Growing Readers Review

Bright Horizons®
Early Education & Preschool

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

Celebrating **25** years

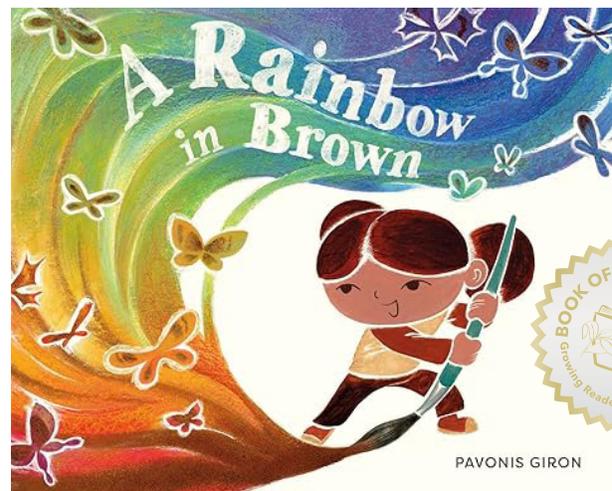## Preschool-Young School-Age

A Rainbow in Brown

Written and illustrated by Pavonis Giron

In art class, Jo is tasked with painting using her favorite color. After her teacher hands her a palette of red, blue, and yellow paints, she begins mixing these primary colors to create new secondary colors and shades. Through her colorful journey, Jo discovers that her favorite color is a blend of them all: brown. Brown transforms into vibrant depictions of animals, butterflies, sweet potatoes, bread, and more. *A Rainbow in Brown* not only introduces children to the basics of color theory but also conveys a powerful message about self-esteem and seeing beauty.

bubbles, a dark red could be cherry or a bursting orange could even be named something playful like zing).

Engaging activities

Invent a color palette.
Have your child test out mixing two colors at a time. Add white or black paint and discuss shades and hues of color. Brush a small amount of each color on a blank paper and invite your child to invent a new name for the color (a light blue might be called
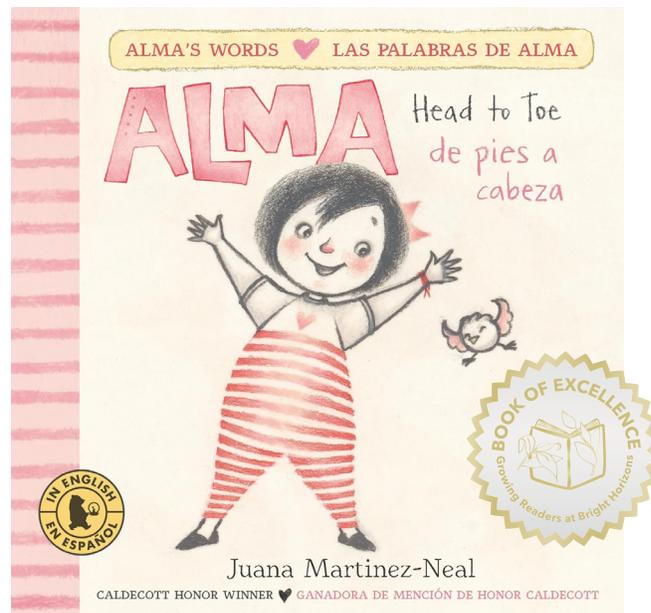
Make portraits.
Offer tempera paints in white, brown, black, yellow, and red, and challenge your child to match their skin color. Create various shades and use them to make portraits such as a self-portrait or portraits of family members, friends, neighbors, or even pets. Frame the portraits if desired and display them or give them as gifts.

Alma Head to Toe

Written and illustrated by Juana Martinez-Neal

Alma is celebrated for her iconic stripes, but there's so much more to her story! With arms for petting her bird and toes for wiggling, she's full of fun surprises. Through charming illustrations and vivid bilingual storytelling, Juana Martinez-Neal's board book introduces the names of body parts in English and Spanish through Alma's adventures.

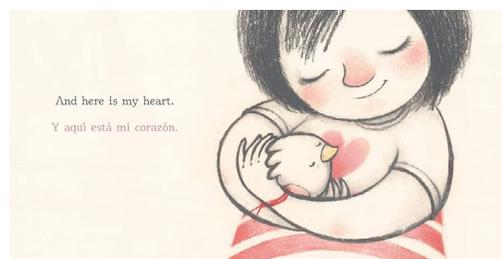### Engaging activities

Join in on songs and movement play.
Use the lyrics of the classic Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes to gently and slowly guide your baby through identifying different parts of their body. Point to your own body and help your baby find each body part as it corresponds to the song.

Create sensory treasure baskets.
Gather various sensory items your child can experience with each of their five senses. Say, "Alma uses her nose to smell flowers. Let's notice what we can smell from this basket." Add a few fragrant items such as pinecones, herbs, flowers, or a citrus fruit to a basket or provide items of opposite sensations, such as soft/hard, dark/bright items, etc. Narrate your child's actions and use descriptive words for each of the senses.

Learn a new language.
Read the story in Spanish (en español)! Follow the pink text along each page to read the story in the author's native language. Make connections to familiar words and refer to the illustrations to enhance comprehension of the new language. If you speak another language, or have members in your community who do, translate the story and add sticky notes with your translation to each page.

Phonemic Fun: Discovering Sounds Through Play

Phonemic awareness is an essential skill for your child's early literacy development. It is the ability to hear, identify, and manipulate individual sounds in spoken words, which is crucial for developing reading and writing skills.

For example, in the book *A Rainbow in Brown* by Pavonis Giron, children can explore the sounds of colors and words as Jo mixes colors to create new ones. Encourage your child to identify the sounds in words like "red," "blue," and "brown," helping them understand how sounds combine to form words. Add a challenge, by playing a sound manipulation game. For instance, play around with changing the first sound in a word to create new words like changing "red" to "bed," or "six" to "mix."

In *Alma Head to Toe/Alma de pies a cabeza*, children can practice segmenting the sounds in words like "go" (g-o) or "legs" (l-e-g-s), enhancing their phonemic awareness through playful interaction. With younger children, sing songs and recite nursery rhymes to help highlight sound patterns and make learning enjoyable.

These activities make learning engaging and support the foundational skills needed for literacy development.

Reading news

Storytelling tips

Invite your child to actively participate in reading.

While young children may not be able to read the words on a page yet, you can support their early literacy development by inviting them to read or retell a story using their own words, pointing to images, or responding to questions.

Encourage young toddlers and infants to turn the pages of the book, mimic sounds, or point to images they want to talk about. Perhaps, they point to Alma's bird, and you can narrate, "Alma has a small bird. What else do you see?" Expand the story and their vocabulary by providing descriptive details of the illustration. You can follow up and say, "Alma's bird is fluffy and white. What sound do you think it makes? [Pause] Let's try chirping like a bird."

As children's language skills begin to expand, ask them to tell the story in their own words. They can 'read' the pictures to you and talk about what's happening on the page. For example, your child may point to a page in *A Rainbow in Brown* and say, "Jo is mixing colors," or "She is painting bread and pretzels. Maybe she likes pretzels." Support children's efforts in storytelling by prompting them with questions:

- What do you think is happening? What happens next?
- Tell me about this picture.
- Where is this story taking place? Where do you think Jo is in this story?
- What ideas does Jo have?
- How does the story end?

This will support their memory recall and sequencing skills, as they retell different parts of the story.

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

brighthorizons.com/GrowingReaders

Bright Horizons
Early Education & Preschool