

V is for Vocal

JOY FUL

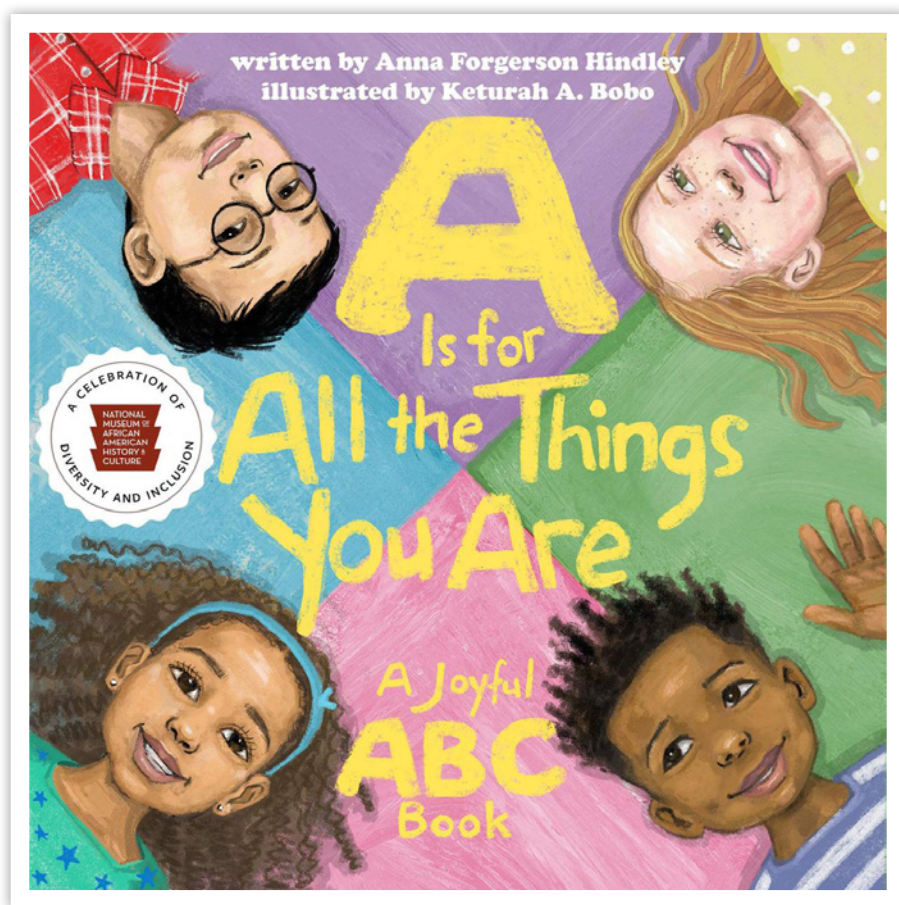


A NMAAHC KIDS ABCs ACTIVITY BOOK

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.

A Is for All the Things You Are: A Joyful ABC Book
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V is for Vocal:

Sometimes it is important to let your voice be heard! Shout the things you are passionate about. Tell those you love that you love them. Stand up and speak out against injustice.

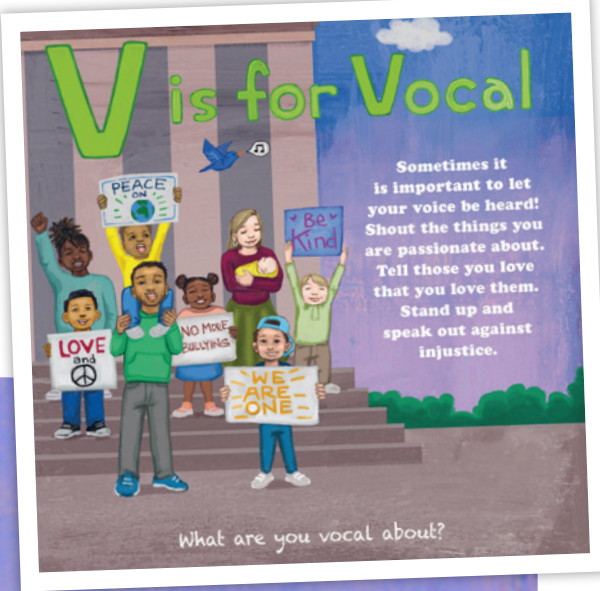
What are you vocal about?

Our growing children have a lot of important ideas and feelings to express, let's help them to be vocal. As they learn new letters and discover new words, children are also coming to know and own new thoughts, frustrations, needs and passions. Expressing themselves and communicating about these new parts of themselves, using their words, can be a struggle. Providing children with regular opportunities to talk about their emotions and their boundaries helps.

“No” is one of the first words our children learn to use to advocate for themselves and they’ll often naturally share their frustration or need for boundaries in their behaviors or attitudes. Caregivers can help them further vocalize these feelings by creating and sharing empowering phrases such as, *No, that isn’t fair. You’re being mean. And, that is not okay. Stop it! I don’t like that.* Simple phrases like these help children to communicate their needs with one another. When we notice our children advocating for their needs, we can respond with, “Thank you for respecting your boundaries. They are important.”

But being vocal isn’t just about stopping harm, it’s also about sharing positivity. Young children can benefit from practicing affirmations, short phrases rooted in self-love. Together, as a family, practice sharing affirmations such as: *Yes, I am kind. I am smart. I am loved.*

Most importantly, being vocal leads to advancements. When people are vocal as a collective, whether to stop harm or spread positivity, change happens. You can find ways to support your child in being vocal by writing letters to leaders together, making yard signs, and joining local community groups. Let them know now that their young voice matters and watch the ways they use it to change the world as they grow.



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What You'll Need:

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

- Markers and crayons
- Large paper
- Paper towel tube
- Tape

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.

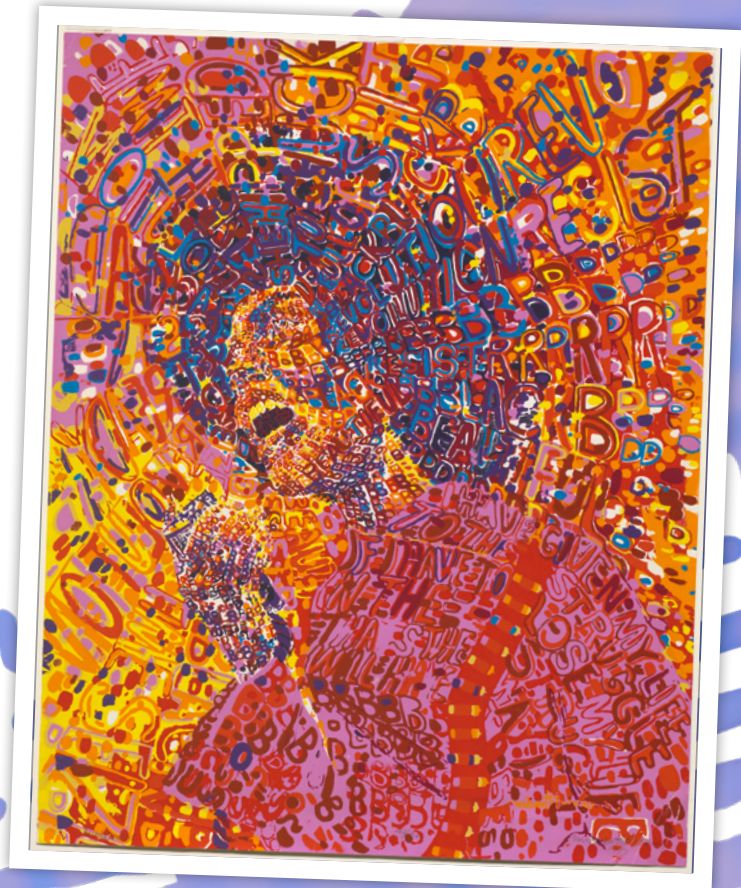
My Powerful Voice

Your voice is a powerful tool. Voices can express feelings and ideas. Voices can be forgiving, kind and helpful. Voices can change communities. Your voice is important and how you use it matters.

Each of us has the power to use our voice to make a difference when we hear or see ourselves or others being treated unfairly. This painting of activist Angela Davis is filled with words she and others have used to stand up for justice, like, *Black, beautiful* and *resist*. What letters do you see? Angela Davis is known for using her voice to help make the world a better place. Her words tell others when things are unfair and how they need to change. Today, her powerful voice continues to fight for people of all races and genders to be treated more fairly.

Talk about it!

Talking about your values can help children learn how to use their voice to speak up when they see injustice. Ask your child to think about a time when they experienced something that they thought was unfair. Ask them: *What did you do or say?* *Can you think of a time when you used your voice to help?* *What words can you say to change something that's unfair?*



Revolutionary by Wadsworth Aikens Jarrell

Tip:

Caregivers, learn more about the ways Angela Davis has used her voice to change the world [from a NMAAHC historian](#).

CREATE

Create art inspired by this week's theme!

Sharing My Voice Through Art

WHAT'S NEEDED:

- Markers and crayons
- Large piece of paper

Speak through art! One way that people share their voices is through words and art on signs. Signs, like the ones in these photographs, tell others what we think, how we feel and what we want or need. Make your own sign to show what you know and believe about yourself! Find more inspiration for your poster by visiting the [NMAAHC Activism Learning Lab collection](#).

Divide a piece of paper into four rectangles using a marker or pen. Write one of the following statements into each space: *I am*, *I can*, *I love*, and *I do not like*. Next, talk with your child about how they can fill those spaces by asking questions like: *What makes you feel really happy?* *What do you know how to do?* *What is something you don't like?*

When we provide children with opportunities to talk about their thoughts, feelings and personal characteristics, we are supporting them to feel more confident in using their voice to advocate for themselves and others in future moments.

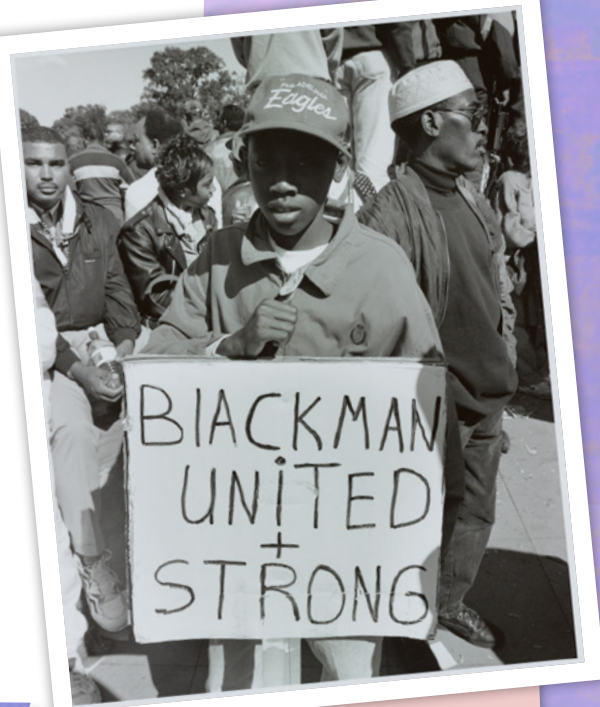
Invite your little one to fill the four rectangles with drawings of their answers during or after your talk. Support older children in adding words or their name to the pictures.

Tip:

Use this poster as a conversation starter between your child and their family, friends, teachers or neighbors!



Untitled by Devin Allen



Black Men United & Strong by Roderick Terry

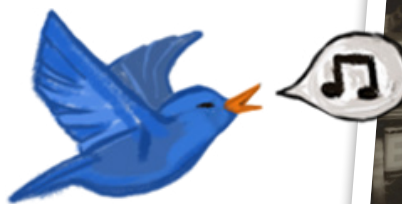
LEARN

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

Hear My Voice!

WHAT'S NEEDED:

- Paper towel tube
- Tape
- Scissors
- Markers and crayons



Indoor portrait of a young girl by Rev. Henry Clay Anderson

Talk about it!

- Who have you talked to on the phone? What did you talk about?
- Who can you tell about your feelings?
- What can you say when something doesn't feel fair?

Children can gain confidence in their own voice when they hear it themselves! Create a homemade phone with a cardboard tube that allows your child to talk into one end and hear their voice through the other.

When children hear their own voice, whether soft or loud, they not only become stronger readers but can also grow in their abilities to speak up for what's fair, express their opinions and advocate for themselves.

Cut the paper tube into three pieces as pictured. Attach the three pieces together with tape to create a part for your child to put their ear to, hold onto and talk into. Next, invite your little one to decorate the phone with markers or crayons!

Then, invite your child to use their play phone for reading a favorite book, pretend conversations with friends and family, or practicing letter sounds.

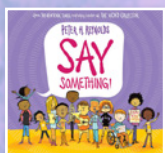


EXPLORE MORE

Continue learning with your little one using these recommended resources:

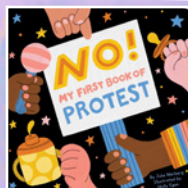
Books

Read about the power voices have! Talk about the ways you can use your own voice in the same and different ways.



Say Something!

by Peter H. Reynolds



No! My First Book of Protest

by Julie Merberg,

illustrated by Molly Egan



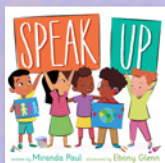
One

by Kathryn Otoshi



Sometimes People March

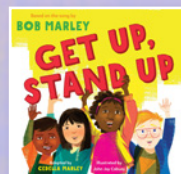
by Tessa Allen



Speak Up

by Miranda Paul,

illustrated by Ebony Glenn



Get Up, Stand Up

based on the song by Bob Marley, adapted by
Cedella Marley, illustrated by John Jay Cabuay

Tip:

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

Online Resources

Children can use their voices to make big and important changes! See how with the resources below.

- ★ [Speak Up - Making Space with Christian Robinson](#)
- ★ [Stand Up, Speak Up - Amp'd! Songs to Rock Childhood](#)
- ★ [8 Little Ways to Encourage Your Child to Speak Their Mind - Parents](#)
- ★ [Twelve Books to Help Children Understand Race, Anti-Racism and Protest - Smithsonian Magazine](#)

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.

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) is 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

- *Revolutionary* by Wadsworth Aikens Jarrell Sr., 1972. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, © Wadsworth Jarrell. [2010.3.1](#)
- *Untitled* by Devin Allen, 2015. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of Devin Allen, © Devin Allen. [2015.170](#)
- *Black Men United & Strong* by Roderick Terry, 1995. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of Roderick Terry, © Roderick Terry. [2013.99.31](#)
- Indoor portrait of a young girl by Rev. Henry Clay Anderson, 1948–1970s. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of Charles Schwartz and Shawn Wilson, © Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture. [2012.137.18.27](#)

Original Artwork

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