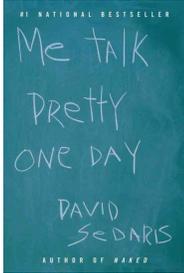


Books by the Stack



Me Talk Pretty One Day by David Sedaris

In a collection of essays, observations, and commentaries, the humorist describes his recent move to Paris, life as an American in Paris, his struggle to learn French, his family, and restaurant meals.

Why you'll like it: *Humor writing. Sardonic. Self-deprecating. Conversational.*

About the Author: David Sedaris was born in Binghamton, New York on December 26, 1956. Much of Sedaris' humor is autobiographical and self-deprecating, and it often concerns his family life, his middle class upbringing in the suburbs of North Carolina. Sedaris recently moved from New York to Paris. Raised in North Carolina, he has worked as a housecleaner &, most famously, as a part-time elf for Macy's. Several of his plays have been produced, & he is a regular contributor to Public Radio International's "This American Life." His essays have been featured in "The New Yorker", "Harper's", & "Esquire". He is the author of the books "Barrel Fever", "Naked", & "Holidays on Ice". (Publisher Provided)

Questions for Discussion

1. What did or didn't you enjoy about this book?
2. What was your favorite chapter or scene and why?
3. Have you been to France? Did you have anxieties about speaking French with native speakers? What did you do? Did you have any particularly embarrassing gaffes?
4. Sedaris has certainly had some odd jobs. Were there any that were especially hilarious?
5. Fake battered woman bruises, drug addled performance art, poop – its all here. Were there any essays that were just too much? Too over the top?
6. In the chapter "Jesus Shaves," Sedaris details the way our holidays are celebrated quiet differently elsewhere. Were you aware of any of these variations on our American traditions? Do you see our holidays in a different light now that you've read this?
7. In her review for the *New York Times*, Michiko Kakutani calls Sedaris "a self-dramatizing narcissist by turns egomaniac and self-deprecating, needy and judgmental." How did you feel about the author?
8. What do you think of the Sedaris family as a whole? Are the stories about his family the result of situations that could have happened to any family, or from extraordinary events particular to him?
9. Not every member of the Sedaris family is included in David's book – by their own choice. If David were your son or brother, would you let him include you in his work?
10. How would you describe the author's style of writing? Would you call this a collection of essays, short stories, memoirs or something else?

- 11.** Sedaris describes how he felt his identity was being challenged by his speech therapy. Have you or someone you know ever had a similar experience and been treated like an outsider by an institute? How is this different than when an individual discriminates against someone?
- 12.** Sedaris' comedy relies on how his perspective now is different than his perspective in the past. How would you describe the differences between Sedaris as a young man and at the time he wrote his book?
- 13.** How does the ending to Rooster's episode lead you to reexamine his extremely foul language?
- 14.** What are the ways Sedaris mocks himself as a young artist?
- 15.** Sedaris' description of himself as a teacher plays on suspicions many of us have had about teachers. What do you think is a good response to taking a course where the methods do not work well for you?

(Questions provided by author/publisher)



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