

H is for Happy

JOY  
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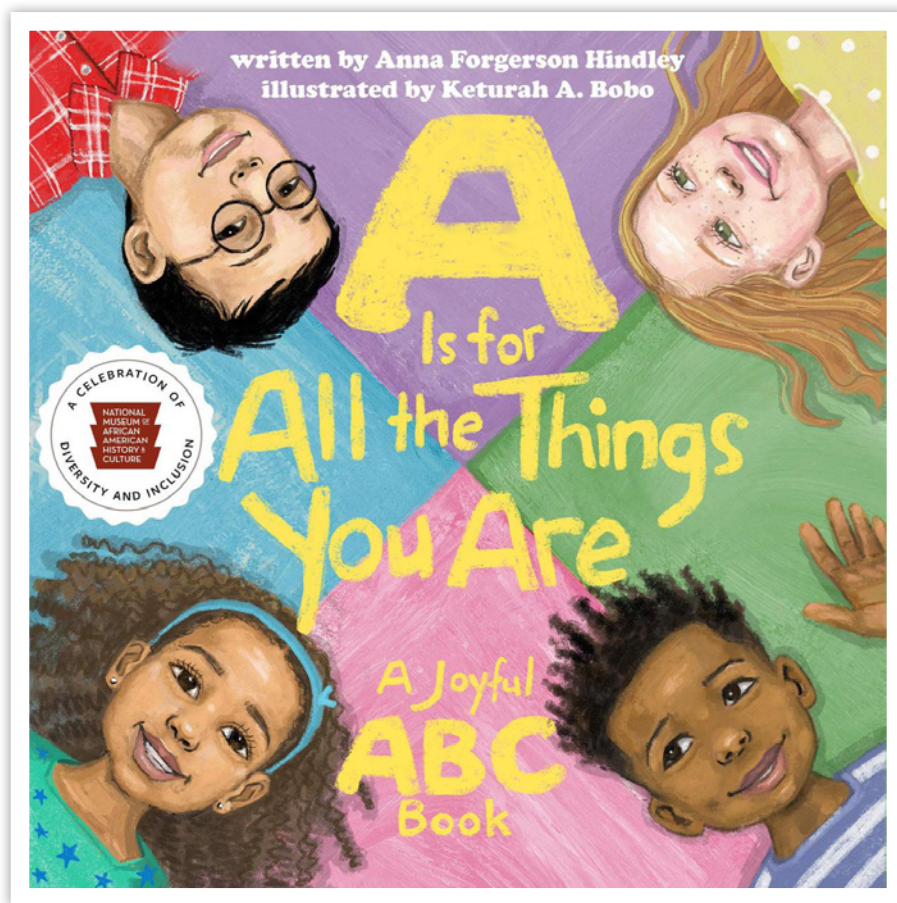


**A NMAAHC KIDS ABCs ACTIVITY BOOK**

EARLY LEARNERS EDITION - AGES 3 TO 5

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 Forgeson 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. In exploring ideas such as fairness, kindness, open-mindedness and being vocal, children begin the task of recognizing injustice and knowing how to stand up for themselves and others.

*Each activity booklet offers suggestions of how to begin the lifelong work of having a positive sense of self and others with your early learner, 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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# H is for Happy:

There are wonderful things right in front of you.

Hold a friend's hand. Stop to smell a flower. **You'll be happy!**

## How can you share your happiness with others?

We all want our children to be happy but we often mistake excitement for happiness. Laughter and big smiles are contagious and satisfying but they are only one way that children show their happiness. Hugs, snuggling and relaxing into another person's presence are signs of happiness. Being absorbed in a self-directed, focused task is also a form of happiness. Though these kinds of happy moments are often taken for granted, we can support our children to notice and name these calmer times as happiness.

As you support your child in acknowledging the many ways we can experience happiness, we can also introduce (or remind them) of simple experiences that spark happiness like time in nature and time with friends.

Children can feel engaged and happy when we invite them to play and explore outside and in nature. Whether it's in a park, countryside or along a city street, trees, fresh air, birds and flowers can help us all breathe deeper, move slower and notice more. Like nature, relationships are essential to our health and happiness. When we encourage our children in making friends and maintaining friendships, we are building their capacities for thriving in our world.

As we slow down to encourage our little ones to discover the many ways happiness is possible they become our teachers, showing us how to live in the moment and to continually find new ways to be aware and connected. It is that aware connection that makes happiness possible for us all.

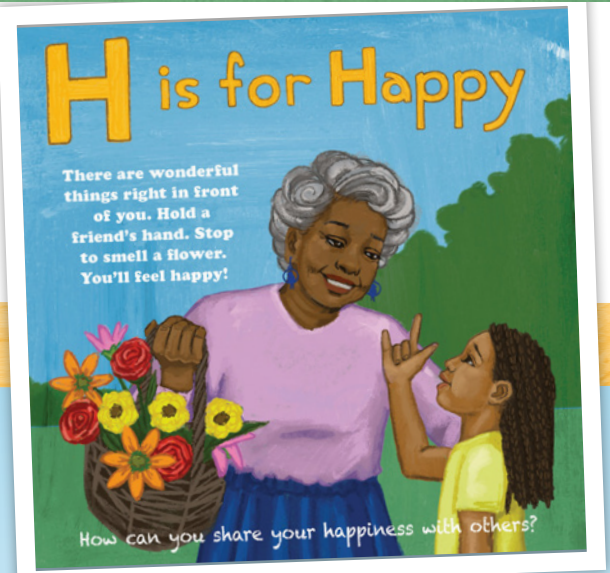
## What You'll Need:

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

- Paper
- Chalk
- Scissors
- Crayons, markers or colored pencils
- 1-2 Cardboard tubes
- Packaging or masking tape
- Binoculars (optional)
- Natural materials (like flowers and leaves)
- Beanbag, small stones or a sock filled with dry rice

**Tip:**

Build an at-home creativity kit full of all the supplies and recycled materials you'll need for future ABC art and play activities. Find the supplies list [here!](#)



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# EXPLORE

In early childhood, children learn best through doing! Explore this week's theme with your child by trying this engaging experience inspired by our museum collection.

## Discover Happiness in the Sounds and Sights of Nature

### What You'll Need

- Paper
- Crayons, markers or colored pencils
- Binoculars (optional)



Right outside our doors, there's a whole world of plants, animals and happiness to discover. When we slow down, look and listen to all the things around us, we can find something that makes our hearts feel happy. Sometimes a flower's color may make us smile! Jumping in a puddle can feel exciting! Watching leaves falling can make us feel peaceful. There are many ways nature brings happiness to people.

This week find happiness in taking a closer look at the different birds living all around you. Take a bird watching walk outside and use some or all of the suggestions below.

- 1 **Stop!** Go outside. Slow down and listen carefully. What can you hear?
- 2 **Look!** Can you see any birds? Some birds may be on the ground, flying or perched in a tree.  
**Tip:** Take a closer look at birds with binoculars! Use a store-bought pair or make your own by taping together two cardboard tubes.
- 3 **Listen!** Can you hear any birds? Notice the different sounds they make.
- 4 **Use Your Words.** Use words to describe the birds' colors, moves and parts you can see. If you know the kind of bird it is, say its name out loud.
- 5 **Draw.** Bring along paper and something to draw with. Then, draw a picture inspired by the bird.



# CREATE

Create art inspired by this week's theme!

## Create a Nature Friendship Bracelet

### What You'll Need

- 1-2 Cardboard tubes
- Packaging or masking tape
- Scissors
- Natural materials (like flowers and leaves)



**Building friendships with peers is one of the great joys of childhood!** Having a friend a child can play, talk and share with gives them a true sense of happiness. Combine the joys of nature and friendship by inviting your child to create a nature friendship bracelet to give to a good friend. Start by talking to your child about the big and little friends in their life: *How do you like to play with your friends? What makes your friends special? How does being with your friends make you feel?*

Choose one friend (or a few!) to make a friendship bracelet for and follow the steps below.

### Grown-Ups

- 1 Cut a toilet paper tube in half to make two small tubes. They'll become a bracelet for your child and a bracelet for their friend.
- 2 Cut the rolls up the side. This allows the tube to become a cuff-like bracelet.
- 3 Apply tape to the outside of the cuff so that the sticky side is facing outward.



### Early Learners

- 1 Take a nature walk with a grown-up to collect small leaves and flowers to decorate your bracelets. Look for interesting colors, shapes and textures. What items would make your friend happy?
- 2 As you gather the natural materials, add them to the sticky side of the friendship bracelets.
- 3 Once your bracelets are covered, choose one to give to your friend. Let them know how happy they make you feel!



# LEARN

Invite your child to take part in the following experiences to support their literacy and language skills.

## Happy Hopscotch

### What You'll Need

- Chalk
- Beanbag, small stones or a sock filled with dry rice

**Play inspires happiness!** Whether indoors or outdoors, alone or with friends, play is a joyful experience for children and it comes in many forms. This week, invite your child to play outside and with a friend to boost their literacy.

Start by drawing a hopscotch-like grid on the sidewalk with chalk. If your little one wants to help, invite them to draw a simple row of squares or other shapes.

Next, together with your child, spell out their name by writing a single letter into each square. Later, think about adding new letters! (Draw as many squares as you need.) Once the letters and the squares are complete, try this:

- **Say a letter or make a letter sound out loud.** Invite your child to jump, hop or step to that letter and count how many hops it takes you to get there.
- **Invite a friend to play.** Together and side by side, children can hop on one foot or two onto each letter. As they go, they may sing a song or come up with rhyming words together!
- **Encourage your child to toss a stone or beanbag onto a letter.** When they stop, you can all call out the letter and think of words that start with the letter together.



A

B

C

D

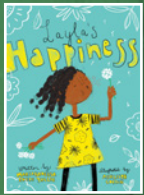
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# EXPLORE MORE

Continue learning with your little one using these recommended resources:

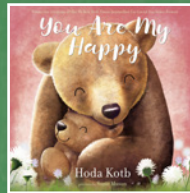
## Books

As you enjoy a book from the list below, talk to your little one about what brings them happiness. How is their happiness sparked similarly or differently than the characters in the stories?



### **Layla's Happiness**

by Mariahadessa Ekere Tallie,  
illustrated by Ashleigh Corrin



### **You Are My Happy**

by Hoda Kotb,  
illustrated by Suzie Mason



### **My Heart Fills With Happiness**

by Monique Gray Smith,  
illustrated by Julie Flett



### **Now**

by Antoinette Portis

Tip:

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

## Online Resources

Sing a joyful song and do a happy dance with the videos below!

 [Happy](#) by Pharrell Williams

 [The Happy Happiness Song](#) - Sesame Street

 [Elmo's Happy Dance](#) - Sesame Street

# 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.

The developmental path to reading is a child's understanding that, *"Anything I do or see, I can say! Anything I say can be written! Anything written can be read!"* Many booklet experiences will encourage you to engage in conversations about objects and during story times to deepen your child's connection to spoken and written words. Other experiences will invite you to build literacy skills by writing down what your child says, feels or thinks and reading it back to them aloud. Some booklets will introduce fun ways to boost fine motor skills that contribute to a child's writing and reading abilities. The booklets will also recommend books that intrigue children by illustrating the rich diversity of people in the world and providing them with a mirror to their own lives or a window into other lives.

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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### Program Photos

- Doug Sanford, National Museum of African American History and Culture, 2019

### Original Artwork

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