



Reading Guide
Pre-K through 3rd Grade

Grow Engage Read Imagine is an Initiative of Safe Haven Ministries

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About this Reading Guide

The Reading Guide for Children's Books pairs with the Grow Engage Read Imagine (GERI) initiative books for children in preschool/young three's through 3rd grade. The Reading Guide includes book summaries, an overview of themes in the book, discussion questions for ongoing conversations with your child(ren), and activities you can use to promote healthy relationships, boundaries, and positive social norms.

The GERI has also created a Parent Toolkit that provides an overview of topics including:

- Tips on age appropriate conversations with your child(ren)
- Safe, unsafe, and unwanted touches
- Handling disclosures
- Community resources for victims and survivors

This toolkit can be downloaded at www.GeriGR.org

Content Warning

Safe Haven understands that some of the books included in the GERI contain stories that show different forms of harm. Our goal is not to show violence for entertainment or shock value. However, violence is a reality in our world, and many people experience it day-to-day. The GERI Parent Toolkit and Reading Guides will help readers or parents/caregivers process and handle difficult conversations about sexual assault, domestic violence, and other forms of violence.

If what you read feels overwhelming, remember to take some time for self care. Put the book down, take a break, and talk to someone you trust about why you feel overwhelmed.

Resources

This guide was created with the intent to give people who care for children and youth the tools to talk about tough subjects. Having these kinds of conversations can be hard. Do your best to speak to kids from a place of concern and care.

If you or someone that you know has experienced or is experiencing violence or abuse, the following local resources can provide free and confidential support:

Safe Haven Ministries

Website: www.shmgr.org

24/7 Hotline: 616-452-6664

YWCA West Central Michigan

Website: www.ywcawcmi.org

24/7 Hotline: 616-454-9922

Children's Advocacy Center of Kent County

Website: www.cac-kent.org

Telephone Number: 616-336-5160

Michigan Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence (MCEDSV)

Website: www.mcedsv.org

24/7 Hotline: 855-864-2374 or text 866-238-1454

Hispanic Center of Western Michigan

Website: www.hispanic-center.org

Telephone Number: 616-742-0200

Books for Pre-K and Kindergarten

Title and Author: *Counting On Community* by Innosanto Nagara

Description: Counting up from one stuffed piñata to ten hefty hens—and always counting on each other—children are encouraged to recognize the value of their community, the joys found in healthy eco-friendly activities, and the agency they possess to make change. A broad and inspiring vision of diversity is told through stories in words and pictures. And, of course, there is a duck to find on every page!

Themes: Community, Friendship, Diversity

Discussion Questions

1. What does community mean?
2. What is something special about the community you live in?
3. How do people in your community show they care for each other?
4. What foods do people in your community make?
5. Were you able to find all the ducks? If not, go back through and look for them.

Activities

Community Garden

Create a garden that represents your community. It can be inside or outside, big or small. Research the types of plants you want to grow. After you decide, begin planting and growing out your community garden.

Build a Community

This activity is going to require poster paper, crayons, and markers. With the help of your child(ren), put together a chart of people who make up the community. This can include teachers, pets, neighbors, doctors, and so much more. For every thing or person, draw a picture that represents them and what we can count on them for.

Title and Author: *Guess What I Can Be?* by Marcel Gamble and Illustrated by Chris B. Dudley

Description: A book that takes kids on a journey to explore various career paths in an imaginative way. It's filled with vibrant illustrations and has a poetic and fun flow to grab the attention of young readers.

Themes: Imagination & Creativity, Representation

Discussion Questions

1. What do you want to be when you grow up? Pick three different jobs you would want to have when you are a grown up.
2. Imagine the different things you can be. What if you were...
 - a. President? What kinds of laws would you make?
 - b. A writer? What would your books and poems be about?
 - c. A zookeeper? What would your favorite animals be?
3. Do you know what the adults in your family do for their jobs? If you know, tell us about it. If you don't, ask them about what they do.
4. Adults, share with your child(ren) what you wanted to be when you were their age and what you want to be now. Help them follow their dreams!

Activities

Video Time!

Check out the Youtube channel HiHo Kids. Their web series called "Kids Meet" shows children introduced to adults of many different backgrounds and jobs.

Practice your ABC's

Help your child to imagine different career paths by practicing their ABCs. Identify each occupation by a letter and then add three skills needed for that job. Example:

T is for teachers and teachers have to be kind, smart, and good at math. Do this for the entire alphabet.

Title and Author: *Start with Sorry* by P.T. Finch and Illustrated by Gokhan Bas

Description: Three-year-old Luna loves spending time with her older brother Asher. They do almost everything together. But when they sit down to draw pictures, Luna feels upset she can't do everything Asher can and reacts in anger, hurting Asher's feelings. With Mommy's help, Luna learns to make amends for hurting her brother's feelings.

Themes: Emotions, Respect, Family

Discussion Questions

1. What do Asher and Luna like to do together at the kitchen table?
2. What color did Asher and Luna make their cats? Why was Luna sad about her cat?
3. Luna starts to feel jealous because Asher can draw better pictures than her. What does it mean to be jealous of someone?
4. Have you ever been jealous of someone?
5. When Luna gets mad what does she do? (Adults, help name all the things Luna did when she was angry.) When you get angry what do you do?
6. Why does Asher begin to cry? Have you ever made someone cry? What did you do to make them feel better?
7. How does Luna help Asher feel better?

Activities

Check Out Sesame Street's Special on Jealousy!

The mini-episode covers what it means to be jealous and how kids can work through strong emotions. This episode can be found on YouTube for free!

The Feeling Jar

For this activity you will need a cup or a jar, a pack of multi-color pom poms, and a clear space. The point of this activity is to help children recognize the different emotions they are feeling. Together with your child, help them determine what feeling goes to each color pom pom. After, ask them to fill the jar up with whatever current emotion they are feeling. The Feeling Jar can be used for when kids have emotions too big for words. The jar can help them communicate that.

Title and Author: *Giraffes Can't Dance* by Giles Andreae and Guy Parker-Rees

Description: Gerald the Giraffe just wants to dance, but like all giraffes, he has crooked knees and thin legs. It's hard for giraffes to dance! Thankfully, Gerald figures out how to dance his own way after hearing some encouragement from an unlikely friend.

Themes: Bullying, Self-esteem

Discussion Questions

1. What is Gerald the Giraffe good at doing? What kind of things are you good at?
2. What kind of dances does each animal do?
3. Is Gerald good at dancing? Are the other animals being nice to Gerald?
4. How do you think Gerald feels about being laughed at?
5. The cricket helps Gerald feel better after he is sad. Who makes you feel better when you are sad?
6. What kind of music do you like to dance to?

Activities

Have an Animal Dance Party!

Write down the names of a few different animals and then place them into a hat. Have children pick out different animals, and then have them create their own dances based on how they think that animal would dance. Maybe kids will decide to tango like lions or break it down like the rhinos. The point is to have as much fun and be as creative as possible!

Jump Like a Cricket

In our story we meet a Cricket who helps Gerald learn to dance. Using the beat of any song, have children compete for who can be the best jumping cricket. Have them jump, clap, or tap to the best of their ability.

Title and Author: *Hug Me* by Simona Ciruolo

Description: If you ever feel like you need a really big hug, you know exactly how Felipe the cactus feels. Of course, we also know that cactuses aren't exactly touchy-feely. Felipe's family is quite prickly! So, Felipe heads out to find a friend and, hopefully, a big hug.

Themes: Healthy Boundaries, Consent, Friendship

Discussion Questions

1. Who is Felipe? What kind of plants are Felipe and his family?
2. Why doesn't Felipe's family like to give hugs? What happens when you touch a cactus?
3. Who is Felipe's new friend? What was the disaster that struck?
4. Felipe just wanted to hug his friend Balloon, but he hurt him. What can you do when you hurt someone, but not on purpose?
5. How do you think Felipe felt after hurting his friend?
6. Who was crying? How did Felipe make them feel better?
7. If Camilla the rock said no to Felipe's hug, what was another way to make her feel better?

Activities

Greetings and Goodbye Chart!

This activity is a great way to teach kids about creating boundaries. Create a chart with drawings or symbols of actions for saying goodbye or hello. Work with your child to create options for the chart, like hugs, a pat on the back, mini dance parties, or a fist bump. Each day as they leave or are coming home, they get to decide what they would like to do.

Story Time!

Hug Me is one of several books that have its own virtual storytime available on Safe Haven Ministries' YouTube page. You and your child can watch as we read *Hug Me* aloud and stay till the end for a fun activity.

Title and Author: *La Catrina: Emotions-Emociones* by Patty Rodriguez and Ariana Stein

Description: Inspired by one of the most recognized symbols of Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead), this book introduces little ones to emotional expressions and their first English and Spanish words—and teaches them to recognize feelings like emocionado (excited), triste (sad), and confiado (confident).

Themes: Emotions

Discussion Questions

1. What does the word confident mean? What makes you feel confident?
2. How do you show that you love someone? What can you do to make someone feel loved?
3. Sometimes things that surprise us can make us feel excited, and sometimes they can make us feel scared. When did a surprise make you feel scared? When did it make you feel excited?
4. What kind of faces do people make when they are mad?
5. When you get mad at someone, how do you let them know you are mad?

Activities

Emotion Chart

For this activity you're going to need some crayons, paper, and a pencil. Just like our book shows us different emotions, let's draw different faces to show how we are feeling. Sometimes it can be hard to express ourselves, but using our emotion chart can help us say what we are feeling. Draw a face for happiness, anger, fear, excitement, sadness, and any other emotions you can think of. Draw them in any color you like and then put the chart where you can see it for the future.

Feeling of the Day

For this activity, you're going to need some crayons and paper. It's good to check in with each other throughout the day. Take some time to have kids draw what they felt throughout the day. End the activity with having them pick one emotion that could sum up their whole day.

Title and Author: *Daniel the Tiger: Won't You Be My Neighbor* by Rachel Kalban and Illustrated by Jason Frutcher

Description: Inspired by the classic series Mr. Roger's Neighborhood. Come along with Daniel the Tiger as he discovers what it means to be a good neighbor.

Themes: Community, Friendship, Respect

Discussion Questions

1. What does it mean when someone says they are your neighbor?
2. How can you be a good neighbor to someone?
3. Sometimes our neighbors can be our good friends. What are things that you and your friends like to do together?
4. What are three things the neighbors from our story did together?
5. What's something nice that you can do for someone in your neighborhood?

Activities

Be a Community Helper

Look for child-friendly volunteer opportunities that children can participate in. This can look like packing lunches for other children in need or planting trees with local clean park organizations.

Friendly Neighbor Calendar

Use Daniel Tiger as an influence to help your child be a good neighbor. Together, create a weekly calendar of tasks that good neighbors can do. For example, Mondays are for helping our neighbors clean; a good neighbor keeps their room clean.

Title and Author: *I Like it When/Me Gusta Cuando* by Mary Murphy

Description: A loving tale of a little penguin detailing all that it likes about spending the day with a loving caregiver.

Themes: Family, Emotions, Single Parent

Discussion Questions

1. What are three things the baby penguin likes to do with the older penguin?
2. How do you help your caregiver/parent?
3. Do you like surprises? What kind of things surprise you?
4. What's one thing you love to do with your caregiver?
5. What stories do you like to read with your caregiver?

Activites

Let's Make a Book!

Together with your child, create a mini scrapbook of all your favorite memories together. Use drawings, photos, stickers, and all other types of colorful methods to create your own "I Like It When" Book.

Chalk Time!

For this activity, you will need chalk and some space outside or inside where you can draw with chalk. Use chalk to have children draw pictures of what they love to do with their caregivers.

Title and Author: *Missing Daddy* by Mariame Kaba and Illustrated by Bria Royal

Description: In this story, a little girl who misses her father because he's away in prison shares how his absence affects different parts of her life. Her greatest excitement is the days when she gets to visit her beloved father.

Themes: Family, Prison, Separation from Loved Ones

Discussion Questions

1. What does it mean to be a family?
2. Where did the little girl's Daddy go?
3. What does it mean when someone goes to prison?
4. How do the other kids make the little girl feel about her Daddy being in prison?
5. How does the little girl feel about her Daddy being in prison?

Activites

Watch Together

Go to Youtube and check out the video *Formerly Incarcerated Father Opens Up to Daughter | {THE AND} Mia & Khalil* by Skin Deep. Skin Deep is a creative studio that explores human emotion, intimacy, and connection in the digital age. This video contains a father speaking with his nine year old daughter about his time being incarcerated and how that made her feel. We suggest that adults preview this video before watching it together with children. We also recommend that adults watch this video with children in the 1st-3rd grade learning and age range.

Watch Together

Go to YouTube and check out the video *Sesame Street: Little Children, Big Challenges: Incarceration -- Sizzle Reel*. Sesame Street in Communities is a youtube channel created by Sesame Street about a variety of topics that children may experience in the areas of health and well-being, school readiness, and emotional well-being. Some of the content and topics presented are more sensitive, so you should preview these videos before sharing with a child. This particular episode contains a character that is sad about his dad being incarcerated followed by other children sharing their feelings about their parents being in jail.

Title and Author: *The Color Monster: A Story About Emotions* by Anna Llenas

Description: One day, Color Monster wakes up feeling very confused. His emotions are all over the place; he feels angry, happy, calm, sad, and scared all at once! To help him, a little girl shows him what each feeling means through color. As this adorable monster learns to sort and define his mixed up emotions, he gains self-awareness and peace as a result.

Themes: Feelings, Emotions

Discussion Questions

1. How does the Color Monster wake up?
2. What does Color Monster's friend tell it to do when its feelings are all mixed up?
3. What color is sadness?
4. When you are scared, who makes you feel brave?
5. What is the last color in the book and what do you think it means?

Activites

Music and Feelings

Pick a few of your child's favorite songs. Have your child listen to the song and think of a color and emotion that represents that song. If the song makes them happy it may be the yellow song or if it makes them calm it could be the green song.

Emotion Bingo

Create a bingo board for your child, each with 12 squares that feature various feelings/ faces (you can add more squares for older children). Have children draw a feeling name from a bag and then cover the matching feeling face with the paper that was drawn from the bag. When they cover a face, they can talk about events or memories that made them feel that emotion.

Title and Author: *Miles is the Boss of His Body* by Abbie Schiller and Samantha Kurtzman-Counter

Description: It's Miles' 6th birthday, but he's not thrilled about being pinched, hugged too tight, noogied, picked up, or tickled by his family. They mean well, but Miles has had enough! He announces that he is the boss of his body, and his family supports and respects his personal boundaries.

Themes: Bodily Autonomy, Consent, Healthy Communication

Discussion Questions and Activities

1. What was so special about Miles' day?
2. Do you think that Miles liked receiving a "birthday noogie"? Why or why not?
3. Why do you think Miles became so frustrated with his family?
4. When you are upset by something, how do you deal with it?
5. Why do you think Miles believes he is in trouble?
6. How did Miles' family react to his anger?

Activities

Read and Review

After you finish reading, go back through our story and have children describe Miles' interactions with his family, The Birthday Chicken, and the Pizza man. Ask them about what they would have done for each person to let them know they were uncomfortable.

Be the Boss of Your Body!

Using pictures from magazines, stickers, and other arts and craft materials, help children to make a poster about what being the boss of their bodies means to them.

Books for Kindergarten through Third Grade

Title and Author: *The Name Jar* by Yangsook Choi

Description: Being the new kid in school is hard enough, but what about when nobody can pronounce your name? Having just moved from Korea, Unhei is anxious about whether American kids will like her. So instead of introducing herself on the first day of school, she tells the class that she will choose a name by the following week. Her new classmates are fascinated by this no-name girl and decide to help out by filling a glass jar with names for her to pick from. On the day of her name choosing, the name jar mysteriously disappeared. Encouraged by her new friends, Unhei chooses her own Korean name and helps everyone pronounce it—*Yoon-Hey*.

Themes: Friendship, Respect, Accepting Difference

Discussion Questions and Activities

1. How do you think Unhei feels going to a new school? How did you feel on the first day of school?
2. What happened to Unhei on the bus? Were the other kids being nice?
3. How would you react if someone was bullying your friend about their name?
4. Has anyone ever made fun of your name?
5. Why do you think Unhei does not share her name with her classmates?
6. What does Unhei's mom tell her when she wants to pick an "American" name?
7. According to Mr. Kim, what is the meaning of Unhei's name?
8. What happened to the name jar? Who took it and why?

Activity

What Does Your Name Mean?

All names are beautiful and special. Unhei learned that the meaning of her name was "grace." Have children research what their names mean and where they come from. Together with your child, write their name out on paper in big letters and have them decorate their name to show how special it is.

Title and Author: *My Three Best Friends and Me, Zulay* by Cari Best and Illustrated by Vanessa Brantley-Newton

Description: Zulay and her three best friends are all in the same first grade class. They study the same things, even though Zulay is blind. When their teacher asks her students what activity they want to do on Field Day, Zulay surprises everyone when she says she wants to run a race. With the help of a special aide and the support of her friends, Zulay does just that.

Themes: Disability Awareness, Community, Friendship

Discussion Questions

1. What do you notice about Zulay's classroom? What appears next to each student's name on their desk?
2. What does Zulay keep in her desk? Why do you think she has a folded-up cane?
3. Why do you think Zulay dislikes having to work with Ms. Turner?
4. Zulay says that she sees with her fingers. What does she mean by that?
5. Why does Zulay feel uncomfortable using her cane? Can trying new things be scary?
6. What does everyone say they want to do for field day?
7. Zulay says she wants to run the race for field day. What does she say when walking the track with Ms. Turner?
8. Zulay ends up running the race with support of Ms. Turner, her friends, and family. Can you name a time you were afraid you couldn't do something but your friends helped you do it?

Activity

Let's Watch Together!

Check out "Kids Meet a Guide Dog for the Blind" with HiHo Kids on youtube. HiHo Kids is a platform devoted to helping children explore the world and the people in it with them. In this video children will meet Camille and her guide dog Egan as children ask questions about Camille's experiences being blind and how Egan supports her.

Title and Author: *All Are Welcome* by Alexandra Penfold, Suzanne Kaufman

Description: The children at this school are all unique and different from each other, but all are welcome. At this school, kids in patkas, hijabs, yarmulkes, and baseball caps all play together. Follow the friends along as they learn from each other and gather to celebrate Lunar New Year with their community.

Themes: Diversity and Inclusion, Community, Acceptance

Discussion Questions

1. The children in *All Are Welcome* come from many different places and speak many different languages. How many languages do you speak or know?
2. What are 3 things that are different and the same as you from the kids in our story?
3. What does it mean to include someone? When have you felt included?
4. What does it mean to exclude someone? How does it feel to be excluded?
5. In *All Are Welcome*, everyone can come as themselves. How can you be welcoming to other people?

Activities

Drawing Community

At the end of *All are Welcome*, everyone comes together for a community meal and event. Have children draw their own version of sharing a community event by drawing people who represent their community in attendance.

Let's Watch a Video!

Check out [HiHo Kids](#) on YouTube. HiHo Kids is a platform devoted to helping children explore the world and the people in it with them. The channel has a series called "Kids Meet" where children meet people of all different backgrounds. Children will meet doctors, people with disabilities, and many more people with diverse experiences. Our suggestion for adults is to preview some videos as some subject matter may be too advanced for younger children.

Title and Author: *Pink Is for Boys* by Robb Pearlman, Eda Kaban

Description: In this picture book, we're reminded that pink is for boys, and girls, and everyone! Rethink the gender binary and the blue/pink stereotype. In this beautiful book, kids and grown ups are empowered to express themselves however they choose. Readers can see themselves in a diverse group of characters, and be reassured that it's okay to enjoy whatever it is you love to do—whether that's playing sports, dressing up, daydreaming about unicorns, or racing cars!

Themes: Healthy Masculinity, Gender Equity, Gender Stereotypes

Discussion Questions

1. What is your favorite color and why is it your favorite?
2. All the kids in our story wear whatever color they like. Has anyone ever told you that there were colors you weren't supposed to like?
3. Can boys like pink? Why or why not?
4. Do you play any sports where there are only boys or only girls?
5. Would you want to play on a sports team with both boys and girls? Why or why not?
6. Are there things that only boys or only girls are supposed to do?

Activities

For Parents

Amaze.org is a great parent tool. It offers various videos that are age-appropriate and medically-accurate about sex education. For help on understanding and explaining gender, check out their video on Gender and Gender Stereotypes.

For Kids

Along with your child, watch Amaze's video called "Help Kids Learn About Gender (with Scoops and Friends)." This fun video teaches children about gender stereotypes and helps them understand that it's ok if boys like pink or girls want to play with fire trucks.

Title and Author: *Some Secrets Should Never Be Kept: Protect children from unsafe touch by teaching them to always speak up* by Jayneen Sanders, Illustrated by Craig Smith

Description: Just like we teach kids to be safe around water or the road, we must teach them body safety in a way that isn't scary or confrontational. This beautiful picture book sensitively talks about the topic of unsafe and unwanted touch. Parents and children can also lean on the notes to the reader and discuss questions found within the book.

Themes: Child Sexual Abuse, Consent, Safe Touch and Unsafe Touch

Discussion Questions

1. Do you know what safe and unsafe touch is?
2. When Lord Henry tickled Alfred's genitals, was that a safe or unsafe touch?
3. Why do you think Alfred did not tell his mother about what Lord Henry was doing to him?
4. There are good secrets, like surprising someone with a gift, and unsafe secrets, like when Lord Henry told Alfred to not tell anyone about the "tickling". When someone tells you to keep an unsafe secret, what should you do?
5. Alfred was able to talk to his mom about how Lord Henry was hurting him. Who are three adults you can talk to if someone is hurting you?

Activities

For Parents

Be sure to read the before and after of *Some Secrets Should Never Be Kept*. It contains helpful tips on reading our story with young readers. Check our Parent Toolkit for how you can talk about consent and boundaries with young children.

Learn About Safe and Unsafe Touch

The Barbara Sinatra Children's Center Foundation created a video for children talking about safe and unsafe touches. The video can be found on their YouTube page labeled [Protect Yourself Rules - Safe Touch / Unsafe Touch](#). We suggest parents watch beforehand to prepare themselves for questions children might have during the video.

Title and Author: *Mango Moon* by Diane De Anda and Illustrated by Sue Conelison

Description: When a father is taken away from his family and facing deportation, his children are left to grieve and wonder about what comes next. Maricela, Manuel, and their mother face the many challenges of having their lives completely changed by the absence of their father and husband. Their day-to-day norm now includes moving to a new house, missed soccer games and birthday parties, and emptiness. Maricela learns that her love for her father continues on even though he's no longer part of her daily life.

Themes: Immigration, Family, Deportation

Discussion Questions and Activities

1. What is Marciela doing with her Papi at the start of our story?
2. What happened to Marciela's Papi?
3. How does Marciela and her brother react to their father being taken away?
4. Why does Marciela and her family have to move?
5. What does Marciela's Mama say was the reason for her father being taken away?
6. Marciela is afraid that her Mama and her brother will be taken away. What does her Mama say to make her feel safe?
7. What does Marciela's Mama tell her about love?

Activities

Understanding Deportation

Check out [HiHo Kids](#) on YouTube and watch the video *Kids Meet a Person Targeted for Deportation by I.C.E.* In this video children meet an adult who is at risk of being deported. We suggest that parents preview this video before watching together with their children.

Developing Coping Skills

Parents can help their child(ren) create their own list of healthy coping skills. Visit <https://www.verywellfamily.com/coping-skills-for-kids-4586871> for examples of coping skills children can use by themselves or with support from others. Help your child draw or take pictures of them doing their coping skills as a visual cue of what behaviors to engage in if they are feeling overwhelmed or other complex emotions.

Title and Author: *Don't Touch My Hair!* by Sharee Miller

Description: Just about everywhere Aria goes, someone wants to touch her fluffy, curly hair. Whether she's in the street, under the sea, in the jungle, or even in space, strangers (and strange creatures) try to touch Aria's hair. Finally, she has had enough!

Themes: Racism, Girl Empowerment, Consent

Discussion Questions

1. What does Aria love about herself? Name two things you like about yourself.
2. Aria loves her hair. Who else also loves it?
3. Do you think Aria likes it when people try to touch her hair?
4. Can you name three places Aria tried to hide so people wouldn't try to touch her hair?
5. What does Aria decide to do?
6. How did people react after Aria told them to stop touching her without permission?
7. How can you tell someone that something that they are doing makes you feel uncomfortable?

Activities

Let's Watch a Film

Watch the Oscar-winning short film [Hair Love](#) by Matthew A. Cherry. It can be found on YouTube for free. The film tells the story of a father doing his daughter's hair for the first time. Watch as the daughter advocates for what she wants and needs from her father the same as how Aria spoke up for herself.

Hair Stylist in the Making

Using flat paper plates, have children draw and color faces on however many they like. Then, using a pair of scissors, have them cut their paper plate friends a new hairstyle.

Title and Author: *Mango, Abuela, and Me* by Meg Medina and Illustrated by Angela Dominguez

Description: Mia's abuela leaves her sunny house with parrots and palm trees to move in with Mia and her parents in the city. When she arrives, Mia wants to share her favorite book before bedtime, but learns that Abuela can't read it. Mia decides to help Abuela learn English while they cook together, and she gets to learn some Spanish herself. It's hard for Abuela to learn and tell Mia her stories, but they have some help after Mia sees a parrot in the window.

Themes: Girl Empowerment, Immigration, Different Family Structures

Discussion Questions

1. Mia is nervous when her abuela (grandmother) moves in. Why is she nervous?
2. Do you think Abuela is nervous to meet Mia?
3. Have you ever met your grandparents?
4. Can Mia and her abuela understand each other?
5. What does Mia do to help her abuela learn English?
6. What are some things you like to do with your Grandparents?
7. What does Mia get her abuela to make her feel less homesick?

Activities

Practice a New Language

Mia and her abuela had a hard time communicating at first. But with some practice, they were able to learn from each other. If you and your child(ren) want to try to learn a new language, try labeling things around your house or classroom with the name of the object in the language you want to learn.

Family Tree

Mia was able to learn more about her Abuelo from her Abuela. Grab crayons and paper for this activity. Help children to draw a tree with a giant trunk. In the middle of the tree have them put their name. Then have them draw branches with each branch being named after a member in their family. Family can be grandparents, siblings, and close friends!

Title and Author: *Julián Is a Mermaid* by Jessica Love

Description: Julián notices three women on the subway dressed up in beautiful gowns that end in fishtails and bright, billowing hair. When he gets home, he starts daydreaming about the magic he has seen and wants to dress up in his own fabulous mermaid costume. Julián sets off to create a tail from a butter-yellow curtain and a headdress from a potted fern. What will Julián’s abuela think of the mess he’s made or the costume he’s created?

Themes: Healthy Masculinity, Family Acceptance, Self-Esteem

Discussion Questions

1. While riding the train with his abuela, who does Julián meet?
2. What was Julián’s “good idea”?
3. How do you think Julián feels after becoming a mermaid?
4. Why does Julián look upset after his abuela sees him dressed as a mermaid?
5. How do you think Julián’s abuela feels seeing him as a mermaid?
6. What does Julián’s abuela give to him?
7. Where does Abuela take Julián? And what do they do?
8. Do you think that Julián would be allowed to be a mermaid at your school?

Activities

Mermaid Parade!

Julián and his abuela attend a parade of mermaids, which is based on a real one held on Coney Island in New York City. Use items from around the house or other craft materials to dress up as mermaids and have children celebrate what makes them special.

Mermaid Tails

Everyone can be a mermaid if they want to! Grab some colorful paper, crayons, glitter, and glue. Have children cut out what their mermaid tail would look like and then have them design it in whatever shape or fashion they please.

Title and Author: *The Day You Begin* by Jacqueline Woodson and illustrated by Rafael López

Description: Sooner or later, you will face a time when you walk into a room and find that nobody there is quite like you. There are lots of reasons you might feel different, whether it's the way you look, the way you talk, where you're from, or what you eat. It's not easy to take those first steps when nobody knows you yet, but somehow you find the courage to do it.

Themes: Respecting Difference, Mindfulness, Healthy Friendships

Discussion Questions and Activities

1. Are there times you feel different from those around you? When is that?
2. Where did Rigoberto move from? Why did the class laugh at him?
3. Were the other children being nice when looking at the girl's lunch?
4. Have you ever felt left out at school?
5. What did Angelina do on her summer vacation?
6. The other kids didn't always understand their classmates. How can you make someone who is different from you feel welcome?
7. What is one thing that is special about you?
8. Throughout our story there were hidden rulers. Were you able to find all the rulers? If you did not find all five, go back and try to count them all!

Activities

Create Your Own Affirmations

Being new and different can be a challenge. Help children come up with positive affirmations they can repeat to themselves when they don't feel like they are enough. Example: "I get my rest, because I'm the best. I am the best because I can pass any test. But I don't need a test to tell me that I am the best."

Draw What Makes You Feel Confident

In *The Day You Begin*, each child talked about not feeling brave enough to express themselves. With your young reader, have them draw out what makes them feel brave and confident. After they finish their drawing, have them answer the following questions:

1. What is your drawing of?
2. Why does it make you feel confident?
3. Can you use this to make others feel brave?

Title and Author: *My Papi Has A Motorcycle* by Isabel Quintero and Illustrated by Zeke Peña

Description: When Daisy Ramona zooms around her neighborhood with her papi on his motorcycle, she sees the people and places she's always known. She also sees a community that is rapidly changing around her. But as the sun sets purple-blue-gold behind Daisy Ramona and her papi, she knows that the love she feels will always be there.

Themes: Strong Father Figure, Family, Community

Discussion Questions

1. What does Daisy appear to be working on when her papi gets home?
2. After work, Daisy's papi loves to take her for rides on his motorcycle. Have you ever rode on a motorcycle before?
3. What are some things your family does together after school and work?
4. Name four people that Daisy sees while riding in her neighborhood.
5. What things do you notice about Daisy's neighborhood? How is it different and similar to where you live now?
6. Daisy drives past a mural saying it tells the history of her neighborhood and the immigrants who built it. What does the word "immigrant" mean, and how have you heard it used?
7. Daisy notices many changes taking place in her community, but one of the final things she says is that "in our little house there are things that will always stay the same". What do you think this means?

Activity

Neighborhood Ride Book

All communities have a history. Daisy and her papi live in a neighborhood filled with historical value. Take some time to map out places in your community that have history. This can be murals, parks, buildings, and old statues. Then, like Daisy and her papi, go for a neighborhood ride or walk with children to these destinations. Have your child take pictures so that they can create a mini book of the places they have been in their community.