



# Allison

*Allen Say*

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## **Allison** Allen Say

When Allison tries on the red kimono her grandmother has sent her, she is suddenly aware that she resembles her favorite doll more than she does her mother and father. When her parents try to explain that she is adopted, her world becomes an uncomfortable place. She becomes angry and withdrawn. She wonders why she was given up, what her real name is, and whether other children have parents in faraway countries. Allison's doll becomes her only solace until she finds a stray cat in the garden and learns the true meaning of adoption and parental love.

## **Allison Details**

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## From Reader Review Allison for online ebook

### Kaitlyn says

Children come from all different types of homes. Some children have parents that are divorced, some children live with their grandparents, and some children are adopted, just like Allison is in the book Allison. In the book, Allison struggles with the fact that she is of Asian descent and her parents are not. Once she realizes that her parents are not her “real” mommy and daddy, she rebels. Allison feels alone and different. She only feels related to her doll Mei Mei who looks exactly like her. She ruins her parents’ belongings and is very closed off. While reading this book, I imagined how hard this realization could be for a young child, especially one who is a different ethnicity from their adopted parents. I also felt for the parents in this book, because I’m sure it would be a struggle to make that child feel better about the situation and deal with the child’s bad behavior. At the end of the story, Allison sees a stray cat and realizes he doesn’t have a mother or a father either. Allison finds comfort in the cat and can relate to him. She asks her mom and dad if he can be part of the family, and they say yes. Allison is finally back to normal and happy with her family. Allison struggles with fitting into her family in this book, but in the end she realizes she is truly loved by her adopted parents. They may not be biological, but they have always been there for her ever since she was a baby, and they love her very dearly. I think Allison would be a great book to read aloud to a class. A teacher could discuss the fact that many of the students’ families may be different, but one thing they have in common is that they are all loved, and that is the most important part.

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### RLL2202017\_Roxanna Jasso says

This story is about a little Asian girl discovering that her parents are not her real parents, but her adoptive parents. Her 'parents' do not look like her or her doll. Because of this, she feels really different and rejects them as her parents. She takes notice that every other children look like their parents in some way. It is not until she finds and wants to adopt a stray cat that she realizes that some family find each other. This book touches on self identity and acceptance. This could be recommended for grades 1st and up.

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### Esther says

The pictures were beautiful but the story was anxiety provoking. It expressed negative emotions but there was a lack of warmth to the book and I'm not sure it soothes enough for all the anxiety it provokes.

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### Bettie? says

Description: *When Allison tries on the red kimono her grandmother has sent her, she is suddenly aware that she resembles her favorite doll more than she does her mother and father. When her parents try to explain that she is adopted, her world becomes an uncomfortable place. She becomes angry and withdrawn. She wonders why she was given up, what her real name is, and whether other children have parents in faraway countries. Allison's doll becomes her only solace until she finds a stray cat in the garden and learns the true*

*meaning of adoption and parental love.*

Lovely title, smashing illustrations, great subject to tackle early on.

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### **Cody says**

Right. In. The. Feels. I've read this book over a dozen times and it still gets me all misty-eyed in public. It's so emotionally charged and I always feel like I'm on a roller coaster after I'm finished reading it. Highly recommend.

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### **Amanda Walz says**

A story about adoption, anger and acceptance.

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### **Nicole Grote says**

I really enjoyed this book and felt that it had a great message. The story starts when young Allison realizes that she doesn't look like her parents (she's adopted) and it upsets her greatly. She goes to school and discovers that she is the only child in her class who says they don't look like their parents. When she goes home, she cause a wreck and is very angry at her parents. Then she notices a stray cat outside. After some discussion, the family decides that they will keep the cat and make it the newest member in their family. Teaching Allison a bit more about what it meant for her parents to adopt her as well as the idea that families come in all different shapes and sizes. I really enjoyed the text and message found in the book. The book would be great for kids who are adopted or to even show kids that there are all kinds of different families and one is not better than the other. I also really enjoyed the illustrations. When I read this book I was actually very surprised that its illustrations didn't win a Caldecott medal. The illustrations were very life like and utterly beautiful. They really enhanced the text and made the reading just that much more enjoyable. With the text and illustrations combined Say creates a beautiful piece of children's literature.

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### **Thomas S. says**

Summary: Allison is a story about a little girl, who realizes she is adopted. Allison sees that her parents' faces look nothing like her own Asian face and she starts asking a lot of questions. She is disappointed that her biological parents gave her away and she is angry at her mother and father for not being her real parents. She starts disobeying her parents and ruin their stuff, because she is angry and confused about who she really is. But one day, Allison finds a stray cat and she asks her parents if they can keep it. The cat does not know its biological mother and father, so Allison feels a connection to the cat and when her parents accept the cat into their family, Allison also accepts her parents again.

The theme is that it can be difficult and confusing to find your own identity. Especially when the picture you have of yourself is challenged.

Personal response: As a school teacher, I have been teaching adopted children who struggled to accept that they were given away by their biological parents. This book may help them, because they can see that they are not alone.

Recommendation: Allison is a great book about the confusion and anger adopted children can go through, when they realize that their parents are not their biological parents. Other children who are going through the same thing as Allison can read this book and feel that they are not alone. Furthermore, this book can also help other children who are not adopted to get a better picture of what their adopted friends are going through. The beautiful, realistic illustrations in this book makes it even more appealing to everyone who finds it interesting.

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### **Melki says**

Unlike the other kids at school, Allison doesn't look like her parents. This is making her pretty unhappy, until she finds a creature of her own to adopt.

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### **Ashley B. says**

I liked this story because it is about a young girl who finds out she is adopted and struggles to cope with that information. She didn't think much of what her parents looked like or even her classmates, but when she was old enough to see how she didn't look anything like her parents or classmates, she began to question where she came from. Her parents were honest with her, but she didn't know what to think about having parents in a different country. This is a real feeling for those who are adopted and this book can be used to build both empathy and sympathy (depending on the reader).

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### **Mary Crabtree says**

I really enjoyed this simple story around a child's growing awareness of their own adoption. The quick intake of breath when she realizes for the first time that there are "other" parents out there. And that these "other parents" decided they could not care for her. Allen Say's story and illustrations ring with a quiet beautiful truth easily understood by the youngest of ages. This is a wonderful read-aloud.

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### **Lesley Looper says**

Good story which adds some insight into what some adopted children go through. Lovely illustrations from Allen Say, as usual.

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**????? says**

i love Allen Say's works

i hope i can have all of them and read them to as much children as i can

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**Lexie Wosk says**

Allison is a young Asian-American girl who realizes that she is adopted. In the beginning, the story unfolds as Allison realizes that she does not physically look like her parents. After talking with a few students in her class, she discovers that she is the only one in her class that does not share the same physical features as her parents. Allison struggles to cope and she has a difficult time understanding why her biological parents had to give her away. The disappointment and sadness that Allison feels becomes apparent when she rebels and rejects her adopted parents as her own. Depending on the reader, this story can build both empathy or sympathy for children who are adopted. The visuals in the book are beautiful, colorful, vibrant paintings that truly portray what the characters are feeling, especially Allison and her parents. There is a good balance between having the story written on the left hand side of the book, and a painting on the right side.

The one recommendation I do have for this book was that the resolution of the story was resolved very quickly and I wish I were to see a longer ending. The build up of the story was written very nicely, I just wish there was more of a strong ending. In the end, Allison's cultural identity remains, however she has a new beginning with her parents and accepts her parents as her own. This story is great for empathy and acceptance, I would prefer this book to 1st grade and up.

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**Tom Franklin says**

An adopted child learns that love is love regardless of who makes up your 'family' thanks to a stray cat. Another fine Allen Say book.

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