

Me 2 *2 e M*

by playwright Joanna H. Kraus

Suggested Themes for Discussion of *Me 2*

IDENTITY

Emily and Madison are eager to know their family history because it affects their individual identities.

- Why would young people want to know their family history? How could knowing one's family history shape a young person's identity?
- Ed argues that he and his wife are the real parents of Madison because they are the ones who raised her, rather than her birth mother. Do you agree or disagree? Why?
- Ed says that when Emily and Madison were separated through adoption, the adoption agency believed that the two girls would be better off being raised independent of each other, rather than knowing about each other, so they could form their own personalities. Do you agree or disagree? Why?

TWINS

- Do you believe twins should be dressed alike, be given similar first names, be registered in the same classes, or be enrolled in the same activities? Give reasons for your answers.
- Should twins or siblings who are put up for adoption be adopted by different parents? If they are separated by adoption, should twins or siblings be told that fact? If so, when and how?
- If twins or siblings were separated through adoption, do you believe that the adoption agency should be required to inform the parents of that fact? Why or why not?
- What would you think or feel if you found out that you had a twin or sibling that you hadn't known about before?

HONESTY

Madison is desperate to pass the entrance exam to get into Northwood High School.

- Is Madison justified in asking Emily to take the exam for her?
- Madison believes that her whole future depends on that exam. Do you agree or disagree? Explain.
- Has it ever been so important to you to join a particular club, team, or organization that you were tempted to lie or cheat in order to get in? What choice did you make?
- Would you tell a lie if you thought you were telling it for right reason?
- There are times in modern history when a lie has saved lives. Can you find examples of this through historical research? In those cases, was the lie justified? Why or why not?

LOYALTY

- Emily and Madison vow to help each other in whatever the other asks. Do you think Emily's decision to refuse to help Madison when she asks her to take the exam for her was cowardly or courageous?
- Is loyalty always admirable? Are there times when something else is more important than loyalty?
- Should there be a limit to the loyalty one shows for family and friends? Under what circumstances should loyalty to friends be questioned or broken?

PRESSURE

- Emily initially refuses to be part of the deception of taking the exam for Madison. Why does Emily make that decision?
- If you were in Emily's place, what would you do?
- Has anyone ever tried to pressure you to do something you felt was wrong? If so, what did you do?
- Why does Drew pressure Madison not to let Emily take the exam in her place? Why does Madison pay attention to him? Does Drew have a strong argument? Would he have convinced you? Why or why not?

VALUES

Which of these is the most important to you? Explain your answer.

- Cultural and family traditions
- Peer approval and acceptance
- Family loyalty
- The laws of the community
- Personal beliefs
- Standards of ethical behavior

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Suggested Activities for Classroom Exploration of *Me 2*

ART

1. Create a collage or drawing that shows the feelings of Emily or Madison when they discover that they are twins.
2. Think about one of the characters in the play. Divide a piece of poster board or large sheet of paper into six parts. In these segments, draw images or list words that describe the following:
 - His/her attitudes about life
 - The character's proudest moment or achievement
 - An embarrassing moment or fear
 - Interests and hobbies
 - The character's most important values
 - A descriptive adjective that best fits the characterYou could do the same exercise for yourself.

LANGUAGE ARTS

1. Imagine that you suddenly saw someone who looked exactly like you, in a photo or in person.
 - Write a journal entry about how it happened and what you thought and felt.
 - With a partner, role-play asking advice from a friend as to what you should do next.
 - Write an e-mail to introduce yourself to your "double." What would you say?
 - With a partner, tell a television news reporter about your experience.
2. In the role of either Emily or Madison, write a letter to your future grandchild and tell how being a twin has affected your life.

MATH

1. Find out what percentage of births in the United States are twins and make a pie graph. Make another pie graph that shows what percentage of twins are identical and what percentage are fraternal.
2. Emily tries to convince Madison that she will need mathematics in her life. Develop a power point presentation that Emily might create to convince Madison or her class that math is necessary.
 - Where do you use math today in your everyday life?
 - How do you expect to use math in your future career?
 - What role does math play in computer science? How have computers affected the world of math?
 - Why do people need to learn math even though we have access to computers and calculators?

MUSIC

1. In the play, Emily, Madison, and Drew talk about popular songs that they like. What popular songs do you know that might relate to the following situations in the play?
 - Finding someone else who is very much like you
 - Being pressured to do something that the person doesn't want to do
 - Finding out something is true that you always hoped or believed would be true.
2. Movies often use "underscoring" music to increase the mood or build the tension. Alone or in pairs, pick or play a piece of music that could underscore a scene from the play, such as the scene when Emily and Madison discover that they really are twins or the scene when Emily is struggling to decide whether or not to take the test for Madison.

SOCIAL STUDIES

1. Find a news item about separated twins who found each other later in life and how it occurred.
2. Research how twins may be alike and how they may be different. If the twins are raised in the same family, how can parents foster the individuality of each of them?

SCIENCE

1. Find out how and why twins occur. Do identical or fraternal twins tend to run in families?
2. What is a zygosity test? How is it conducted? Are there other ways to test twin-ship?
3. What is DNA? Who discovered its significance and when? How is DNA information used today?
4. What concerns do people have about the possibility of being able to change a person's DNA?

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