

A is for Amazing

# JOY FUL

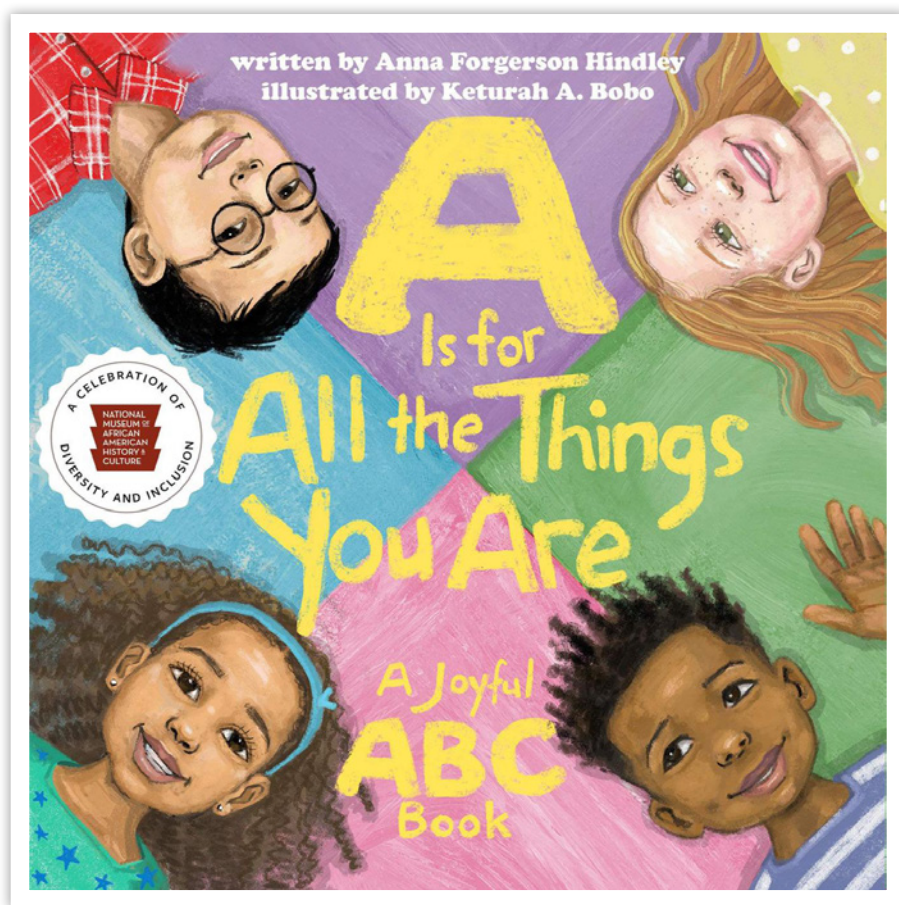


**A NMAAHC KIDS ABCs ACTIVITY BOOK**

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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# A is for Amazing:

**You have special traits that make you YOU!**

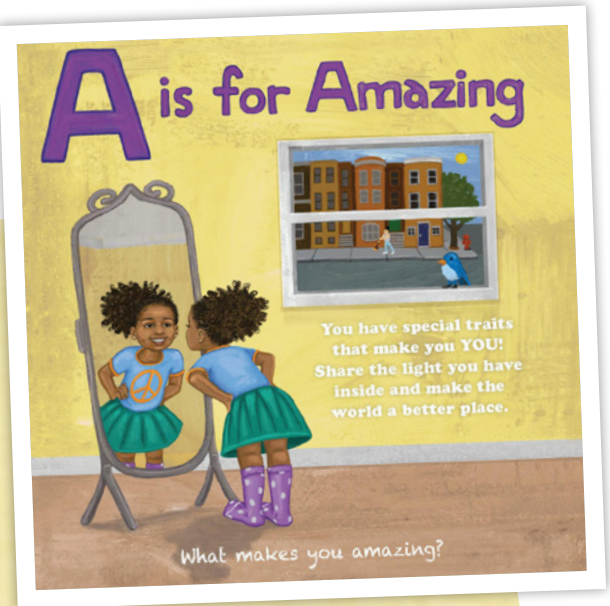
Share the light you have inside and make the world a better place.

## What makes you amazing?

**A is for amazing.** Our little ones are amazing from the moment they are born. They are curious about everything they see and hear. They keep growing, trying and stretching what they can do. They accept love as their right, and give it back to others. Amazing is a word that tells a child, *"You are wonderful, astonishing, impressive – just as you are. The world is a better place because you are in it."*

As you go through the week, find new ways to describe what makes your child amazing, makes other people in your lives amazing, and what makes you amazing. It's powerful for your child to hear you naming your positive traits too! Ask your child: *What is something that you love about yourself - on the inside and the outside? When do you feel amazing?* Support them by providing words to describe who they are. Be sure to answer the questions for yourself too!

Use the following experiences in this booklet to practice teaching your child that who they are matters while also giving them the vocabulary to understand the world and to feel proud of themselves.



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## What You'll Need:

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

- Safe, open space for movement
- A music playing device (like a phone, radio or computer)
- Old magazines or newspapers
- Scissors
- Glue stick
- Blank piece of paper
- Cooking pot and spoon (optional)
- Paper towel roll (optional)
- Scarves (optional)

### 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.

## Talk about it!

- What is happening in this picture?
- How many children do you see?
- If the children are dancing to music, what would it sound like?
- How do you think they are feeling? How can you tell?



## Expressive Dance

### What's Needed:

- Safe, open space for movement
- A music playing device (like a phone, radio or computer)
- Cooking pot and spoon (optional)
- Paper towel roll (optional)
- Scarves (optional)



*Portrait of Three Children by Jack Mitchell*

### We can express ourselves through movement!

Like the children in the photograph, you can dance to share the way you feel. Show off your amazing dance moves by playing your favorite song and moving your body to show how it makes you feel on the inside. How do you dance when you feel happy or calm, angry or sad? Add to your expressive dance with homemade instruments (like a spoon and cooking pot for a drum or a paper towel tube for a horn). Use scarves to wave and move around as you dance! What can you say with your body?



# CREATE

Create art inspired by this week's theme!

## Amazing Me! Collage Art

Create a collage that shows who you are.

### What You'll Need

- Old magazines or newspapers
- Glue stick
- Scissors
- Blank piece of paper

1 Start by gathering old magazines, scissors, a glue stick and a pair of scissors.

2 Search the pages of a magazine or newspaper for pictures of things you love, like colors, foods or activities. Look for words that may describe your personality. When you find the pictures and words, cut (or tear) them out.

3 Glue the magazine or newspaper words and images to a blank piece of paper.

4 Be sure to write your name at the top of the page so that others will know that the collage shows who you are!



# LETTERS & LITERACY

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

There are many ways to express and celebrate our amazing selves! One way we can do that is through the words we say. This microphone was used on The Oprah Winfrey Show. During the show, the host, Oprah, and special guests talked about many things. Without a wire, the microphone could be easily passed around so that guests and people in the audience could share their thoughts, feelings and opinions with each other. Using a microphone also helped to make people's voices loud so that everyone could hear what was being said.



[Wireless Gold Microphone](#)  
Used on The Oprah Winfrey Show

## Boost Literacy

Grab a mixing spoon or hairbrush and pretend it is a microphone! Next, look for objects around your home that start with the letter A. Objects may include food, toys, pictures and more! How many objects can you find? As you find them, say their names into your microphone. Try saying some words in a whisper and some words in a shout! For an extra challenge, look for objects during a walk in your neighborhood.

## Learn Letters

After finding objects that start with the letter A, pick 3 to draw a picture of on a blank piece of paper. Once you've drawn 3 pictures, work with an adult to write the objects' names or practice writing the letter A.

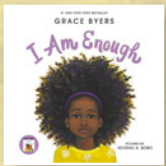


# EXPLORE MORE

Continue learning with your little one using these recommended resources:

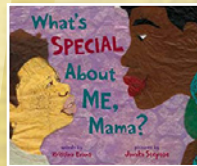
## Books

Reading is a wonderful way to support the development of a child's positive sense of self. While enjoying these books, invite your child to point to their own body part when reading about body parts and to move in the same ways as characters in the illustrations.



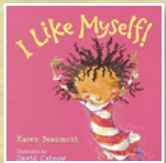
### **I Am Enough**

by Grace Byers,  
illustrated by Keturah Bobo



### **What's Special About Me, Mama?**

by Kristina Evans,  
illustrated by Javaka Steptoe



### **I Like Myself!**

by Karen Beaumont,  
illustrated by David Catrow



### **It's Okay To Be Different**

by Todd Parr

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 positive sense of self with the online resources below.



[Building Self Esteem](#) - **Sesame Street** ... Watch the video and use the discussion questions to begin conversations with your child about what they can appreciate about themselves and others.



[Will.i.am Sings "What I Am"](#) - **Sesame Street** ... Sing along with Will.i.am and Sesame Street friends to tell the world about all the amazing ways your little one can be!



[You Are Special](#) - **Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood** ... Share this classic song to tell your child how special they are!

# 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

- Portrait of three children by Jack Mitchell, ca. 1960. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, © Jack Mitchell, All Rights Reserved. [2016.83.2](#)
- Gold wireless microphone used on The Oprah Winfrey Show, 2009. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of Oprah Winfrey. [2014.324.3.1](#)

### Original Artwork

- Bluebird (cover, pages 3, 4); © 2018 Art by Keturah Ariel LLC