

Forest of Reading – White Pine Award
Synchro Boy by Shannon McFerran

Activity #1 – Discussion Questions



- 1) Bart faces a lot of bullying and homophobic comments for wanting to join the synchro swim team. Do you feel sports carry gender expectations? Why or why not? Is there anything that can be done to change how different sports are viewed?

- 2) Bart finds himself loving synchronized swimming because it reminds him of dance, which he left for swimming. Have you ever given up something due to outside pressures? Do you feel that this is something that happens frequently to teenagers and young people? Why or why not?

- 3) As of fall 2019, mixed duet synchronized swimming was not included in the 2020 Tokyo Summer Olympics despite a push from athletes and FINA (Fédération internationale de natation or the International Swimming Federation). Swimming at the Olympics was one of Bart's goals. There are other sports at the Olympics that include a mixed duet, ice dancing for example. Do you feel mixed duet synchronized swimming should be included in the 2020 Olympics? Why or why not?

- 4) Bart has a realization over the course of the book that he is bisexual. Do you find the inclusion of the LGBTQ+ characters to be an authentic representation? Did the story provide you with an authentic depiction of an LGBTQ+ character? Do you feel young adult novels could do more to include characters and content that reflect the realities of LGBTQ+ youth?