

Growing Readers Review



Books of Excellence titles are selected annually by a panel of Bright Horizons early childhood experts and represent some of the best new writing in children's literature.

Books of Excellence

Hello, Baby



Infant/Toddler

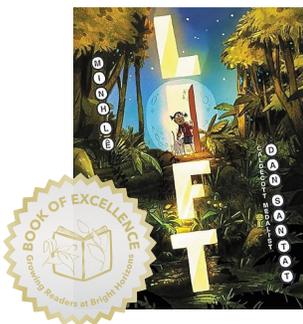
Written by Little Bee Books; Illustrated by Stephani Stilwell

Learn to say “hello” in 15 different languages! Flip through this charming book filled with lovely photographs of babies from all over the world as they engage in everyday play. Explore the smiles and happy expressions through dancing, laughing, and taking a bath.

Activities

- ▶ **Practice saying hello.** Use the phonetic guide at the end of the book to greet in different languages.
- ▶ **Explore shapes and colors.** Point out the colors and shapes on each page. Provide paper and jumbo crayons for children to practice mark-making. Talk about the different colors, lines, and shapes you see. This is a great way to encourage children's fine motor and pre-writing skills.
- ▶ **Make a book.** Take pictures of your child engaged in various activities such as reading, playing, or eating. Print the images and make a book for your baby to use.

Lift



Preschool

Written by Minh Lê; Illustrated by Dan Santat

“Lift” your spirits in this imaginary adventure using a magic elevator button. Comic-inspired illustrations capture the loving, yet sometimes quarrelsome, relationship between siblings. The author metaphorically uses the title, “Lift,” to explore themes of imagination, sharing, empathy, and relationships.

Activities

- ▶ **Explore emotions.** Observe and identify the character's expressions throughout the story. Use clues from the story to understand why a character is experiencing a certain emotion. Practice making facial expressions. Say, “Show me excited, worried, happy, or quizzical.” Here is a list to get you started: Happy, excited, shocked, quizzical, anticipation, betrayed, frustrated, worried, etc.
- ▶ **Pretend play.** Make your own magic button or use props around the house to go on an imaginary adventure. Will you go into outer space like Iris or perhaps the ice glaciers of Antarctica? Let your child take the lead and share their creativity.
- ▶ **Create comic strips.** On a strip of paper, draw lines or boxes and invite children to create a story by drawing a few illustrations in each space.

We believe that books have the power to build empathy in children, introducing them to new perspectives and ideas. Through stories, children come to understand others' hopes, dreams, joys, and sorrows. We're committed to offering diverse stories and voices to our readers.

Reading News

Caldecott medalist and illustrator, Dan Santat, has illustrated over 60 books!

Born to immigrant parents from Thailand, Dan grew up in California with a passion for drawing. Despite this interest, his parents urged him to pursue the study of microbiology. In 1995, Dan graduated from university only to re-enroll in school and earn his bachelor's degree in illustration.

He has authored and illustrated over 100 books and an animated television series. Dan's animated illustrations draw readers into a world of whimsical imagination and humor. His iconic work in graphic novels brings to life vivid mixed-media illustrations that capture the movement and emotions of the characters.



Dan grew up with many fears about his future – making money, having a job, finding his purpose. Despite these fears, his first job at a video gaming company put his worries to ease. Now, Dan offers advice for others juggling the same thoughts, “Find your passion. It was what you were meant to do.”

Upon reflection on his 23 years of work, Dan says that he is fortunate enough to have “the honor and privilege to do exactly what [he] wanted and was born to do.”

Growing Readers Book Club

Become Teacher Nate's co-researchers as you and your child are introduced to high-quality children's books along with ideas to explore, create, and investigate further!

This month's Growing Readers Book Club Video features the book “Lift” by Minh Lê. Be transported into a world of possibilities and let your imagination flourish! Where will the magic elevator button take you?

[Watch the video here!](#)

Storytelling/Reading Tips

Boost Your Child's Vocabulary

Use objects around the room or point to illustrations identifying items that interest your child. Notice what your baby gestures or attempts to mimic and add vocabulary to strengthen their understanding, “I see Jonas moving his arms up and down. Jonas is dancing.”

For older age groups, add new words to your child's feelings vocabulary or everyday life. Talk about the different emotions Iris experiences in *Lift*, e.g., when Iris is curious about the ding of the button, cheerful when she is in outer space, or disappointed when her brother presses the elevator button. Create word cards or feelings cards of new words your child hears or learns.

Visit the Growing Readers website to see a list of other great books we recommend checking out!

