

E is for Emotional

JOY FUL

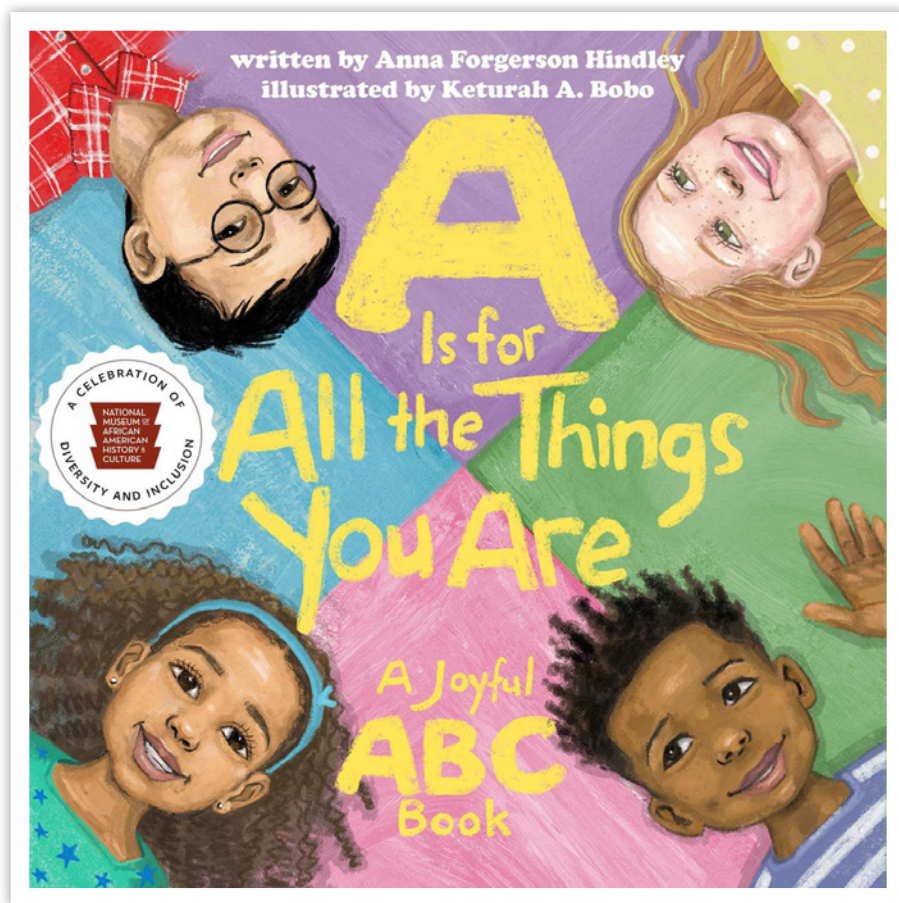


A NMAAHC KIDS ABCs ACTIVITY BOOK

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
© 2018 Art by Keturah Ariel LLC (artwork)
© 2018 Smithsonian Institution (text)

E is for Emotional:

Happy, sad, angry, glad... Everybody feels lots of different emotions. Whether big or little, all feelings matter. **Emotions are what make us human.**

What emotions are you feeling today?

One of the most important ways adults can support children's full, healthy development and understanding of the world is to provide them with a wide vocabulary of words to describe their feelings.

Emotions are complex. For example, there are differences between a child's feelings of *irritation, frustration, worry, confusion, fear and anger.*

However, all of those feelings may typically just be perceived as *sad or angry* by others. There is power in knowing differences between kinds of emotions and helping children acknowledge and describe them. When they understand the differences, children are better able to figure out and advocate for what they need to do to feel safe, relaxed, joyful and ready.

All children's feelings are legitimate to that child. Honoring a child's feelings, even when you have to guide their behavior, helps build the child's capacity to understand themselves and practice controlling their actions. We can acknowledge their feelings and provide options for expressing or addressing those emotions while also telling children which modes of expression are not healthy or helpful. For example, we can say, "*I know your feelings are hurt right now. You can sit on my lap and I'll rock you or sing a song. Please don't kick me. That doesn't help, it hurts.*"

Children who have learned a rich emotional vocabulary have a powerful tool to help them explain themselves, manage themselves, understand others, and understand the situations they will find themselves in as they grow.

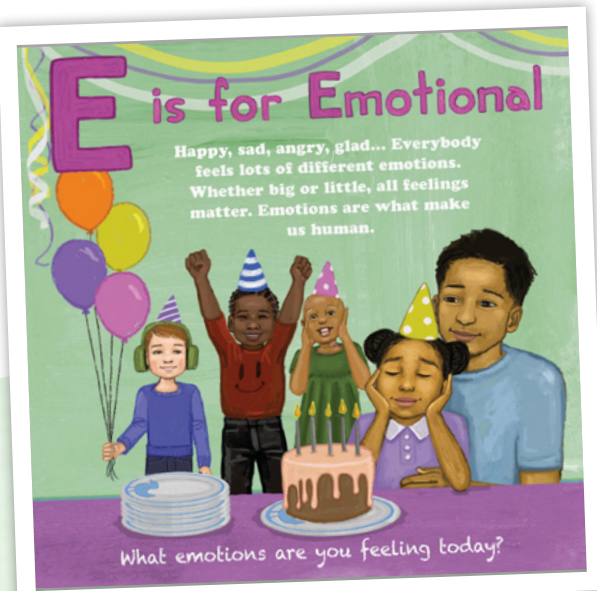
What You'll Need:

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

- Mirror
- Markers and crayons
- 1 Blank piece of paper
- A device for playing music and watching videos

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
© 2018 Art by Keturah Ariel LLC (artwork)
© 2018 Smithsonian Institution (text)

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.

Showing and Sharing Emotions



*Photographic print of children at a cotton candy booth
by Charles "Teenie" Harris*

There are a lot of ways people express emotions. (That means there are many ways to show and share our feelings with others.) Practice expressing your emotions with the following experiences:

- **Sometimes we can express emotions with our faces.** Notice and describe the different feelings children are showing with their faces (or facial expressions) in this photo. How many different emotions can you see? Count them together! Can you make some of the same facial expressions?
- **Sometimes we can express emotions with our bodies.** [In this video](#), watch how dance moves can show emotions. How do the dancers move differently when they are happy, sad or surprised? Do their faces change? Can you hear how the music changes too? Dance along with the dancers from Alvin Ailey Dance Theater. Then, put on some music and show your own unique moves and feelings.
- **Sometimes we can express emotions with our words.** There are many emotions that feel really good. But there are also emotions that describe how we feel when we are sad or scared. In those moments, talking about our emotions can really help us feel better. [Hear](#) how J.R. Martinez talked with people that he loved to help him through a hard time. Then, tell about a time you felt really loved or a time you felt hurt and what made you feel better.



CREATE

Create art inspired by this week's theme!

Emotional Portrait Art

Create emotional self-portraits. A self-portrait is a picture an artist makes of themselves. Sometimes faces in a picture can tell a lot about a person's inside feelings. Look at Frederick C. Flemister's self-portrait. How do you think he is feeling? What could he be thinking about?

Follow the steps below to create a self-portrait that shows your different emotions. (Before beginning, prepare your child's paper by drawing a grid with 4 or more squares.)



Self-Portrait by Frederick C. Flemister

What You'll Need

- Markers or crayons
- 1 Blank piece of paper
- Mirror

- 1 Start by looking at yourself in the mirror. Notice your eyebrows, mouth, eyes and cheeks. With markers and crayons, create a small picture of your face without an expression or emotion.
- 2 Make a happy face in the mirror. How have your eyes, mouth and cheeks changed? Can you see your teeth now? Draw your happy face in one square. If you're using colors, be sure to notice the lovely colors of your skin, hair and eyes!
- 3 What makes you feel sad? Show your sad face and draw it in a new square. Notice what's happened to your eyebrows and mouth. Are your eyes different?
- 4 Make different faces in the mirror. What do you look like when you are surprised? How does your face change when you feel proud, curious or frightened? Draw each emotion.
- 5 Once every square is full, display your self-portraits at home as a reminder of all the different feelings you have. Use your artwork to help you talk to someone you love about your feelings today.



LEARN

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

Boost Literacy

Vocabulary development and fine motor skills both support different aspects of literacy development. Talk about emotions as you build literacy through artmaking. To begin, gather colored paper. Next, look at *Arty (Centerpiece)* by Nelson Stevens with your child.

Ask: *What do you see?*

This is also a portrait. How do you think the person feels? How do the colors make you feel? Explain that you will now create your own collection of small, colorful shapes by tearing the colored paper into pieces. Next, model how to use your fingers to hold and pinch the paper. Tear big pieces and small pieces. Then, invite your child to arrange the pieces on a flat surface to create a no-glue collage inspired by Nelson Stevens' portrait.



Arty (Centerpiece) by Nelson Stevens

Tip:

Tearing paper builds finger strength and develops fine motor skills which is needed for holding writing utensils.

Learn Letters

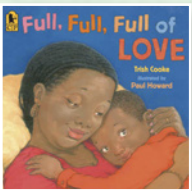
Support letter writing and recognition by inviting your little one to arrange the pieces into the letter E. For further practice in talking about emotions, encourage them to make faces with the torn pieces. Ask: *How are you feeling right now? What emotions do you have? Can you show me? Can you make a happy face or a sad face?*

EXPLORE MORE

Continue learning with your little one using these recommended resources:

Books

Explore a variety of feelings with books about relatable emotional experiences. Try these!



Full, Full, Full of Love
by Trish Cooke,
illustrated by Paul Howard



Happy Right Now
by Julie Berry,
illustrated by Holly Hatam



Ruby Finds a Worry
by Tom Percival



The Day Leo Said I Hate You!
By Robie Harris,
illustrated by Molly Bang

Tip:

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

Online Resources

Discover a collection of resources and songs that will help your little one to understand, express and address emotions of all kinds.

★ [Exploring Emotions](#) - **Sesame Street in Communities**

★ [Building Social Emotional Skills at Home](#) - **NAEYC**

★ [Elmo and Chris Sing about Feelings](#) - **Sesame Street**

★ [Common and Colbie Caillat “Belly Breathe”](#) - **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

- Photographic print of children at a cotton candy booth by Charles "Teenie" Harris, 1945. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift from Charles A. Harris and Beatrice Harris in memory of Charles "Teenie" Harris, © Carnegie Museum of Art, Charles "Teenie" Harris Archive. [2014.302.5](#)
- *Self-Portrait* by Frederick C. Flemister, 1941. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of Robert L. Johnson. [2015.2.1](#)
- *Arty (Centerpiece)* by Nelson Stevens, 1970. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, © Nelson Stevens. [2016.73](#)

Original Artwork

- Bluebird (cover), Children at party (page 3) ; © 2018 Art by Keturah Ariel LLC