the author of such acclaimed titles as *Pride: The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag*, *Stonewall: A Building. An Uprising. A Revolution.*, and *Peaceful Fights for Equal Rights*. He lives in Brandon, Florida. Visit his website or follow him on Twitter.