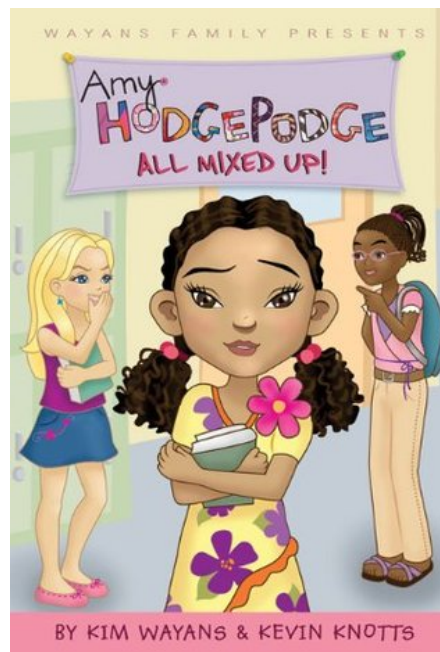




All Mixed Up!

Kim Wayans , Kevin Knotts , Soo Jeong (Illustrations)

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After years of being home schooled, Amy Hodges is excited to start fourth grade at a "real" school. On Amy's first day, she gets teased not only because she is new, but also because she looks different. Amy is part Asian, Caucasian, and African American. Eventually, Amy meets a group of nice kids and one of them even affectionately gives her the nickname "Amy Hodgepodge" since she's a mix of so many races. But when their teacher announces that the annual talent show is coming up, Amy wonders if her new friends will want to include her, too.

All Mixed Up! Details

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Author : Kim Wayans , Kevin Knotts , Soo Jeong (Illustrations)

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From Reader Review All Mixed Up! for online ebook

Laurie says

My five-year old received this as a gift so we read it together. She really enjoyed reading about the kids entering a talent show as she also participates in a theatre arts program. As a parent I felt this book would be a good read for students who could identify w/ issues of being multi-ethnic, and it teaches tolerance and understanding of others, not just to those of other races, but of those who may in less fortunate socio-economic situations.

Kristi Bernard says

Amy Hodges has been schooled at home all of her young life. She has spent most of her time at home with her parents, grandparents and her best friend and dog, Giggles. Her family culture is African American, Caucasian, Japanese and Korean. Amy has learned a lot from them. When her father gets a new job at a hospital in Maple Heights, Amy feels it's a good time to go to school for the first time and make some new friends. She finds its not easy being the new kid. But when she meets Lola and her friends, Amy feels school is pretty cool. Not only does she make new friends, she learns that they are just as diverse as she is, and she learns to celebrate and embrace her differences, talents and culture.

Wayans and Knotts have done a great job of introducing young readers about the different cultures and backgrounds that we all come from. This delightful story of change, friendship and embracing our differences is a wonderful tool that can be used by parents and teachers.

Aliza says

Cute book featured a multiracial (Korean, Japanese, white, black) heroine who braves fourth grade at her local school after being homeschooled her entire life. The photos of her multiracial friends (and many of their afros) are priceless! Written by Kim Wayans (of the Wayans brothers and family) with her husband dedicated to their own multiracial family.

Amy says

Crappy, computer-generated art is what really dooms this otherwise harmless, well intentioned novel. Amy Hodgepodge (the "hodgepodge" refers to her last name, Hodges, and the fact that she is multiracial---it's supposed to be a friendly joke, but it comes off kind of insulting) starts at a new school, gets picked on by popular kids, befriended by less popular ones, and performs a wildly insipid musical number with them in the school's talent show (ironically, they win second place). The book does have some moments that are true to life, but overall the writing is bland and canned. This still might all have been passable but for the lopsided, flat, cheap-looking illustrations, which, in a book meant for that period when kids need to be lured into reading chapter books by visually appealing art, prove fatal.

Jennifer says

I stumbled across the *Amy HodgePodge* children's book series (2008) while browsing the gift shop at the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles. The cover clearly advertised what book one was about: a black girl and a white girl picking on a mixed girl. Gee, where was stuff like this when I was eight?

Multiethnic and tri-racial, shy Amy Hodges has to adjust as both the new girl in town and as an ex-homeschooler now attending Emerson Charter School. Unlike Cady Heron (Lindsay Lohan) in *Mean Girls* (2004), Amy is shunned by her more popular classmates for looking a bit strange. With the help of some cool new friends – other strange-looking outcasts – Amy builds self-confidence.

The outcast's experience is something of a theme with black author Kim Wayans, who also played the part of a concerned religious mother in the drama *Pariah* (2011), a story about the “coming out” of a lesbian teen. It's unclear whether Wayans work at all reflects her personal experiences, reactions to her interracial marriage with white co-author Kevin Knotts.

From a homeschooling perspective, too much about the story was left unsaid. Amy insists on attending school, but it's never made clear why. Feelings of claustrophobia? Desire to socialize with kids her age? Boredom? We're never told. And I was puzzled as to why her parents chose to homeschool in the first place. I was purposely sheltered from the cruel racist world, and I've met many mixed kids who've voiced opinion that they wish they'd been home educated as well. If this was Amy's parents' reason, I would've expected them to be more sensitive to the bullying and isolation she experienced at school.

From a race perspective, it was nice that Amy presents the readers with details about her family in such a matter-of-fact way. That's how I remember life being for me: I was normal, the default setting. It was the other kids who were abnormal, until I was informed otherwise, as Amy is by her rude classmates. It's rather difficult to believe that such a racially-integrated crowd could be so intolerant. Back in the 1980s, I was snubbed by more racially-homogenous groups of black, white, and Hispanic kids. Amy of the 21st century is snubbed by a blond singer and her backup, one black girl and one Asian girl. Yes, there are people of every race who decry miscegenation but promote living together as God's children in harmony, but that's the kind of attitude that I've found more often in adults. Racially-aware children tend to gravitate towards those who are more like themselves, and that means mixed kids often have an advantage over the pure bred “Other.”

Despite being teased, Amy cherishes her heritage. This is what I appreciated most about *All Mixed Up!*: the heroine doesn't feel as though she has to choose from among a long list of possible identities. She's comfortable being Japanese, Korean, African American, and white...all at the same time. Unfortunately, in the actual narrative, her English Hodges-ness takes a back seat. The authors never mention her paternal grandfather or white ethnic heritage, which is likely also mixed. However, I'll postpone judgment on that point since I haven't read the rest of the series.

Sara_2 says

young adult book (main character is about 10 and multiethnic) - in addition to the usual pretween concerns add brushes with racism. Great way to approach this and I will be looking for more from this series.

Zuha Shah says

I really really love this book! I didn't even read the description about the book and simply ordered it! It's sooo nice! I have read this book like thousands of time! :D

Kim says

I'm looking for new read alouds for my third grade class and came across this new series at Vroman's, an amazing independent bookstore in Pasadena. I was so glad to find a book that deals upfront with kids who have a mixed racial identity. The story and the writing are a little cheesy, but this book will definitely be in my classroom in the fall! I'll be curious to see what kids think about it.

Amanda says

What a great book. I picked this one up to see what my 9 year old was reading and was very pleased with the answer! Wayans deals with new experiences, friends, mean kids and diversity all in one book. Easy for kids to relate to the characters and situations. I'll admit, I'm reading the second one already.

Mavia cheema says

This story is about a girl named Amy and she is going to school for the first time in fourth grade. Because Amy always been home schooled. Will Amy make friends? Will Amy like school? Will she like learning in school? Will people like Amy? So many questions but no answers so come on and read.

Renee says

Summary: Attending a "regular" school for the first time, former homeschooler Amy, whose family is racially mixed, meets new friends who celebrate their differences and include Amy in their song and dance routine for the upcoming talent show. (she is in 4th grade)

I actually read the 4th book in the series: Playing Games. You can jump into this series at anybook and understand what is going on.

Nice transitional book for 2nd - 4th graders. Multicultural as Amy is white, African American, Japanese, and Korean.

The book was hard to read. It didn't keep my interest. It seemed slow and the characters are flat.

Krysta says

I would rate this book 3 of 5 because there is some bullying in this book. The title is Amy hodgepodge All Mixed Up. And the aauthor is Kim Wayans and also Kevin Knotts. my favorite character is Amy because she knows how to overcome her fear and stand up for herself. you should consider

Starr says

I wasn't going to leave my thoughts, but I think I should . This book is very problematic, from the way homeschool is depicted (homeschooling does not leave your kid isolated and poorly socialized) to the way being mixed is portrayed (yes some people will make fun of you because they can't figure out what you are, but you don't just make friends with all the other mixed people in the group). This book is problematic and reads as if it's written by someone who has no idea of what homeschooling is or what it's liked to be mixed. Instead they fall back on faulty stereotypes. Very disappointing

Johnny says

This is a sweet chapter book about Amy Hodges, an elementary student who is just starting at a local charter school after being homeschooled for several years. In addition to that, she's a "hodgepodge" of ethnicities, Asian, Caucasian, and African American. (The "hodgepodge" moniker is affectionately given to her by the posse of nice friends she makes after suffering some horrible interactions with the campus mean girls.) Amy and her new friends enter the school talent show, and of course learn some valuable lessons along the way. The writing isn't outstanding here, but the subject matter is. I'm always glad to share books with my own kids that expose them to different ways of life, so I'm thankful Wayans for that!

Madison Mckenzie says

It is about a girl named Amy Hodges. And she has been home schooled since she was a little girl. and she is actually going to a real school. And she is a 4th grader. And these are her family members, Amy, Grandma, Grandpa, Giggles, Mom and Dad.
