

J is for Just

JOY FUL

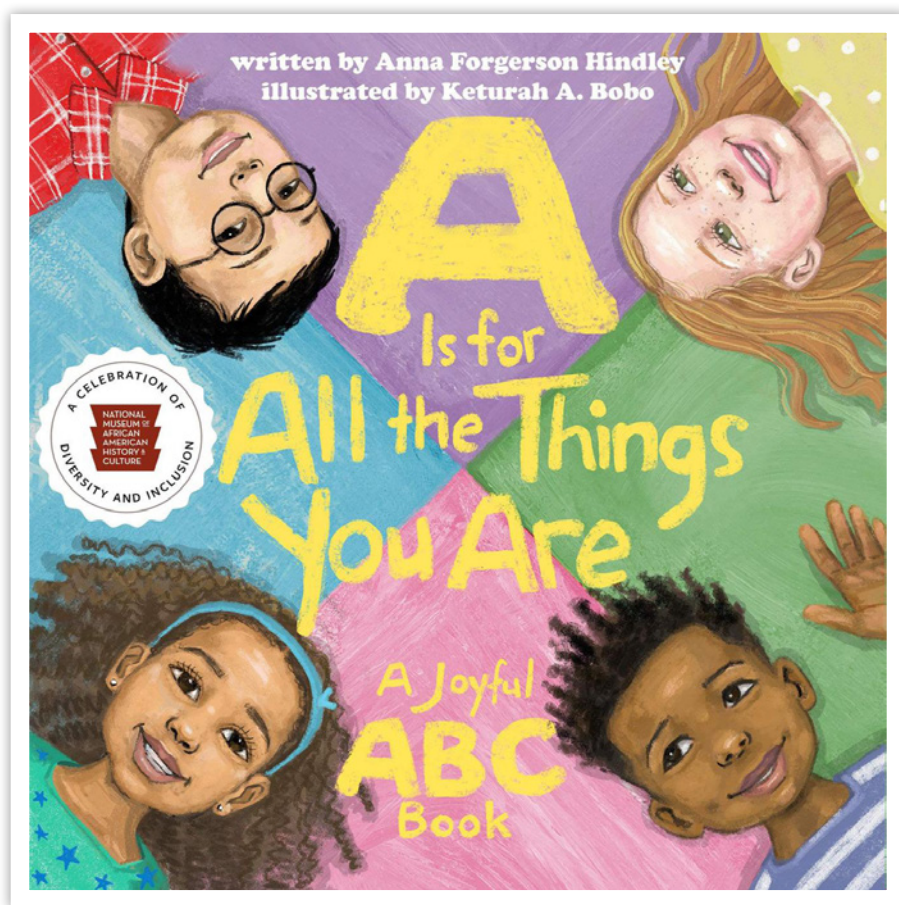


A NMAAHC KIDS ABCs ACTIVITY BOOK

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 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.

J is for Just:

Have you ever had a disagreement on the playground or when playing a game? If you listen to everybody's point of view and treat others fairly, that means you are just.

How have you stood up for justice?

For a concept as complex as justice, the seeds of understanding are planted in a child's early years and their ability to act justly and advocate for justice is cultivated overtime. As children experience and observe the world around them, they are constantly trying to figure out what is fair, what is unfair and who can help make a situation more just, if not themselves. Caregivers can help to develop a child's sense of justice through intentional conversations and by modeling behaviors at home and in public spaces.

When you notice something unfair in your home or community, name it and take the time to have a conversation about it. Ask your child for their opinion and invite them to think of possible solutions to making a situation more just. Share examples of how others have worked to solve similar issues.

Really listening to our children's words, letting them know they have been heard and that their perspective has been considered (even when their demands are unreasonable and we have to say no) helps them to develop the essential skills of speaking up, speaking out and looking for alternative opportunities to meet their needs and goals.

Participate in fights for justice. Marching is one way children can see and experience how people come together to use their individual voices and bodies to speak up for their beliefs. Even with children as young as three, having simple conversations about what they see, hear and feel when communities have protests, allows us to introduce to them the world of people changing what they see as unjust and lets them know that everyone, including your little one, can make a positive difference.

Every day we have opportunities to practice speaking and acting justly and supporting our children to do the same. Lead and work alongside your little one in the journey towards creating a more just world for your family and others!

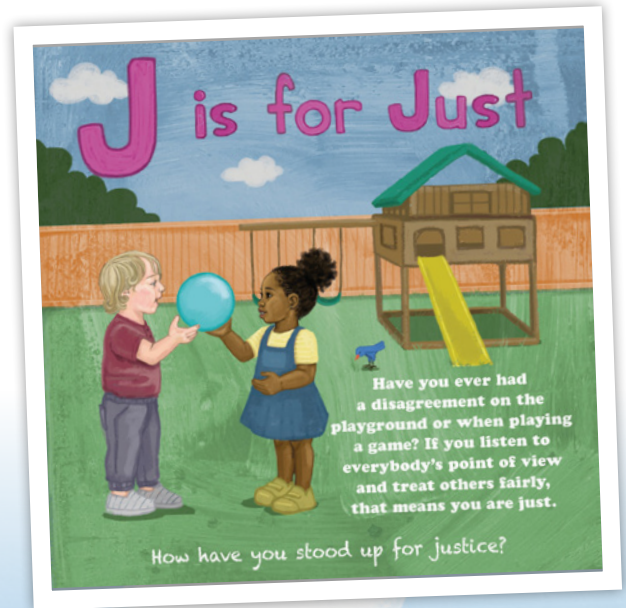
What You'll Need:

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

- Markers or crayons
- Glue stick
- 3D Materials (like sequins, pom-poms or colored paper)
- Pencil
- Large safety pins
- A piece of cardboard (for a handheld sign)
- Tape
- Drinking cup
- Cardstock or thin cardboard
- Scissors

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](#)!



A Is for All the Things You Are: A Joyful ABC Book
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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.

Marching for Justice

What You'll Need

- A piece of cardboard for a handheld sign
- Markers and crayons
- Glue stick
- 3D Materials

When you feel that something is unjust or can be changed for the better, it's important to speak up! The people in this painting are walking in a protest march. Protest marches are one way to use your voice and your body to fight for justice.

When you march and protest, you're making sure a lot of people can see and hear what you believe in and what you want to see change. People often protest when they feel something that's happening isn't fair or helpful and they use signs to say this. **Try making your own protest signs to use at a march in your home or neighborhood:**



[Walking by Charles Henry Alston](#)

- **Discover your reason to march.** Ask: *What do you think is unfair or unjust? What's something you'd like to see change? What do you think could be done about that?*
- **Create a sign.** Write a simple sentence in big letters on a piece of cardboard. For example, your sign could say: *Be Kind, More Swings* or *No Bullies*. Add colors and glue decorations to your signs to catch people's attention.
- **Start marching!** Go for a march in your backyard, around the block, in a park, or march your way to nearby friends' or relatives' homes. If you can, invite a friend or two to join your march.

Tip:

Learn more about protests with [Sesame Street](#) and [CNN](#).



CREATE

Create art inspired by this week's theme!

Button Pins for Justice

What You'll Need

- Tape
- Scissors
- Drinking cup
- Large safety pins
- Cardstock or thin cardboard
- Pencil, markers and crayons

Button pins are small pictures and words that people can put on their clothing to tell others what they believe is just or unjust. Even though the pins are small, they can make a big difference in making the world a better place.

Look closely at this vest. How many button pins can you count? Joan Trumpauer Mulholland had a lot to say! She wore this vest covered in pins to show people, wherever she went, that she believed that people of all skin colors should be treated fairly. Each pin is different and says something important!

Make your own button pins for justice. Grown-ups: Prepare for this project by tracing circles onto cardstock or thin cardboard with a cup and cutting them out. Next, invite children to add words or pictures that show or tell others about something that's important to them. Ask: *What is something important to you? What's something that you want to tell other people about?* (This week, consider making a pin that says "JUST.")



Joan Trumpauer Mulholland's Denim Vest



Add a large safety pin to the back with tape and then attach the button pin to your little one's clothing. Consider making more button pins to share with friends! Who can you show your pins to? What will you tell them?



LETTERS & LITERACY

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



[*Coming Into Montgomery*](#)
by Spider Martin

Boost Literacy

As your child learns about past and current fights for justice and what being just looks like in their everyday life, it's important that we show them the power that words and voices can have in changing the world.

Boost literacy and spark change with music. Music has long been a tool in the fight for justice. From spirituals to protest songs, African Americans have used music to share their thoughts and feelings and to make a difference. Introduce your little one to the ways music communicates with others by clapping and singing along to protest songs like [Let There Be Peace](#) by Sweet Honey in the Rock or [Ain't Gonna Let No Body Turn Me 'Round](#) by The Freedom Singers.

Learn Letters

Take a close look at artist Andrea Pippins' poster, [What Can I Do?](#), and ask your child if they recognize any of the letters on the poster. When they find one, repeat the name and sound of the letter and tell them the word. Share how this word and the action it describes helps make the world just or fair.

EXPLORE MORE

Continue learning with your little one using these recommended resources:

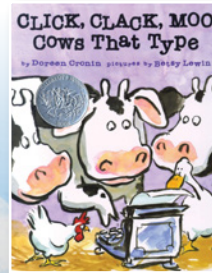
Books

Discover the many ways to act and speak up for justice with the books below!



We March

by Shane W. Evans



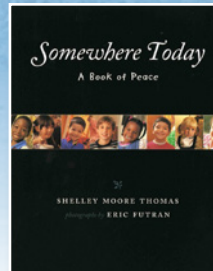
Click, Clack, Moo Cows that Type

by Doreen Cronin,
illustrated by Betsy Lewin



You and Me and Home Sweet Home

by George Ella Lyon,
illustrated by Stephanie Anderson



Somewhere Today: A Book of Peace

by Shelley Moore Thomas,
illustrated by Eric Futran

Tip:

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

Online Resources

Learn how to support your child in practicing empathy and standing up for what's right.



[Conversations that Matter: Talking with Children About Big World Issues](#) - NAEYC



[For Families: 5 Tips for Cultivating Empathy](#) - Making Caring Common, Harvard School of Education



[The Power of We: A Sesame Street Special](#) - Sesame Workshop



[7 Ways to Support the Young Activists in Your Life](#) - Embrace Race

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

- *Walking* by Charles Henry Alston, 1958. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of Sydney Smith Gordon, © Charles Alston Estate. [2007.2](#)
- Commemorative denim vest with buttons assembled by Joan Trumpauer Mulholland, 1960s, assembled 1980s. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift from the Trumpauer-Mulholland Collection. [2010.71.3](#)
- Pinback button for the Black Panther Party, late 1960s. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of Ellen Siegel. [2012.28.2](#)
- Pinback button for voting rights, 1950 - 1990. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of T. Rasul Murray. [2013.68.3.1-2](#)
- Pinback button with "I'm Black and Proud" slogan, after 1968. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of T. Rasul Murray. [2013.68.55](#)
- Pinback button from the 2008 Obama Campaign, 2008. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of M. Denise Dennis. [2012.91.68](#)
- *Coming Into Montgomery* by Spider Martin, 1965. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, © 1965 Spider Martin. [2011.14.1](#)

Original Artwork

- Bluebird (cover, page 3, 5); Clouds (pages 2, 3, 5, 6) © 2018 Art by Keturah Ariel LLC