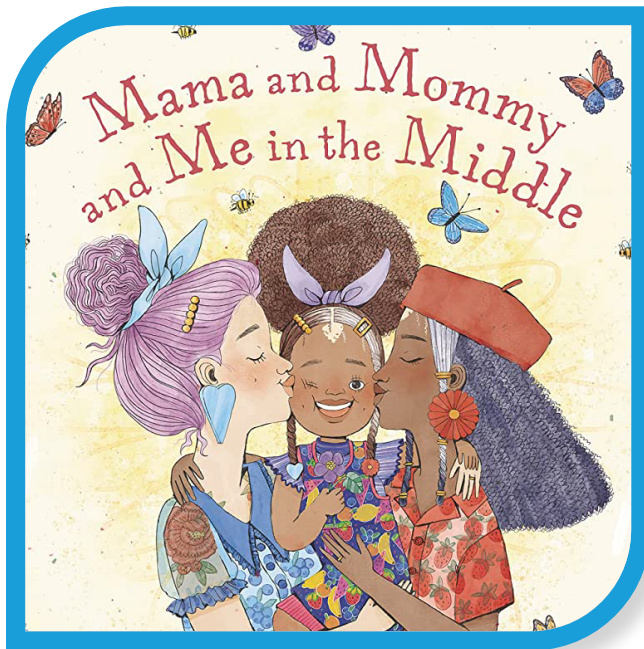




Monthly Featured Book

Presented by ADL's Education Department

About the Monthly Featured Book: This collection of featured books is from Books Matter™: The Best Kid Lit on Bias, Diversity and Social Justice. The books teach about bias and prejudice, promote respect for diversity, encourage social action and reinforce themes addressed in education programs of [A World of Difference® Institute](#), ADL's international anti-bias education and diversity training provider. For parents, guardians and family members, reading the books listed on this site with your children and integrating the concepts into your interactions with them is an excellent way to help children grapple with and learn about these important principles.



Mama and Mommy and Me in the Middle

Nina LaCour (Author) and Kaylani Juanita (Illustrator)

Age Range: 3-7

Year Published: 2022

Book Themes

Family, Kinds of Families, LGBTQ+ People, Missing Someone

About the Book

For one little girl, there's no place she'd rather be than sitting between Mama and Mommy. So when Mommy goes away on a work trip, it's tricky to find a good place at the table. As the days go by, Mama brings her to the library, they watch movies, and all of them talk on the phone, but she still misses Mommy as deep as the ocean and as high as an astronaut up in the stars. As they pass by a beautiful garden, the girl gets an idea . . . but when Mommy finally comes home, it takes a minute to shake off the empty feeling she felt all week before leaning in for a kiss.

Conversation Starters

Whether you read the book aloud with your child or your child reads it on their own and you discuss it later, you can use these open-ended questions to deepen the conversation. Remembering not to judge their responses, listen thoughtfully and engage in a give-and-take will help them expand upon their understanding of the book and its themes.

- What happens in the story?
- In the book, who is part of the family? In what ways is the family similar to or different from our family?

- When Mommy has to leave for a work trip, how do the girl and Mama feel? How do you know?
- Who else in the girl's class missed someone? Have you ever missed someone? How does that feel?
- What do the girl and Mama do to help themselves feel better when they miss Mommy? What kind of things do you do when you miss someone you love?
- What kinds of things do they do as a family? What do they do together and feel that makes them a family?
- What happens when Mommy comes home?
- What was your favorite scene or part in the book and why was it your favorite?
- How did you feel when the book ended? What do you think will happen next?
- Why do you think the author wrote this book?

Talking Points

Below are some important considerations to highlight in order to make this a learning opportunity for your child and your family.

1. Kinds of Families

Talk with your child about the family in the book as a way to engage in a conversation about different kinds of families. Explain and elicit that the family in the story has a daughter and two Moms, Mommy and Mama. Talk with your child about what makes their family a family, highlighting things like: they live together; they take care of errands and chores for the family/household; they care and love each other; they comfort each other when feeling sad; they eat together, etc. Talk about what makes your own family a family, which may include some of those things and maybe others. Ask your child about other families they know, including friends, neighbors and extended family and highlight that there are different kinds of families. This can include a family with two moms (as in the book), one parent, a mom and dad, a grandparent or aunt/uncle living with them, two dads, no children, a parent and step-parent. Also, remind them that some children live in more than one home and have more than one family. Emphasize the idea that families may have different members in them and that there are some common things (named above) that make a family a family.

2. When We Miss Someone

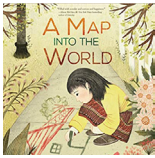
Ask your child what happens when Mommy goes on a work trip and how the daughter and Mama feel while she's gone. Elicit that they miss Mommy very much. Remind them about when the daughter goes to school, she discovers that other children in her class also miss someone they love. Olive misses her sister; Miguel misses his papa and Chloe misses her cat. Ask your child if they ever miss someone, how they feel, and what they do when they miss someone. Share your own thoughts, feelings and reflections about missing people you love. Then talk with them about what the daughter and Mama in the story do when they miss Mommy (e.g., they watch movies, they call her on the phone, they look at a picture and snuggle, they share with each other how they feel, they plan something special for when Mommy returns). Talk with your child about what they do when they miss someone to feel better and if they don't have any ideas, share your own ideas. Share with them that when they miss someone, there are different things they can do to feel better, including what the characters in the book did and the ideas you talked about.

(Note: Be mindful and prepared that your child may share that they miss someone who is absent from their lives for painful or traumatic reasons including death, illness, incarceration or other legal issues.)

3. LGBTQ+ Pride Month

Talk with your child about June being LGBTQ+ Pride Month—a yearly celebration of the history, achievements and contributions of LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer) people. Explain to them that the reason a month is dedicated to highlighting and honoring LGBTQ+ people is because sometimes we don't see LGBTQ+ people much or at all on TV shows, movies, games, and books (like this one) or LGBTQ+ people are not included when we discuss and teach history. This is because of prejudice and exclusion. Explain that prejudice is judging or having an idea about someone or a group of people before you actually know them. Talk with your child about how it is difficult to face prejudice and ask if they ever have ever seen or experienced prejudice. You can also discuss stereotypes (the false idea that all members of a group are the same and think and behave in the same way), which comes from having prejudices about a group of people. Discuss why stereotypes are unfair, which is because not all people who are members of a group are the same and behave in the same way. When we think this way, we don't allow or encourage people to be all of their full selves, express themselves, explore their interests, and follow their dreams. Talk about how you can challenge stereotypes by asking ourselves and others why we might be thinking all people in a certain group are the same.

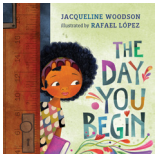
Other Books You Might Like



A Map into the World <https://www.adl.org/map-world>



Stella Brings the Family <https://www.adl.org/stella-brings-family>



The Day You Begin <https://www.adl.org/day-you-begin>



Your Name is a Song <https://www.adl.org/your-name-song>

ADL Additional Resources

The following are curriculum and other resources on LGBTQ+ people and kinds of families.

- Children's Books about Kinds of Families <https://www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?f%5B0%5D=topic%3A1628>
- Children's Books about LGBTQ+ People and Heterosexism https://www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?keywords=&sort_by=dt_published_at&f%5B0%5D=topic%3A1584
- Early Childhood Frequently Asked Questions <https://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/question-corner>
- LGBTQ+ Pride Month and Education Resources <https://www.adl.org/resources/tools-and-strategies/lgbtq-pride-month-and-education-resources>
- Table Talk: Family Conversations about Current Events <https://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/table-talk>
- Why We Need Diverse Books <https://www.adl.org/resources/tools-and-strategies/why-we-need-diverse-books>