

## The Extraordinarily Ordinary Life of Prince: Everybody's Good at Something

**Prince A. Sanders**

**Ikhsan Ditya, Illustrator**

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*A boy who loves dancing perseveres despite naysayers in the encouraging, based in truth picture book The Extraordinarily Ordinary Life of Prince.*

Based in truth, Prince A. Sanders's picture book *The Extraordinarily Ordinary Life of Prince* is about discovering a passion—and overcoming prejudice.

Seven-year-old Prince is an adventurous boy who lives in New York with his parents, older brother, and his teddy bear hamster, Popcorn. He is an inquisitive, curious daydreamer; he loves exploring the world around him and learning new facts. But, for all his willingness to try what's new, Prince hasn't yet discovered what he's good at. His older brother Andrew is athletic and excels in sports; Prince struggles to make his body perform.

Not one to give up, Prince keeps trying in hopes of finding his calling. His mother encourages new family experiences; she loves exposing Prince and his brother to culture via museums, art, and performances. After attending a ballet, Prince is struck by a desire to dance; he signs up for ballet classes and discovers his natural aptitude for the art form. He also observes that he is the only boy in attendance, and contends with bullying at school because of this. Still, with his mother's help, support from his gym teacher, and Popcorn's unconditional love, he stays true to himself helps others to appreciate ballet as well.

Prince's story is designed to encourage others to discover what they enjoy; he models working hard to achieve one's goals, and rising above issues like bullying, ignorance, fear, and judgment. Such lessons are delivered in a palatable manner, emphasizing the positive. Step-by-step guidance for dealing with bullies comes through Prince's mother, though the message wavers near the book's end: Prince, having found what he's good at and mollified his bullies, ends up feeling like a hero and being popular at school, muddying the message of doing what you love for the sake of your personal truth.

But the book's illustrations are vibrant and engaging; they complement the text well. Indeed, each page of text is paired with poignant images on the flanking page, resulting in a charming, colorful draw from beginning to end.

The motivational, autobiographical picture book *The Extraordinarily Ordinary Life of Prince* follows a boy as he finds out what he's passionate about, is supported in following dreams, and perseveres in his pursuits, despite bullying and adversity.

ALEX DAILEY (January 5, 2022)

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