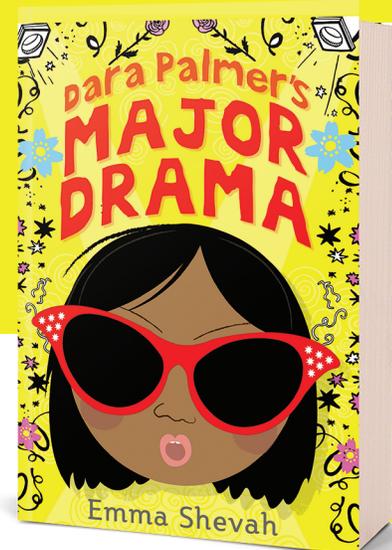




# Dara Palmer's MAJOR DRAMA

Emma Shevah

## Discussion Guide



### ABOUT THE BOOK:

Dara Palmer longs for stardom—but when she isn't cast in her middle school's production of *The Sound of Music*, she gets suspicious. It can't be because she's not the best. She was born to be a famous movie star, so she can't help but wonder: Is it because she's different? Maybe it's because she was adopted from Cambodia and doesn't look like a typical *fraulein*...

So irrepressible Dara comes up with a genius plan to shake up the school: write a play about her own life. Then she'll *have* to be the star.

★ “Following *Dream On, Amber* (2015), Shevah returns with another book, this time deftly navigating the complexity of being a transracial adoptee... This funny, charismatic heroine will capture her readers' hearts.”

—*Kirkus Reviews, Starred Review*

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR:



Emma Shevah is half Irish and half Thai and was born and raised in London. She has lived in India (where her first child was born in the Himalayas), Australia, and Japan, and spent seven years in Jerusalem before moving back to the UK. She spends her days dashing around North London, writing, teaching English, and organizing the lives of four children, a dog named Spark, and a tortoise named Slow Mo. Emma has had a number of jobs, including fire juggler, restaurant manager, and copywriter, but her main loves are writing and traveling, and she likes nothing better than getting on a plane and going on an adventure. Visit [EmmaShevah.com](http://EmmaShevah.com)

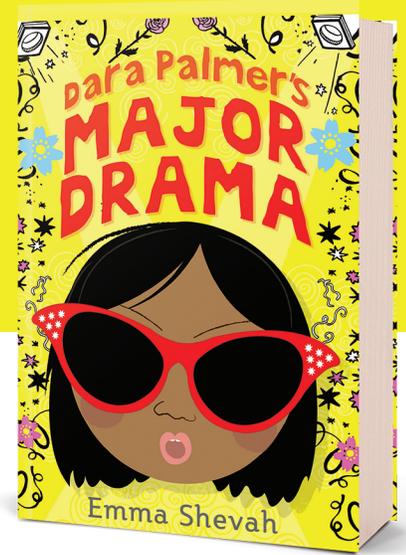




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1. More than anything, Dara wants to become a famous actor, move to Hollywood, and star in films. Would you like to be famous? If so, what for? What do you think are the positive and negative aspects of fame?
2. Dara is adopted, and the members of her family look nothing like her. Do you think that might affect her sense of belonging? If so, how? Is it important to be able to see yourself in your parents and siblings and know where you come from?
3. Dara and Georgia don't get along at all, and Dara has to be more aware and considerate of Georgia before that starts to change. Do you have a sibling or other family member you don't get along with? Do you think putting yourself in their shoes would change that?
4. Were Dara's parents right to stay in contact with Vanna, buy Cambodian food, and encourage Dara to learn Khmer?
5. How do you think Dara's life would have been different if she'd stayed in the orphanage and not been adopted? Would she still be the same person?
6. Do you think Dara should have gone to Cambodia with Vanna? Would you have gone if you'd had the choice?
7. What do you like best about Dara and her story? Are there any other characters you like?
8. How do you think Dara felt when Vanna told her where she was found? Does it make a difference, seeing as she was in an orphanage anyway?
9. In many countries, especially in Asia, more girls are put in orphanages than boys. Can you think of any reasons why this might be the case? Think about China, India, Thailand, Cambodia, Russia, and other countries you might know about.
10. Dara desperately wants a lead role in a play. In order for her dream to come true, she has to take action to make it happen. What message do you think the author wanted to share by writing the book in this way?

