

U is for Unique

JOY FUL

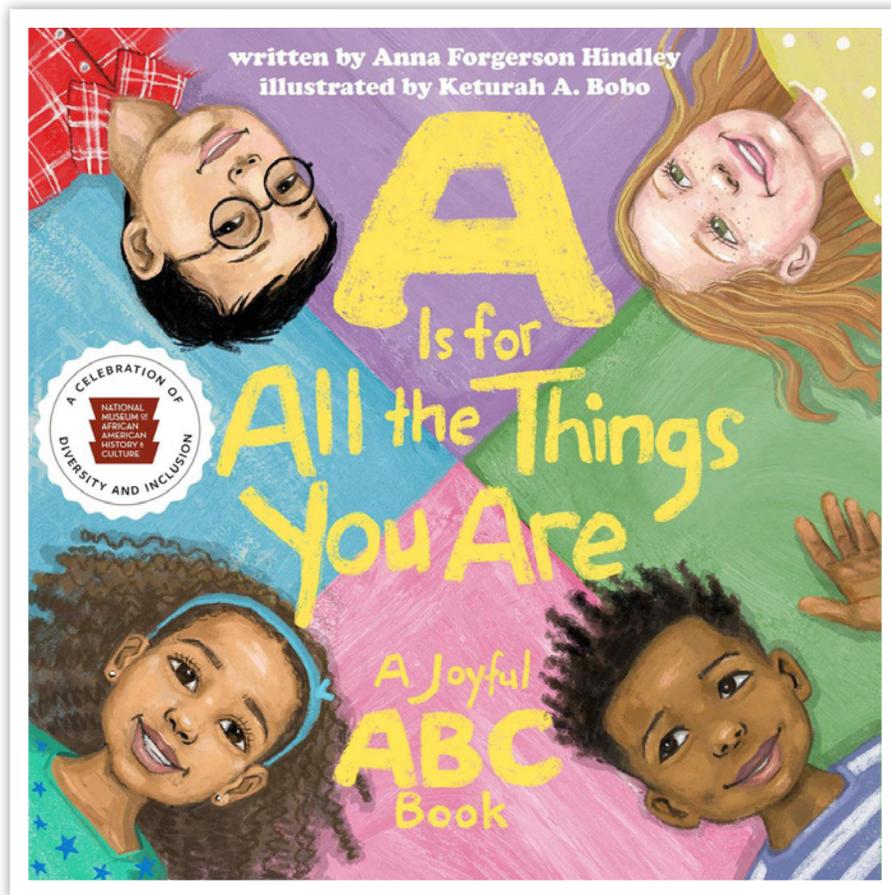


A NMAAHC KIDS ABCs ACTIVITY BOOK

INFANT AND TODDLER EDITION

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 Forgeson 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.

Each activity booklet offers suggestions of how to begin the lifelong work of having a positive sense of self and others with your infant or toddler, 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)
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U is for Unique:

While all humans have certain similarities, we are each unique and special. There is only one you.

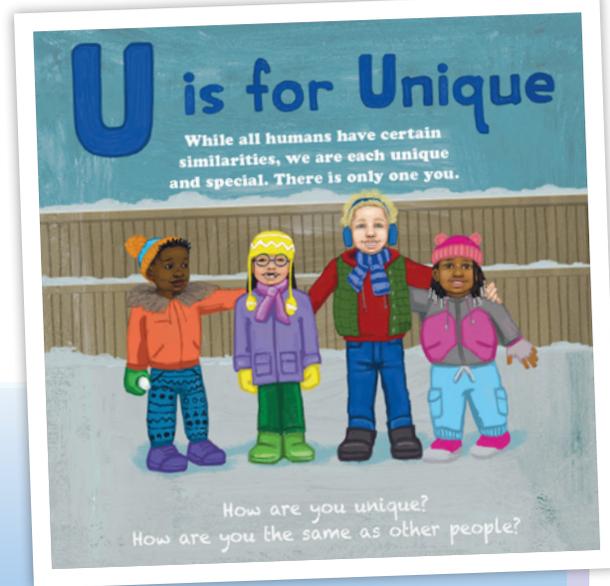
How are you unique?
How are you the same as other people?

Every child is born unique and brings their own style, temperament and pace of living into the world. Yet, too often we compare our children to others, focusing on differences, striving for sameness, and worrying about how quickly they do or don't reach milestones. This focus on who they *should* be, or *will* be one day, distracts us from the wonderful, fully human, version of themselves *right now*. Rather than thinking about who is the fastest or the best, or how they compare to siblings or other children, focus on the unique way your infant or toddler interacts with the world at this moment and the special fact that they are the only one who will ever get to be *them*.

If we can support our little ones to feel okay about being different, then discovering the ways people are the same will be a joyful and intriguing experience rather than a standard that children feel pressured to meet.

Every day, we can find ways to teach little ones how they are both part of the human family and unique in who they are. *You like apples. Your sister likes bananas. We all need to eat! Your eyes are brown. Your friend's eyes are green. We all have beautiful eyes!* This understanding is essential for children growing and learning to live with confidence and openness in a highly diverse world.

While remembering what humans share is beautiful and important, pause to celebrate the unique person your little one is and share with them your delight in the particular way they interact with the world.



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What You'll Need:

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

- Mirror
- Washable paints or watercolors
- Paper
- Tape
- Paint brushes
- Clean-up supplies (See page 4.)



EXPLORE

In early childhood, children learn best through doing! To explore this week's theme, try the activities below with your infant or toddler.

My Unique Name

Our names make us unique. Your little one's unique identity begins when they receive their specially chosen name. Our names can carry deep meanings, connect us to our families, stories and cultures, or our names may be one that our caregivers just felt were "you." However it's selected, a child's name will be the first way they tell others, "I'm me!"

Developmentally, it takes our little ones time to recognize and respond to their names. It'll also take time to understand the specialness of having a name, the importance of saying it out loud, and the power of writing it down. In this moment, support your baby or toddler to know and express pride in their name in playful ways.



- **Mirror Time:** Help your little one recognize that their name is unique to *them* playfully looking in the mirror together. As you point to different parts of your bodies, use their name and yours as you talk about what you see.

These are Daddy's knees. Those are your little knees, Zion! Can you bend your knees with me? That's your nose, Zora! Mommy's nose is right here. What can we smell with our noses?

- **Songs:** Singing songs about your little one's name is a great way to boost name recognition while supporting your child to feel joyful and proud about this part of their identity. Try simple songs like, [What's Your Name?](#), and empowering songs like, [My Name](#).

Playful moments like the ones above help to build an internal foundation for your child to further define what their names mean and who they uniquely are.

EXPLORE

Explore this week's theme with your toddler by trying this engaging experience!

My Unique Body

Our bodies make us unique. From hair textures and skin colors to the shapes of fingers and toes, our children's bodies are a part of their unique identity. Help your little one to see how their body is unique by creating hand and footprints that show their size, shape and details.

Cover a work space with newspaper or a plastic tablecloth. Place a large piece of paper down and secure it with tape. Gather a brush, washable paint and water. Then, follow the steps below.

- 1 Brush a thin layer of paint onto your toddler's hand. Then guide their hand to the paper, pushing it down and lifting it up. Do the same with your hand, making your print in a different color next to theirs. Invite other family members to add their prints.

Repeat with feet, making footprints side by side on a piece of paper placed on the floor. Have a wipe or paper towel nearby to clean excess paint from hands and feet after making prints!

- 2 When your paint prints dry, use your art to spark a conversation about what makes the prints the same, different and unique. Ask questions: *What do you see? Which hand is yours? Which hand is mine?*

Describe what you see: *Your hand has lines that make them unique. My foot is bigger than your foot.*



Tip:

This project can also be done by using markers or crayons to trace hands and feet for easier clean-up!

EXPLORE MORE

Continue learning with your little one using these recommended resources:

Books

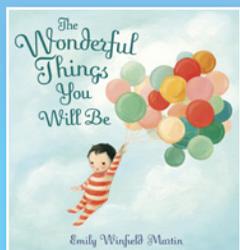
Share the stories below to celebrate your little one's unique self!



You Be You
by Linda Kranz



Sweetest Kulu
by Celina Kalluk,
illustrated by Alexandria Neonakis



The Wonderful Things You Will Be
by Emily Winfield Martin



Beautiful Hands
by Bret Baumgarten,
co-authored and
illustrated by Kathryn Otoshi

Tip:

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

Online Resources

Support your infant or toddler's unique identity development with the resources below.

- ★ ["It's You I Like" Song - Mister Rogers](#)
- ★ ["We Are All Amazing" Song - Sesame Street in Communities](#)
- ★ [Supporting Individual and Community Identity Development in Infant-Toddler Classrooms - Zero to Three](#)

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) 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.

In the first three years of life, early language and literacy skills are best learned through everyday moments. The experiences in these booklets invite you to boost your child's literacy through talking, playing and creating together in fun and accessible ways. Some experiences will guide you in helping your infant or toddler "name the universe" with descriptive words for the actions and emotions of themselves and others. Other experiences will encourage you to point out written words and look closely at objects to provide your little one with the beginning connections between the real world, reading and talking.

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

- Studio family portrait by Rev. Henry Clay Anderson, 1960s–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. [2012.137.24.3](#)
- Photograph of Mae and Joel Reeves holding two young children, ca. 1970. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift from Mae Reeves and her children, Donna Limerick and William Mincey Jr. [2010.6.222](#)

Original Artwork

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

Course Evaluation (return this evaluation with homework)

Your Name: _____ Registry# _____

Course Name: Book ____ (A-Z) Smithsonian Joyful activity book series - <https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/early-childhood>

Date you Completed Course: _____ Are you Family or Group Center

Phone# _____ Email: _____

Training outcome survey rating

Training evaluation statements: Please circle

Please circle
 

The presentation consisted of hands-on training, questions and answers, and lecture.	1 2 3 4 5
Overall effectiveness of training (I feel the training was clear and easy to understand)	1 2 3 4 5
The interactive classroom and homework assignments were helpful learning materials	1 2 3 4 5
This subject was useful, and I have incorporated the information into my childcare environment	1 2 3 4 5
Overall effectiveness of training	1 2 3 4 5
The method used to present this information was in step with my learning style	1 2 3 4 5
I would recommend other providers to attend this training	1 2 3 4 5
The materials used in this training were valuable and relevant (i.e. handouts, books, homework assignments, etc.)	1 2 3 4 5

To receive the 2 hours, complete reviews for two activities below:

1st Activity Name of the activity: _____

Why did you choose this activity? _____

List 3 things you liked about the activity _____

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

2nd Activity Name of the activity: _____

Why did you choose this activity? _____

List 3 things you liked about the activity _____

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

My learning style is: (please check one)

- Visual Learner- You learn by seeing and looking.
- Auditory Learners - You learn by hearing and listening.
- Kinesthetic Learners - You learn by touching and doing.

Was the information presented difficult to understand? Yes No

Would you like access to monthly childcare updates? Yes No

The course materials were well organized? Yes No

I received the materials in a timely fashion? Yes No

The information will be helpful to me in my position? Yes No

Would you consider taking another training offered by Child Care Providers' Helper? Yes No

Return this evaluation to: gcoggs@gmail.com.

Or mail to *Child Care Providers Helper*

7819 W. Potomac Ave.

Milw. WI. 53222

Any questions call-414-536-3397

Thank you for allowing us to serve your training needs.