

The Absolutely (Almost) True Adventures of Max Rodriguez

Discussion Guide

1. How do you relate to Max's experience of feeling like a misfit or outsider?
2. How did Max's childhood habit of reading extensively without speaking influence their teenage years?
3. Rudy and Miguel play significant roles in Max's life. What makes their friendship special? Why is it crucial within the context of the novel?
4. How does Max's Latinx/a/o heritage and cultural background contribute to their sense of identity?
5. What is the nature of Max's relationship with Tío J., and why does it hold significance in Max's life?
6. Max references Tolstoy's novel *Anna Karenina*, suggesting that unhappy families are unique. Do you agree with this perspective?
7. Describe Max's relationship with Tatabuela and discuss its impact on Max's identity.
8. Why does Max deeply resonate with Holden Caulfield and Phoebe's relationship in JD Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*?
9. Analyze Max's relationship with Mamá and explore why her illness affects Max so deeply.
10. Max's perspective is transformed by a lecture on two-spirit peoples during their visit to the university with Lara. Can you recall a similar experience from a class that shifted your outlook on life?
11. Max learns about the discrimination faced by Tío J. as a gay Latino. How have societal attitudes and treatment towards LGBTQ+ individuals evolved since the 1980s, and what aspects remain unchanged?
12. After discovering Vic's murder, how does Max cope with the loss? What impact does Vic's death have on Max?
13. Why are reading, drawing, and ultimately writing so crucial to Max? How do these activities serve importance in your own life?