



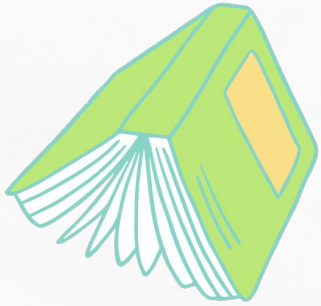
# J.E. Thomas

Author Guide developed by **Elli Weber, Kelly Shipley, and Nicole Teska** for CU Boulder's Children's Book Festival 2023, Open Education Resource, Creative Commons. Available at [colorado.edu/event/bookfest](https://colorado.edu/event/bookfest)





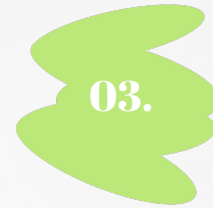
# Table Of Contents



About the Author



Book Summary



Fun Facts



# Table Of Contents

(continued)



04.

Awards/Interviews

05.

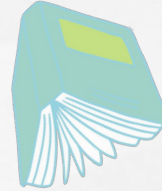
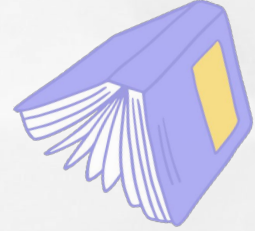
Quotes

06.

Sources

# About the Author

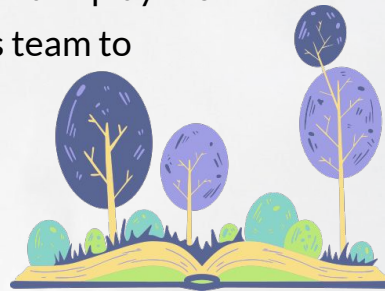
Jan “J.E.” Thomas is an award-winning writer from Denver, Colorado. She has a bachelor's degree in Mass Communications and Political Science, and a master's degree in Public Communications. She used to spend her early summers at the library and knew from a young age she wanted to be a storyteller when she grew up. She started writing full time at the age of 21. *Control Freaks* was the first book she ever completed and published. She had multiple female role models in her life that helped her realize her potential of becoming an author. She thinks that books and imagination are the best “streaming service” around. She is now working on a middle school grade book and a Young Adult debut novel.



# Book Summary

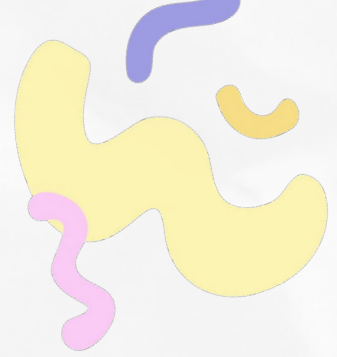
*Control Freaks* is a STEM fiction novel that is perfect for ages 8-12 and for adults! Topics include diverse friendships, STEAM, sports, blended families, and the middle school atmosphere.

Frederick Douglass Zezzmer, also known as Doug, is an intelligent seventh grade student at his college preparatory school, who has dreams to become the “World’s Greatest Inventor.” Doug’s father, a famous former wide receiver for the Denver Broncos, has always emphasized the idea of his importance and urge for Doug to play sports. As soon as the school principal announces an epic weeklong STEAM competition – that is, science, technology, engineering, arts, mathematics, and sports – Doug knew he had to win. He wanted to prove to not only his dad, but also to himself that he could genuinely pursue his dreams. Being a team competition, Doug was paired with four outcast middle schoolers who seemed to be discouraging from the start. However, once Doug was able to foster a mixture of collaboration, support of each player’s strengths and weaknesses, and apply encouragement of individuality, he was able to lead his team to success!



# Fun Facts!!

- 1)
  - *Control Freaks* is the first book J.E. Thomas wrote.
- 2)
  - J.E. Thomas attended a public school and a private school and found out private schools work better for her educational needs.
- 3)
  - She includes the name of one of her dogs in each story.



# Awards/Interviews

Prior to starting writing full-time in 2021, Thomas had a career in freelance journalism, where she was awarded several honors. These include a Clarion Award for Article Writing from Women in Communications; a Gold Award for Feature Writing from the International Academy of Communications Arts & Sciences; a Silver Award for Writing from the Society of National Association Publications; and a Public Relations Professional of the Year Honor from the Colorado Association of Black Journalists, among others.

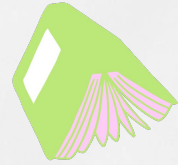
*Control Freaks* recently received a starred review from Booklist, a book-review magazine that has been published by the American Library Association for over 100 years, offering the most reliable reviews and audiovisual materials for students, librarians, teachers, etc.

Jan Thomas frequently visits schools, book stores, and libraries both in-person and virtually. During these visits, Thomas has the opportunity to speak about her authorship, answer questions, and read aloud and sign her books for the public. A few of her recent whereabouts have been to New York, Santa Fe, and California!

# Quotes



All quotes are from Episode 61 of "[Our Classroom](#)"



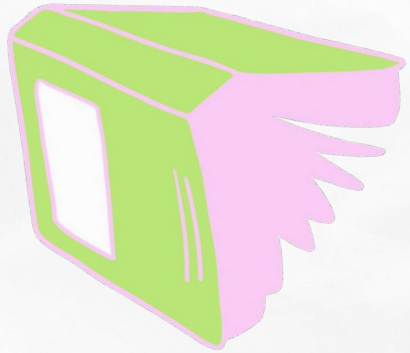
1) "So even though I will tell you I'm not a control freak, probably everybody who knows me would say exactly the opposite."

2) "So when I was younger, when I was growing up, my parents set very high expectations. And part of what happens is I tried to control the narrative. I tried to exceed expectations, and that is actually a controlling behavior, I'll admit."

3) "I was steadfast in the decision that I was not going to use any of the old tropes of the absentee black father, the violent black father, the, you name it, but non-effective black father."

4) I think society is going to rise based on the quality of the education that the younger generation receives, and we just have to pay people appropriately.





# Sources

<https://jethomasauthor.com/about#:~:text=J.E.%20is%20an%20award%2Dwinning,her%20dogs%20in%20every%20story>.

<https://lighthousewriters.org/blog/12-stories-homecoming-jan-thomas>

<https://www.multiculturalclassroom.com/podcasts/our-classroom/episodes/2147941032>

