

AMVÄZE works



PRIDE Resources for Caregivers Understanding Gender Diversity For ages 3 - 12

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AMAZE works

Dear Caregivers,

This collection of lessons helps guide conversations with children on gender diversity, including gender identity and expression. We know that PRIDE is about celebrating all LGBTQ+ people. We also know that sexual orientation and gender diversity are often conflated. For this reason, we are dedicating this resource to gender diversity, and we have created a separate PRIDE resource guide on gay and lesbian families.

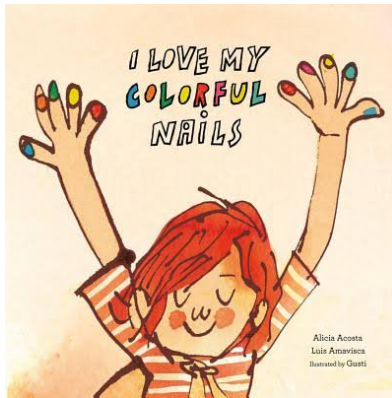
Many children who are gender expansive, who do not express gender according to stereotypical gender roles, and who are gender non-binary or transgender experience bias, teasing, mistreatment, and exclusion because of their gender identity and expression. At AMAZEworks, we know that honest, intentional conversations about identity, difference, and bias reduce bias levels in children.

We also know the power of sharing stories. When we listen to each other's stories, we build empathy. This empathy is necessary if we want to shift our thinking from "their issue" to "our issue." When we take time to understand bias, prejudice, and discrimination in all its forms, including around gender diversity, we are better equipped to stand up to it.

This work requires time and dedication. These books and lessons are a starting point for sharing stories and engaging in discussions. If you have additional questions or want more resources, we encourage you to visit our website: www.amazeworks.org.

In solidarity with all who strive for equity and belonging,
AMAZEworks

Elementary Book Lesson for Caregivers



Book Title

I Love My Colorful Nails by Alicia Acosta and Luis Amavisca, illustrated by Gusti

Recommended Ages

3 and up

Book Summary to Share With Children

Ben is a boy who loves to paint his nails different colors. One day at school, some boys start teasing him because they don't think that boys should paint their nails. Let's read to find out what happens to Ben and his colorful nails.

Reflection Questions for the Caregiver

- What were you taught about what girls and boys should like or how they should act?
- How might these childhood messages affect the way you interact with your child?
- How do you feel about your child not following societal gender roles? How can you affirm the gender identity of your child?

Reader's Note

This book allows children who are gender creative or gender non-binary to see someone like them in literature with a positive message about who they are. It also allows children who follow traditional gender roles to see a child who is non-traditional with a loving family and helps them know how to be a friend. It shows a loving, accepting family while also showing the pain felt when others do not accept the child. The book asks children to decide how they would act toward the child in the book.

Our society tends to expect children to act in rigid and specific ways based on gender. Many children don't want to be boxed in by gender roles. Not all children are transgender who are experimenting with actions and clothing that don't fit with adults' expectations related to gender. But some of them are and don't always have the words (or the comfort level) to talk with anyone about this important part of their identity.

Many people are threatened, bullied, and injured about being transgender, gender non-conforming, or gender non-binary, so it's helpful for families to bring up the topic even if they aren't aware of any children they know who are questioning their gender. Talking about gender differences also creates more room for all of our children to talk about how they feel when someone tries to limit what they can do, say, or feel based on gender.

In this way, we can make our communities safer places for all of our children. If your child questions another child's gender expression, you could say, "Well, _____ knows themselves better than we do, so _____ gets to decide how they dress and act and what they want to be called, just like you do." You could also say, "Yes, that might be a little different than how you've thought about girls and boys before. Whether we think of ourselves as a boy or a girl or something in between comes from a lot of places. We see what our body looks like, and we pay attention to who we feel we are in our hearts. Then we decide what to show other people about who we are by how we dress and act."

Connection to Social-Emotional Learning and Anti-Bias Education

SEL

SELF-AWARENESS

Self-Management

SOCIAL AWARENESS

Relationship Skills

RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

ABE

EMPATHY AND BELONGING

HEALTHY, COMPLEX IDENTITY

RESPECT ACROSS DIFFERENCES

NOTICE, NAME, AND REJECT BIAS

RESPONSIVENESS AND ACTION

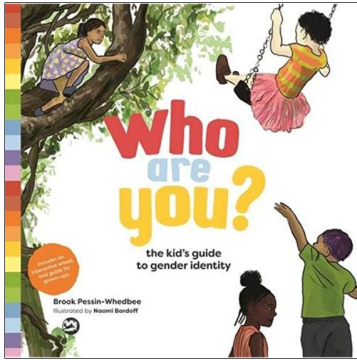
Discussion Questions

1. Why does Ben paint his nails?
 - a. What do Ben's family and friends think about him painting his nails?
 - b. What do you think about Ben painting his nails?
2. What happens when Ben goes to school with his red nails?
 - a. How does Ben feel about this?
 - b. How would you feel?
3. How do Ben's family and friend, Margarita, try to help him feel better?
4. How did Ben change after being teased by the boys at school?
5. What do you think of the ending of the book?
6. What are some other things that Ben could have done or said to the mean boys who teased him?
 - a. If you had seen the boys teasing Ben, what would you have said or done?

Journal Questions/Activities

- What do you think about the idea that there are boy activities and girl activities? Do you agree with that? What things do you like to do that may be considered boy activities? What things do you like to do that may be considered girl activities?
- Write or draw about a time when you helped a friend who was sad or a friend helped you like how Ben's family and friends helped Ben in the story.

Elementary Book Lesson for Caregivers



Book Title

Who Are You? by Brook Pessin-Whedbee, illustrated by Naomi Bardoff

Recommended Ages

4 and up

Book Summary to Share With Children

Gender is personal, and it is part of our identity. People experience gender in many different ways. This book explains some of the many different ways people experience gender and how they may identify.

Reflection Questions for the Caregiver

- Thinking back to your childhood, what did you learn about gender identity and expression?
- How has your understanding of gender expression, gender stereotypes, and gender identity changed as an adult?
- What might you need to consider before having conversations about gender with your child?

Reader's Note

As children continue to explore their identity, including gender, they will have questions about their own and other's identities. Gender is experienced by people in many different ways, and it's important for children to see different gender identities reflected positively in order to affirm each child's own identity and build respect across different identities. This book can be one tool to discuss gender diversity with your child. These discussions help foster healthy, complex identities, respect across differences, and give children language to notice, name, and reject bias when it comes to gender diversity.

Read "A Note for the Grown-ups" on page 1 of the book. Also, note the variety of resources in the back of the book, including the gender wheel.

This book focuses on unpacking gender identity and expression. To learn more about gender diversity and the difference between gender stereotypes, gender expression, and gender identity, check out www.genderspectrum.org.

Discussion Hint: It's important to point out respectful language to use when talking about people's bodies and their identities, like not asking people about their body unless they tell you they are comfortable talking about it and believing people when they say who they are and respecting their pronouns. Talk about how they are likely to make mistakes and what to do if that happens.

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Self-Management

SOCIAL AWARENESS

Relationship Skills

Responsible Decision-Making

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HEALTHY, COMPLEX IDENTITY

RESPECT ACROSS DIFFERENCES

Notice, Name, and Reject Bias

Responsiveness and Action

Discussion Questions

1. What is sex assigned at birth? How is this different from gender?
2. What is the gender spectrum?
3. The book talks about how there are many genders. What does this mean?
4. What does it mean to be cisgender? Transgender (Trans)? Non-binary? Both a boy and a girl? Neither a boy nor a girl?
5. What do you like? (page 10) How have the things you like changed as you've gotten older?
6. What do you think the authors mean when they say that "gender is much more than the body you were born with (p. 7)"?
7. What is identity? (p. 15) How is gender one part of your identity? What are other parts of your identity?
8. What do the authors mean when they say, "You say who you say you are, because YOU know you best"?
9. Some people say there are only two genders. What can you say to someone who says this?
10. How could your classroom and school community be more understanding of gender identity?

Journal Questions/Activities

- What are the parts of your identity that you're still trying to figure out?
- Who can you talk to in your life about your gender identity?
- Use paper plates (and/or round pieces of paper) and a brad to have your child create their own wheel like the one in the back of the book.
 - For the "I have/Body" section, your child can fill in physical characteristics about themselves.
 - For the "I am/Identity" section, your child can write words or phrases that describe their identity (including but not limited to gender).
 - For the "I like/Expression" section, your child can fill in all the things they like to do.

Elementary Book Lesson for Caregivers

Book Title *One of a Kind, Like Me (Único como yo)* by Laurin Mayeno, illustrated by Robert Liu-Trujillo



Recommended Ages

4 and up

Book Summary to Share With Children

One of a Kind Like Me/Único como yo is a story (written in Spanish and English) about a child named Danny who wants to be a princess in the school parade. Danny and his mom go searching for the perfect dress, and have to get creative to get it ready for the school parade in time. As you listen and look at the illustrations, pay attention to Danny's feelings and how they change throughout the story.

Reflection Questions for the Caregiver

- Thinking back to your childhood, what did you learn about gender roles and what boys and girls should and shouldn't do?
- How has your understanding of gender expression, gender stereotypes, and gender identity changed as an adult?
- As your child moves through their own journeys of gender identity and expression, which can be both deeply personal and very public, what support do you think they might need from you and other family members, friends, and the school community?

Reader's Note

It is important to distinguish between gender expression and gender identity and not conflate these two different aspects of gender diversity. One of the ways gender non-conforming children are teased and mistreated is when other kids purposefully misgender them because they do not fit into gender stereotypes.

To learn more about gender diversity and the difference between gender stereotypes, gender expression, and gender identity, check out www.genderspectrum.org.

Be sure to read the Author's Note to Parents, Caregivers, & Educators and share this information with your child about this true story. Take time to visit oneofakindlikeme.com and check out the great Guide for Educators under the Resources section. It offers a deeper explanation of how and why to have conversations about gender with every age, more discussion questions, and how to respond to children's questions and concerns you may hear from other parents/caregivers.

Connection to Social-Emotional Learning and Anti-Bias Education

SEL

SELF-AWARENESS
SELF-MANAGEMENT
SOCIAL AWARENESS
Relationship Skills
Responsible Decision-Making

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EMPATHY AND BELONGING
HEALTHY, COMPLEX IDENTITY
RESPECT ACROSS DIFFERENCES
NOTICE, NAME, AND REJECT BIAS
RESPONSIVENESS AND ACTION

Discussion Questions

1. What is gender? What makes someone a boy, a girl, or another gender? Encourage exploration without having to have a definitive “answer”.
2. Do you think there are any clothes or colors that only girls can wear or only boys can wear?
 - a. What if a boy likes to wear skirts or dresses?
 - b. Do all girls like pink?
3. How did Danny's family react when he said he wanted to be a princess for the costume parade?
4. How did Danny's feelings change as he looked for his princess costume at the store?
5. Danny has to search hard and get creative when looking for his princess costume at the store.
 - a. Have you ever had to try more than once or get creative to do something you wanted to do? What was it? What did you do?
6. How did Danny feel at the end of the story?
7. How do you think Danny felt when Carlos said that he'd never seen a boy princess before?
 - a. What was Danny's response?
 - b. How would you have responded?
8. What makes someone a good friend? (Focus on character traits, highlighting that these traits are what matter, not someone's gender or what they wear.)

Note: Some discussion questions and journal prompts are taken or adapted from the educator's guide.

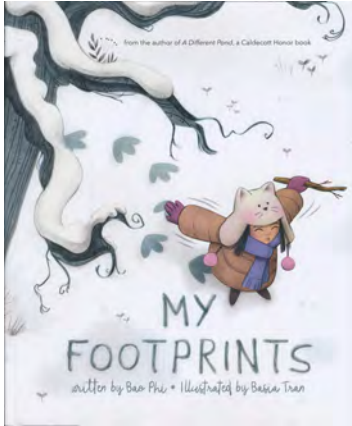
Journal Questions/Activities

- Draw or write about how you are one-of a-kind. What do you like about yourself?
- Draw or write about what is unique or different about your family.
- Has anyone ever told you not to do something because of your gender? How did you feel? Draw or write about this experience, and include your feelings.

Elementary Book Lesson for Caregivers

Book Title

My Footprints by Bao Phi, illustrated by Basia Tran



Recommended Ages

7 and up

Book Summary to Share With Children

Thuy experiences teasing and mistreatment from other kids at school because she has two moms. When her moms ask her how her day at school was, Thuy struggles to express her emotions. The family uses their imagination, inspired by their footprints in the snow, to tap into inner strength and courage to help Thuy feel empowered and proud of her family.

Reflection Questions for the Caregiver

- Growing up, when did you experience teasing and mistreatment about a part of your identity, or witness someone else being teased about their identity? How did that experience feel? How did you find strength, hope, and courage in that moment and afterwards?
- How can you help your child to feel proud of your family while also building empathy and understanding for how every family is different?

Reader's Note

We live in an increasingly diverse world, and that includes diverse family structures. Even so, some children are uncomfortable sharing about their family at school because of the bias, prejudices, and stereotypes around family structures that don't look like the traditional "nuclear" family. It is important to discuss and share about different family structures, so children can learn to have respect across differences and be able to notice, name, and reject bias.

The book does not end with a satisfying resolution in which Thuy returns to school and never experiences teasing and mistreatment from classmates about her family structure. This is an important point to discuss with your child because life usually does not have simplistic resolutions to bias, prejudice, and stereotypes. Instead, the book inspires a discussion on resilience, coping skills, and turning to loved ones for support and care, all of which help children learn to move through the challenges that they may experience in life, especially around their identities.

Connection to Social-Emotional Learning and Anti-Bias Education

SEL

SELF-AWARENESS

SELF-MANAGEMENT

SOCIAL AWARENESS

RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

ABE

EMPATHY AND BELONGING

HEALTHY, COMPLEX IDENTITY

RESPECT ACROSS DIFFERENCES

NOTICE, NAME, AND REJECT BIAS

RESPONSIVENESS AND ACTION

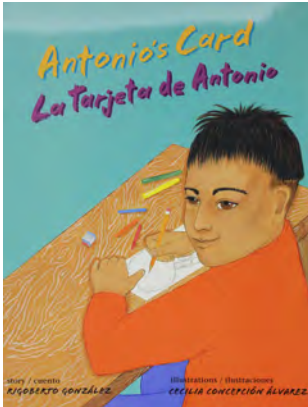
Discussion Questions

1. At the beginning of the book, why is Thuy upset as she leaves school?
2. What are some of the emotions that Thuy experiences throughout the book?
 - a. How does she manage her emotions?
3. What is the significance of the different animals Thuy sees and imagines?
4. What animals would you choose to represent:
 - a. Strength
 - b. Courage
 - c. Hope
 - d. Resilience
 - e. Justice
5. Momma Arti says, "There are lots of different ways to be strong." What are some examples of different ways to be strong? In what ways have you shown strength?
6. What is the significance of footprints in the story?
7. The story does not end by solving Thuy's problems with being teased about having two moms. Why do you think that is?
 - a. How do you feel about the ending?
 - b. What do you think Thuy can or should do to deal with the teasing?
8. How does Thuy feel about her family at the end of the book?

Journal Questions/Activities

- Thuy and her moms used their imagination to conquer Thuy's frustrations and anger about being teased at school. Tell about a time when you used (or could use) creativity to overcome something you were upset about.
- Create an animal like Thuy does in the book to represent something important about yourself or your family. Describe what it looks like, sounds like, feels like, and illustrate it. Don't forget to give it a name.
- Write a new ending for the book that focuses on Thuy's next day at school and how she deals with the teasing. Does she find comfort and support from a friend? Does she get an adult involved? Does she stand up for herself? If so, how? Try to imagine what you might do if you were Thuy or were a friend who witnessed the teasing.

Elementary Book Lesson for Caregivers



Book Title

Antonio's Card (La Tarjeta de Antonio) by Rigoberto González, illustrated by Ceilia Concepción Álvarez

Recommended Ages

7 and up

Book Summary to Share With Children

Antonio made a beautiful Mother's Day card for his mom and her partner, Leslie. When kids at school say hurtful things about Leslie, Antonio becomes embarrassed and worried about what other children will say when Leslie comes to school to see the card on display. He has to make an important decision about whether or not he wants Leslie to come see it.

Reflection Questions for the Caregiver

- Reflect on your family. Who makes up your family? What makes your family unique?
- How do you talk about and show different family structures in the books and media you share with your child?
- What bias exists in the messages your school and community send to families about who truly belongs and who doesn't?

Reader's Note

We live in an increasingly diverse world, and that includes diverse family structures. Even so, some children are uncomfortable sharing about their family at school because of the bias, prejudices, and stereotypes around family structures that don't look like the traditional "nuclear" family. It is important to discuss and share about different family structures, so children can learn to have respect across differences and be able to notice, name, and reject bias. The positive relationships in Antonio's family encourages children to recognize that everyone's families can look different. What truly matters are the actions we take to care for one another and meet each other's needs, which help us discover belonging.

Connection to Social-Emotional Learning and Anti-Bias Education

SEL

SELF-AWARENESS
 SELF-MANAGEMENT
 SOCIAL AWARENESS
 RELATIONSHIP SKILLS
 RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

ABE

EMPATHY AND BELONGING
 HEALTHY, COMPLEX IDENTITY
 RESPECT ACROSS DIFFERENCES
 NOTICE, NAME, AND REJECT BIAS
 RESPONSIVENESS AND ACTION

Discussion Questions

1. What does the word family mean to you?
2. Describe Antonio's relationship with Leslie.
3. What happens when Leslie picks Antonio up from school?
4. How does Antonio feel when the other kids make negative comments about her?
5. How does he respond?
6. What emotions and thoughts does Antonio have about the card he made for his mother and Leslie? What is he worried about?
7. Why does Antonio's mother tell Antonio, "Well, I'll leave it up to you. You're old enough now to decide what to do"?
8. How does Antonio act the next day when Leslie comes to pick him up?
9. What does Antonio realize about his family when he sees the painting that Leslie made for his mother for Mother's Day?
10. How do you think Leslie will feel when she sees Antonio's card? How would you feel if you were Leslie? If you were Antonio?
11. What are some ways that Antonio could say to respond to the hurtful things his classmates may say about Leslie after this?
12. Why is it important to learn about different types of families?

Journal Questions/Activities

- Draw or write about what is unique about your family?
- Draw or write about a time when have you felt embarrassed to share something about your family with others? What did you do?
- Discuss the different ways families can look and that who makes up one's family is up to each individual. Then create a portrait of your family. You can draw, use photographs, use symbols to represent each person or the family as a whole, make a sculpture, include words or phrases, or use a variety of mediums.