

How To Use: CHOICES

Discussion Prompts

Here are some ideas for things to talk about while sharing the book - you could ask a few different questions each time you read it.

The title page shows a communal changing room - you could use the spread to talk about using lockers, taking pre-swim showers and the overall process of getting ready to swim in a public pool.

Look closely at the 'They can be little choices...' page together. Which ice cream would you choose and why?

Would you be brave enough to go on the biggest slide? It looks quite scary, but it might be worth it!

The 'Or to blend in with the others' page shows a class using pool noodles. You could talk about what they're used for and how they help people who are learning to swim. Why do you think they're called 'noodles'?

The main character is shown applying sunscreen in the toilets while an adult in the background puts a cap on a child's head. We have lots of methods to protect ourselves from the sun. Can you think of any other ways? Maybe you wear sunglasses or stay in the shade on hot days.

Can you find the pool lifeguard on a very high chair? Why do you think they're blowing their whistle? Can you work out why they're sitting so high up?

Do the people queuing behind the main character mind that she needs a bit more time to dive or do you think they're patient and supportive?

'Life is full of choices... and with every choice you grow!' - talk about this final line and how it doesn't mean that you'll literally grow bigger after making a decision. Can the child you're reading with think of any times they challenged themselves and felt stronger or more grown-up afterwards?

Can you count all of the decisions in the book?

Activities

Out of Your Depth?

The book shows us that choosing to challenge ourselves can be a rewarding experience.

Share an anecdote about a time when you struggled with an obstacle. Did someone help you face your fears? Did you feel better afterwards? Did it lead to a new hobby? Maybe you made a friend as a result? The child you're reading with may have a similar memory that they can link to the book.

The theme of building self-confidence through small challenges can make this book a useful resource when reassuring a child who has a school play or contest coming up. If you find the message of this book helpful, you may also like *BIG DANCE* by Aoife Greenham and *BEA BY THE SEA* by Jo Byatt.

Role Play Ideas

You could create your own pool scene by lying a blue sheet on the floor, placing towels near the edge and leaving an inflatable beach ball on the 'water'.

Here are some other ideas:

- You could add pool safety and sun safety signs on the walls.
- A chair could be placed near the 'water' for children to take on the role of a pool lifeguard.
- Props seen in the book could be left in the role play area: goggles, swim caps, an empty bottle of sunscreen, toy ice creams and sunglasses.