

I is for Interesting

JOY FUL

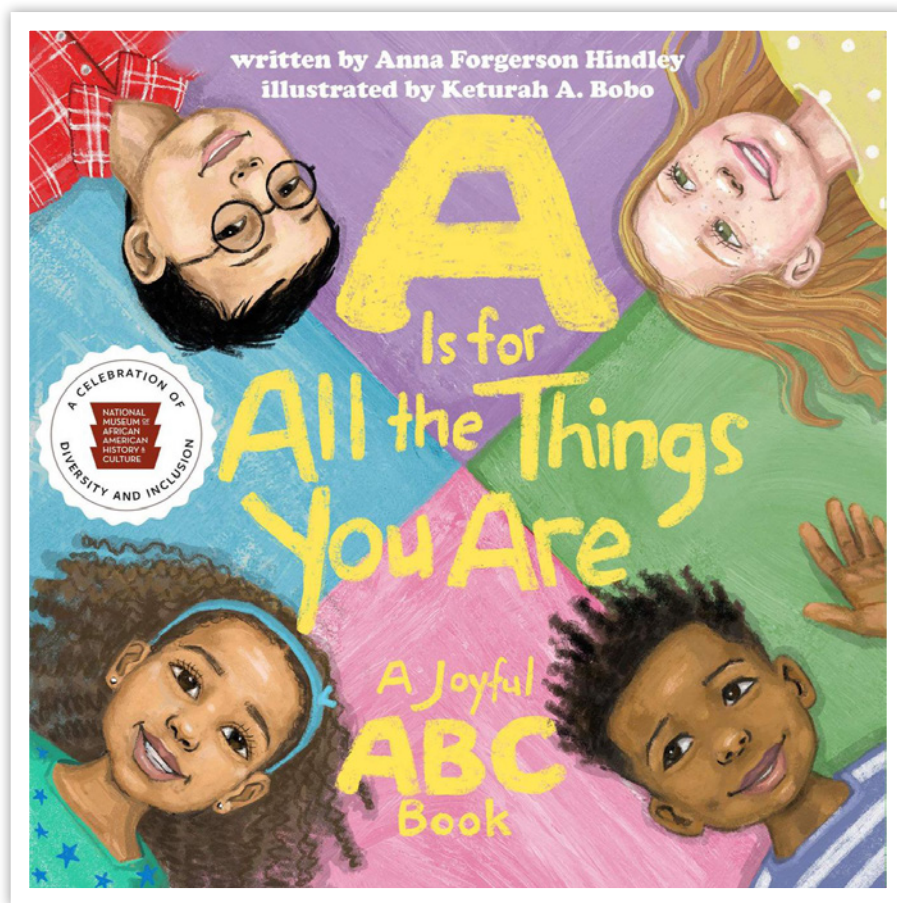


A NMAAHC KIDS ABCs ACTIVITY BOOK

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 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. 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 book 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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I is for Interesting:

Do you have unique ideas about how to solve problems? Do you eat different foods than other people you know? You are interesting! Remember that everyone has something special that makes them interesting, too!

Who or what do you find interesting?

All children are distinctly who they are. Even within a single family, each child develops different ways of thinking, doing things, showing emotions and feeling self-pride. We can choose to see a child's differences as problems or assets – things that make them original and interesting.

Honor your child's unique qualities by inviting them to share their ideas and imaginations often. Give them the vocabulary to express their ideas and teach them to use self-descriptive "I" statements (*I like, I think, I am*). Provide them with regular opportunities to discover and explore the things *they* find interesting.

By noticing and talking about what they care about and who they are, we show them that they are not only interesting but worthy of our interest. This matters to children's positive intellectual and emotional identity development. But be prepared! A child's interest and personal qualities today will likely be quite different next week or next month. They are still beginners at self-discovery. Follow them wherever they go!



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What You'll Need:

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

- Index cards
- Cardboard
- Scissors
- Ribbon or string
- Markers or crayons
- A work of art, article of clothing and a favorite thing
(See page 3 for more details.)

Tip:

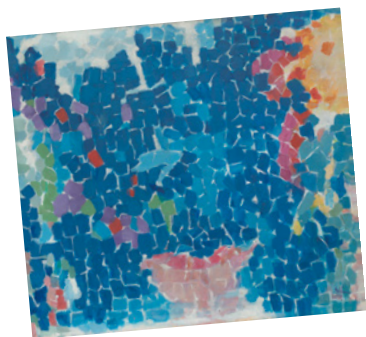
Build an at-home creativity kit full of all the supplies and recycled materials you'll need for future ABC art and play activities. Find the supplies list [here](#)!



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.

Create an Interesting Exhibit



Our interesting collection includes [Suddenly It's Spring](#) by Alma Thomas, [MC Lyte's shoes](#) and a [doll](#)!

Museums are filled with all kinds of things that tell interesting stories about the people who created them and used them. Did you know that *you* have a story to tell too? The things you use or love in your life - like a favorite hat or something from a special place - can show others about who you are in an interesting way. You have an important story to tell the world!

One way to tell your story is through a museum exhibit. An exhibit is a space with a collection of objects (or things). These collections tell a story. **Create your own collection of 3 or more objects to use in an exhibit that tells *your* story:**

- 1 **Pick a work of art.** Find art you've made or that decorates your home in a special way.
- 2 **Choose a piece of clothing.** Clothes (like shirts, shoes and hats) can remind us of special moments, favorite things or may make us feel really good when we wear them!
- 3 **Find a favorite thing.** This can be anything! Add an object to your collection that you really like to look at, play with or use.

Once you've gathered your objects, create an exhibit by placing them on a shelf or a tabletop where others can see them. Invite a friend or family member to visit your collection and tell them why you chose those items.

Tip:

For more exhibit inspiration, read *Milo's Museum* by Zetta Elliot!

CREATE

Create art inspired by this week's theme!

Create Your Own Camera

The world is an interesting place full of so many new things to discover everyday! This camera belonged to Reverend Henry Clay Anderson who took pictures of many people, places and events in his community.

Create a cardboard camera to take pretend pictures with as you walk around your neighborhood or home in search of something interesting.

What You'll Need

- Cardboard
- Ribbon or string
- Scissors
- Markers or crayons



[Camera from the studio of Reverend Henry Clay Anderson](#)

Grown-Ups

- 1 Cut out a cardboard rectangular or square shape small enough to be easily held by your child.
- 2 In the middle of the rectangle, draw a small circle. (Consider tracing a bottle cap or a toilet paper tube!) Then, cut along the line to create a hole.
- 3 Use scissors to make two holes at the top corners. Then, pull and tie the ends of a string through the holes, as pictured, to create a camera strap.



Early Learners

- 1 Decorate your camera! Use Reverend Henry Clay Anderson's camera as inspiration.
- 2 Take your camera and go for a walk inside or outside. Walk slowly and look around for things that make you wonder or smile. What interests you?
- 3 When you find something or someone interesting, look through the "lens" or hole of your camera and pretend to take a picture.

Tip:

Learn more about photographers and cameras with [Sesame Street!](#)



LEARN

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

Boost Literacy

Create labels for collection objects. In museums, labels give visitors more information about the object they are looking at. Help your little one gain a better understanding of written and spoken language by creating labels together for the objects in their interesting exhibit.

Start by folding an index card (or 5"x7" piece of paper) in half so that it stands up on its own like a tent. Ask your child to tell you the object's name and write it down on the folded paper. You may also support your child in writing the word, or the first letter of the word,

Learn Letters

With your little one, create a collection of objects that start with a favorite letter. It can be a collection of objects from around your home or a collage of images from a magazine. Identify the sound at the beginning of the words to help your child hear that they have the same sound.

Tip:

This week, ask your child to tell you interesting things about themselves and encourage them in practicing saying "I" or "I am" statements. Ask questions like: *What do you like to do? What is your favorite food? How do you feel when you are playing outside?*



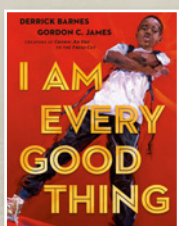
“I am...”

EXPLORE MORE

Continue learning with your little one using these recommended resources:

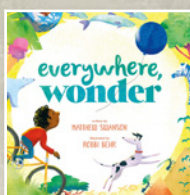
Books

Discover a world of interesting things around you and inside of you with the books below!



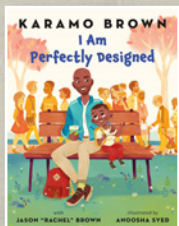
I Am Every Good Thing

by Derrick Barnes,
illustrated by Gordon C. James



Everywhere, Wonder

by Matthew Swanson,
illustrated by Robbi Behr



I Am Perfectly Designed

by Karamo Brown with
Jason "Rachel" Brown,
illustrated by Anoosha Syed



All My Treasures: A Book of Joy

by Jo Witek,
illustrated by Christine Roussey

Tip:

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

Online Resources

Foster your child's curiosity and encourage them to explore what interests them using tips from these online resources.

 [What Sparks Interest in Children?](#) - **Chicago Children's Museum**

 [Follow Your Curiosity](#) - **Sesame Street**

 [Sparkling Rich Conversations with Your Child](#) - **NAEYC**

 [Milo's Museum Resources](#) - **Social Justice Books**

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

- White and pink MC Lyte Baby Phat sneakers, 1998-2010. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of MC Lyte. [2011.118.4ab](#)
- Male doll with tan clothing, ca. 1965. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift from the Trumpauer-Mulholland Collection. [2011.109.9.1](#)
- Suddenly It's Spring by Alma Thomas, 1970. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of Joan Willis Holton, © Charles Thomas Lewis. [2017.24](#)
- Camera from the studio of H.C. Anderson, 1947-1955. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture. [2007.1.1.1](#)

Program Photos

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

Original Artwork

- Bluebird (cover, page 5) © 2018 Art by Keturah Ariel LLC