



***'Twas the Night Before Pride* by Joanna McClintick, illustrated by Juana Medina**

ISBN: 9781536213430 (Hardcover); 9781536226829 (E-Book)

Candlewick Press, 2022

*Age Range: 4–8 years

Grade Range: Preschool–Grade 2 (Recommended by *School Library Journal*)

BOOK SYNOPSIS

A glittering celebration of queer families puts Pride gently in perspective—honoring those in the LGBTQ+ community who fought against injustice and inequality.

This joyful picture-book homage to a day of community and inclusion—and to the joys of anticipation—is also a comprehensive history. With bright, buoyant illustrations and lyrical, age-appropriate rhyme modeled on “’Twas the Night Before Christmas,” it tackles difficult content such as the Stonewall Riots and the AIDS marches. On the night before Pride, families everywhere are preparing to partake. As one family packs snacks and makes signs, an older sibling shares the importance of the march with the newest member of the family. Reflecting on the day, the siblings agree that the best thing about Pride is getting to be yourself. Debut author Joanna McClintick and Pura Belpré Award–winning author-illustrator Juana Medina create a new classic that pays homage to the beauty of families of all compositions—and of all-inclusive love.

REVIEWS AND PRAISE

“Rainbows abound in Medina’s full-color digital illustrations, which incorporate historical references and depict a wonderfully diverse cast. . . . While there is no shortage of picture books about Pride, this one may be the most inclusive and expansive yet. . . . An affirming and kid-friendly history lesson.” —[Kirkus Reviews](#)

“McClintick presents a loving survey of the queer community in all its diversity. . . . Medina’s rainbow-flecked digital illustrations do a superb job of capturing the spirit and scope of Pride and the excitement it generates, while the sprightly text joins in the celebration. With affirming discussions of togetherness and LGBTQ+ rights, the book’s final takeaway that ‘being yourself is a blast’ hits just the right note.” —[Booklist](#)

“Joanna McClintick’s picture book is a great way to introduce young readers to the history behind Pride month. . . . Covering everything from the Stonewall riots to the queer activism behind AIDS marches, *’Twas the Night Before Pride* explains that Pride is not just about rainbow flags but about fighting for the right to exist as you truly are, with all the dignity that entails.” —[Entertainment Weekly](#)

“This story is a great way to share and create conversations with young readers about rights, the LGBTQ community, different dynamics of households, what it means to be a family, and the beauty of being yourself.” —[The Calgary Herald](#)

Updated 3/28/2025

Candlewick Press

publicity@candlewick.com

“In this beautiful and inclusive picture book, characters anticipate celebrating Pride while also telling an important history of what led to Pride, from Stonewall to AIDs. If you’re looking for an age-appropriate introduction to history, this is the perfect pick!” —[Book Riot](#)

“Medina’s rainbow-hued illustrations give Pride scale and scope, mingling images of protests with awe-inspiring parade views from above, the spreads brimming with people of arrayed abilities, gender expressions, and skin tones carrying a range of Pride flags in this warm and moving tale.” —[Publishers Weekly](#)

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- A Rise Feminist Book Project List Selection
- A Chicago Public Library Best Book
- A National Council for the Social Studies Notable Trade Book for Young People

MEDIA AND RESOURCES

- [Activity Kit](#)
- [We Need Diverse Books Interview](#)
- [Pride and Less Prejudice Interview](#)
- [Discussion Questions from Read Across America](#)
- [Nerdy Book Club Author Post](#)

AUTHOR STATEMENT

[From an interview with the author in Connecticut College Magazine:](#)

Q. Across the country, there are more and more reports of schools banning books about the LGBTQ community. What are school administrators and politicians so afraid of?

A. It’s so backward and not consistent. I hear conservatives say, let kids be kids and don’t bring up difficult topics. But some kids have LGBTQ parents and some kids are LGBTQ themselves. You don’t really want to let kids be kids; you only want to let kids be kids if they are straight children, or if they have straight parents.

Q. Florida’s Legislature has approved a bill—critics call the “Don’t say gay” bill—that would prohibit classroom instruction on sexual orientation and gender identity in kindergarten through third grade. Supporters say parents, and not teachers, should have control over such discussions. Are they wrong?

A. There are many families where the adults in the child’s life are LGBTQ identifying. If you don’t talk about it in school, what does that mean? That they can’t share what they did with their moms over the weekend because it’s banned? And you can’t say “my moms are gay”?

*A NOTE ON AGE RANGES

A publisher-suggested age range covers the gamut of readers that publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate age range for the diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book’s intended use.