

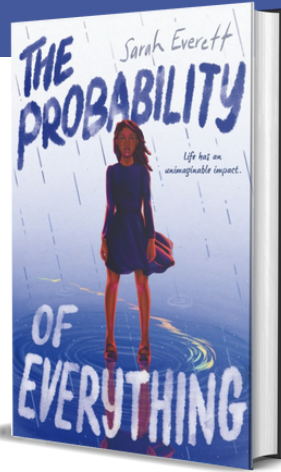
THE PROBABILITY OF EVERYTHING

Sarah Everett

DISCUSSION GUIDE

ABOUT THE BOOK

Eleven-year-old Kemi Carter loves scientific facts, specifically probability. It's how she understands the world and her place in it. Kemi knows her odds of being born were 1 in 5.5 trillion, and that the odds of her having the best family ever were even lower. Yet somehow, Kemi lucked out.



But everything Kemi thought she knew changes when she sees an asteroid hover in the sky, casting a purple haze over her world. Amplus-68 has an 84.7% chance of colliding with earth in four days, and with that collision, Kemi's life as she knows it will end.

But over the course of the four days, even facts don't feel true to Kemi anymore. The new town she moved to that was supposed to be "better for her family" isn't very welcoming. And Amplus-68 is taking over her life, but others are still going to school and eating at their favorite diner like nothing has changed. Is Kemi the only one who feels like the world is ending?

With the days numbered, Kemi decides to put together a time capsule that will capture her family's truth: how creative her mother is, how inquisitive her little sister can be, and how much Kemi's whole world revolves around her father. But no time capsule can change the truth behind all of it, that Kemi must face the most inevitable and hardest part of life: saying goodbye.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Sarah Everett is the author of several books for teens. *Charlotte's Web* was the first book that ever made her cry, and while she despises spiders, she still has an abiding love of stories that move her. When she is not reading or writing, she is dreaming about summer, gearing up for her next travel adventure, perfecting her tree pose, or yodeling with her dog. She lives in western Canada.

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1. Kemi and her family are having breakfast when the news breaks that an asteroid (AMPLUS-68) is headed straight for Earth. What do you know about asteroids?
2. How does Kemi react to the news of the asteroid? How would you react if you found out an asteroid was headed for Earth?
3. Kemi comes up with a list of theories about what the asteroid means for her world. What is a theory? While you were reading, did you have any theories about what would happen in the book?
4. Kemi and her family are having breakfast Kemi keeps a notebook where she likes to write down her important thoughts. She calls it her "favorite place to hide". Where do you keep your most important thoughts? Why might Kemi feel the need to hide?
5. Why does Aunt Miriam think Kemi and her family shouldn't live in Pineview? Are there places where Black people belong and places where white people or people of other races belong? Why or why not?
6. Dia is Kemi's best friend. On page 45, she says, "I just want everything to stay the same." What do you think this means? Why do you think change is sometimes scary?
7. On page 52, the chapter is "Facts About Gritstone (Part 1)", and on page 54, there is "Facts About Gritstone (Part 2)". What do you think is the difference between parts one and two? Are there different meanings of the word "gritstone"?
8. Kemi says on pg. 71 that, just from looking at him, her Uncle Steve "didn't fit in with us any more than my family fit in Pineview." What does Kemi mean by this? Where do you fit in? Are there places that are easier to fit in than others?
9. Kemi sets out to make a Miss Celina's Things time capsule. What kinds of things does she think should go in a time capsule? What do you think belongs in a time capsule?
10. Why is Patricia's Diner so special to Kemi and her family? Do you have a place you'd want to go to if the world was ending?
11. Kemi comes up with an experiment to find Dad's time capsule object, the thing he loves the most. What does Kemi love the most? Do you know what you love the most, and why is it sometimes difficult to know?

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12. What happens when Kemi and her cousins sneak back to her house to pick up objects for the time capsule?

13. Who is Mr. Vance and what role does he play in the story?

14. What happens on Kemi and her parent's first October in Pineview? Why is it important that Kemi and her family choose to call themselves The Spectaculars that night? What would your superhero name be?

15. Kemi loves lists. Why do you think this is? Do you ever make lists? Why or why not?

16. On the day of the end of the world, a strange man wants to talk to Kemi, but she dodges him, going out to the backyard to bury the time capsule instead. What are your theories about who he is and why Kemi doesn't want to talk to him?

17. How did you feel when Part I ended? Why do you think you felt that way?

18. Why does Part II start with Kemi telling us about the asteroid again? What happened to Kemi's father?

19. It takes all of Kemi's courage to tell Officer Wentzel about the various incidents with Mr. Vance. What is she afraid of? When have you called on your courage in the past?

20. What does Kemi consider the real end of the world? Why?

21. How is Kemi able to talk to her father at Aunt Lydia's house and the church? What do you think about this?

22. Kemi's father tells her she is allowed to make waves. What does this mean? In what ways do you or the people around you make waves?

23. What is probability, and why do you think this book is called The Probability of Everything? Do you think that title fits the story?