

**B** is for **Brave**

**JOY**  
**FUL**

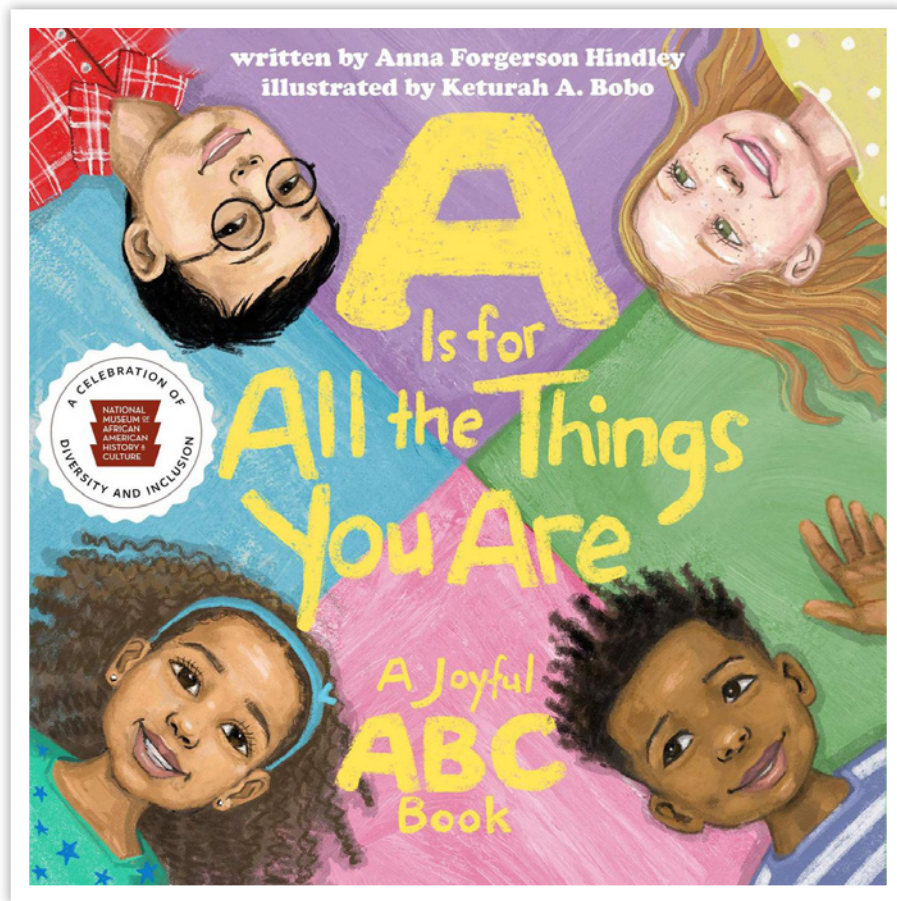


**A NMAAHC KIDS ABCs ACTIVITY BOOK**

INFANT AND TODDLER EDITION

Brought to you by the National Museum of African American History and Culture Early Childhood Education Initiative.  
Inspired by the children's book, A is for All The Things You Are: A Joyful ABC Book written by Anna Forgerson Hindley  
and illustrated by Keturah A. Bobo, ©2018 Art by Keturah Ariel LLC.

Funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.



*A is for All the Things You Are* was written to affirm our children and empower them to see themselves as many things at once – daring and loving, creative and just, amazing and zany – and everything in between. The book offers wonderful opportunities for conversations with children to build their vocabularies, strengthen their sense of self and deepen their joy in and acceptance of human diversity. The illustrations allow them to see not only themselves but others in the same positive light as well. By seeing positive images of children of different colors, genders, abilities, classes, and other social identities, we nurture the child's comfort and joy in human diversity so deep caring connections can be made across humanity.

Each activity booklet offers suggestions of how to begin the lifelong work of having a positive sense of self and others with your infant or toddler, how to support their language development and how to build the foundations of literacy.

A Is for All the Things You Are: A Joyful ABC Book  
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# B is for Brave:

When you're somewhere new or you're meeting a new kid, you might feel scared or unsure. **Believe in yourself! Face your challenges head on!**

What are you going to be brave about today?

Starting in infancy, children repeatedly face new or unfamiliar experiences. Their bodies present them with new challenges every single day, growing and changing at an amazing speed. Their brains develop at the fastest pace of their entire lives. Babies and toddlers are constantly changing. Each new discovery or new skill presents new demands for growth.

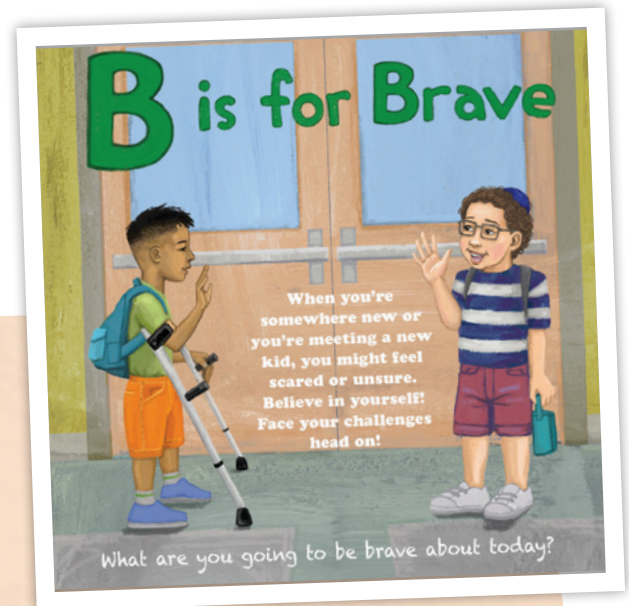
During these years of such astonishing change, babies and toddlers begin to develop attitudes about their own capacities for dealing with the unfamiliar, for trying what they haven't done before. We can help them see their struggles for new skills as wonderful - helping them only enough to help themselves, giving them room to take as much time as they need, recognizing that mistakes are just attempts that didn't quite work and that a future attempt will! We teach courage when we show our little ones in words and actions, *I know you can do this when you are ready. If it didn't work before, it will work next time. I trust you to figure this out in your own way.*

This is the foundation of bravery.

## What You'll Need:

The following supplies are suggested for the experiences in this booklet.

- Scarf, towel or small blanket
- Miscellaneous items (Some options include toys, noise making objects, keys and whole fresh vegetables.)
- 1 Empty paper towel tube (cut in half) or 2 toilet paper tubes
- Tape



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# EXPLORE

In early childhood, children learn best through doing! To explore this week's theme, try the experience below with your infant.

## Supporting Your Infant's Bravery

**Designed for:** Infants (3 months to walking)

**What you'll need:** Scarf, towel or small blanket, miscellaneous items (Some options include toys, noise making objects like instruments or rattles and whole fresh vegetables.)

**Build bravery through peek-a-boo.** Meeting new people entering places like businesses, homes or childcare centers for the first time can be an interesting, exciting and challenging experience for babies. Through fun at-home experiences, we can help to prepare them to face new moments with curiosity and pleasure.

A simple game of peek-a-boo can give little ones a chance to wonder and discover in a safe and joyful way. Enhance your next peek-a-boo game by collecting a scarf and items in your home that are visually interesting, unfamiliar or make sound. To play this game, instead of hiding your face, you'll hide the object with the scarf.



[Studio Portrait of a Baby by Rev. Henry Clay Anderson](#)

When the item is hidden, move it in a way that makes sound or shows that there is something behind the scarf. Enthusiastically, ask your little one what they think it is - even if they aren't talking yet. Once you reveal the item, continue to make the sound or movement. Then, allow your child to experiment with the item to make the sound on their own or explore the object with their hands and mouths. This game is best explored when your little one is comfortable - on their back, sitting up or on your lap.

# EXPLORE

Explore this week's theme with your toddler by trying this engaging experience inspired by our museum collection.

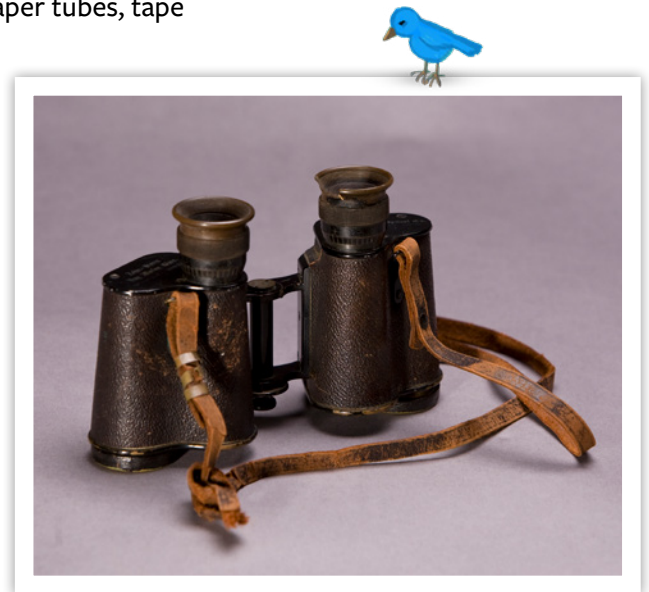
## Explore New Places Together

**Designed for:** Toddlers

**What you'll need:** 1 Empty paper towel tube (cut in half) or 2 toilet paper tubes, tape

**Make exploring new places exciting.** A significant part of being a young child is facing unfamiliar things. A child's newness to the world means they're regularly surrounded by new faces and voices, new smells and sounds, new environments and feelings - and experiencing understanding, and adapting to these new things is hard work. As an adult in their life, you can support them in being brave by exploring new places with a sense of wonder and curiosity rather than unease or fear.

When possible, try the ideas below to make visits to everyday places like libraries or drugstores feel like an adventure!



[Binoculars used by Peter L. Robinson Sr.](#)

Before your visit, enthusiastically talk about a few things that you will see (like books on shelves or shopping baskets). If you can find pictures, look at them together and name them. Then, try to find the real things during your trip!

Peter L. Robinson, one of the first African American officers in World War I, used the binoculars pictured here to better see his surroundings while stationed in France. To encourage close looking when you arrive in new places with your little one, bring along binoculars made of cardboard tubes taped together. Point to and describe what you see in simple words. Invite your little one to look around and see what they notice. Help them by naming what they don't have words for.

Narrate your experience and ask questions along the way. You may say something like: *We're about to go into the next aisle. I wonder what we'll discover! Do you hear the music playing? Let's count the tiles as we walk! Look around! What colors do you see?*

# EXPLORE MORE

Continue learning with your little one using these recommended resources:

## Books

Support your child's development and understanding of the concepts introduced in this booklet with the following books.



### **I Am So Brave!**

by Stephen Krensky,  
illustrated by Sara Gillingham



### **Peekaboo Morning**

by Rachel Isadora



### **Babies on the Go!**

by Debby Slier (Star Bright Books)



### **Carry Me**

by Star Bright Books

Tip:

Use your favorite search engine to find read-aloud videos online!

## Online Resources

Discover more ways to support the development of your child's bravery with these online resources.

- ★ [Grocery Store I Spy Game](#) - **Sesame Street** ... Turn a trip to the grocery store (or any place) into a fun and educational adventure with a game of I Spy.
- ★ [Elmo and Taye Diggs Go for a Drive](#) - **Sesame Street**... Discover one way of starting an imaginary adventure!
- ★ [Elmo and The Noodle Family Play Peek-A-Boo](#) - **Sesame Street**... Extend your peek-a-boo play with Elmo and the Noodle Family.



# CONNECT

## A Guide for Families and Caregivers

### Why do these experiences matter?

A child's identity is both internally constructed and externally imposed. They learn who they are and how they are valued from the words and actions of others and from the way they do or don't make sense of those messages. Their beloved adults (that's you!) are the most important people in their world. The words you give a child to describe themselves and others have lasting power in their lives. When a child has the words to think about their strengths and their worth, they can sort through negative messages and hold on to their sense of being loveable and capable. The experiences in this booklet are invitations for you to use objects, activities and words to support your child's positive identity development, their fascination with how people are both different and the same, and their ability to read emotions and build empathy. In time, experiences like these will also support your child's ability to recognize unfairness or unkindness and to stand up for themselves and others.

### What about supporting language development and getting ready to read?

Alphabets, in and of themselves, are not particularly interesting to young children. However, learning letter-filled words to describe the world around them and inside of them (their feelings, experiences and senses) are very interesting to children! Discovering new words, new ways to say things and new ways to think is exciting and essential to a child's literacy and identity development.

In the first three years of life, early language and literacy skills are best learned through everyday moments. The experiences in these booklets invite you to boost your child's literacy through talking, playing and creating together in fun and accessible ways. Some experiences will guide you in helping your infant or toddler "name the universe" with descriptive words for the actions and emotions of themselves and others. Other experiences will encourage you to point out written words and look closely at objects to provide your little one with the beginning connections between the real world, reading and talking.

Every child's path to literacy is different and valid - just like their identity. The experiences in these booklets aim to support you and your child along their unique journey to literacy and a positive sense of self. **Remember to have fun along the way!**

## Credits

### Objects

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- Binoculars used by Peter L. Robinson Sr. during World War I, 1917. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of Peter L. Robinson Jr. and Marie Robinson Johnson. [2010.18.2](#)

### Original Artwork

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