

Growing



Readers Review

Book recommendations to help your child spark a lifelong love of reading

Celebrating

25
years

Preschool-Young School-Age

Every Body

Written and Photographed by
Shelley Rotner

Author and photographer Shelley Rotner captures the various ways children move, learn, and play. The captivating photographs and children's narrations are a beautiful celebration of all children and their different abilities.

Engaging activities

Discuss differences.

Notice if your child has questions about a specific picture. What have you noticed or observed about others? What do you think we can do to make sure everyone feels included in play?

Show kindness.

Offer a lending hand by helping an elderly neighbor rake the leaves, holding the door open for another, or inviting a new friend to play.



Every Body

A Celebration of Diverse Abilities

SHELLEY ROTNER

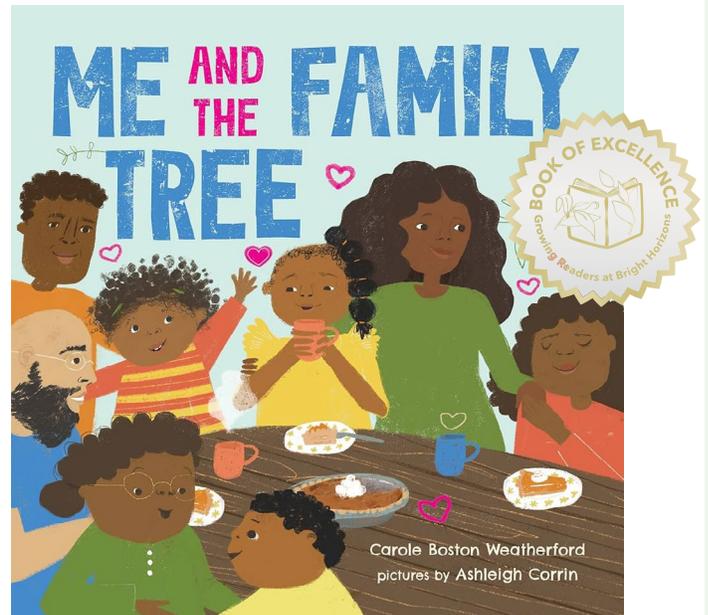
Make a collage.

Take inspiration from Rotner's [photography-based books](#) and have your child take photographs of things that interest them or use photos from printed media to create a collage. Ask your child if they would like to select a topic for their collage or story.

Me and the Family Tree

Written by Carole Boston Weatherford and
Illustrated by Ashleigh Corrin

In this sweet board book, a little girl compares her features with different members of her family. She notices the likeness of her chin to her uncle's, and the similarity of her toes to her cousin's. While noticing her similarities, the young girl also reflects on what makes her special and unique.



Engaging activities

Keep a family journal.

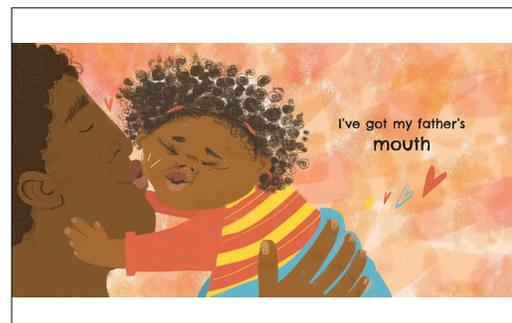
Children love looking at pictures of themselves or talking about experiences they have had in the past. Document your family memories with photos and written notes.

Let life imitate art.

Flip through the pages of the book and find an activity that your child enjoys. Encourage your baby or toddler to join the fun and act out each action or expression.

Label the body parts.

Point out each feature mentioned in the book. Ask your child, "Where do you see the nose?" Pause and give them time to point, gesture, or babble. Then respond with pointing out the nose on the book, yourself, or your child. Make the connection to their life, "Oh, look at grandma's cheeks, here are your cheeks. Looks like my cheeks and your cheeks are round like grandma's too."



Selecting high-quality books

Growing Readers books represent some of the best writing in children's literature. Every year our Growing Readers partner, The Book Vine for Children, curates a collection of recently published, high-quality children's books that they share with our Growing Readers team. Next, our group of education specialists and literacy leaders spend countless hours reading, reviewing, and discussing over 150 titles before making a final selection on the books that represent some of the best new children's literature for that year - our Books of Excellence.



Reading news

What criteria should families consider for selecting high quality books?
Use these questions to guide your next children's book selection.

- **Analyze the story** – does it have a clear plot and purpose?
- **Inspect the illustrations** – are they engaging and complement the story?
- **Examine the lens** – how does the book authentically represent different races, genders, abilities, families, cultures, or economic classes?
- **Consider the characters** – high quality children's books have well-developed characters.
- **Determine if it's engaging and developmentally appropriate for the audience** – for example, is a book for preschoolers too long to keep a three- or four-year old's attention? Would the book be a fun read or spark joy?

Storytelling tips

Mirrors and Windows: Celebrate similarities and differences

Children begin to notice similarities and differences in others starting in preschool. Some children might want to know more about a certain photo in the book or another child they know. When reading these stories, pause on pages where a child shows interest and allow them to reflect on the illustrations and photographs. Invite them to make observations, then ask questions and make empathetic comments to deepen your child's understanding. Use gentle prompts and model asking open-ended questions that focus on observations instead of judgements, such as "Tell me about what is happening in this photo" or "Why do you think that person is using a wheelchair?"

In the book, *Me and the Family Tree*, point out the family's closeness and how they spend time with one another. Talk about similarities and differences between the illustrations in books and your own life. You might say, "We both have brown hair. I see her hair is curly, and mine is straight. What else do you notice?" Think about your family and how you have mealtimes. Model and share what makes each person special in their own way.

Learn more about modeling kindness and inclusion at [PBS Kids](https://www.pbskids.org).



Make reading a joyful part of your child's daily routine

brighthorizons.com/GrowingReaders

