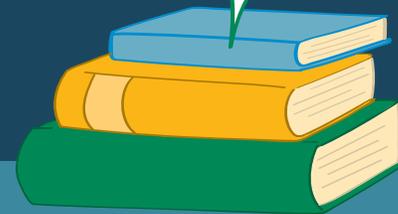


Growing Readers Review

April
2023



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

Book of Excellence

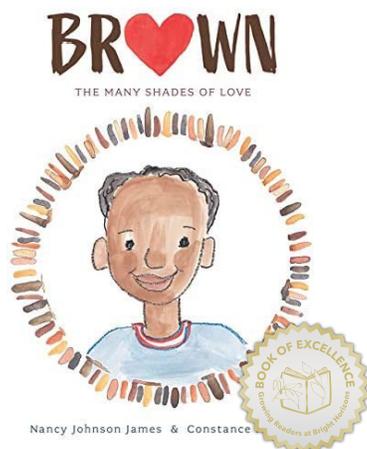
Check out...

Growing Readers
Book Club videos!
See page 2
for further details.

PRESCHOOL

Written by Nancy Johnson James; Illustrated by Constance Moore

“Brown” by Nancy Johnson James and Constance Moore describes one family’s skin tones in familiar terms: polished pine, cinnamon, honey, or an autumn leaf. Told from the perspective of a young boy, the gentle narrative is a celebration of diversity, and subtly dispels the idea that family members should all look the same.



Storytelling Tips

- ▶ **Explore similes and metaphors.** Point out the metaphors and similes in the book, e.g., “an autumn leaf or like a field of wheat.” Watch for these literary elements in other books. Write your own to describe family members or pets.
- ▶ **Make text-to-self connections.** Ask your child questions to connect the text with their own life: How do the characters in the story remind you of yourself or our family? How are they different?

Extend the Learning

- ▶ **Make a skin color palette.** Offer slightly diluted tempera paint in the following shades: white, brown, black, yellow, and red. Challenge your child to use the paints to re-create the skin colors described in the book. Invite your child to name each shade.
- ▶ **Make portraits.** Use the skin color palette and crayons 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. Copy them on cardstock to make cards.
- ▶ **Make family dolls.** Take full-body photos of each family member (pets too!). Cut away background details. Glue the photos on cardstock and laminate. Glue felt to the back to use as flannel board figures or add bull clips or craft sticks to make paper dolls or puppets. Use these family dolls to tell stories.

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.

Notable Books

Other great books we recommend.

Point your smart phone camera at the code to link to the Growing Readers website for more book recommendations.



INFANT & TODDLER

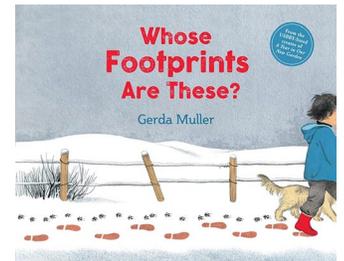
Whose Footprints Are These?

Written and Illustrated by Gerda Muller

A charming wordless book with a mystery to solve: whose footprints are these? Infants and toddlers will enjoy looking at the bright illustrations while older children will delight in unraveling a young child's morning adventure.

Storytelling Tips

- ▶ **Point out the details.** For babies and toddlers, simply point at and name the objects on the page. Ask questions and make the text relevant to your child. "Oh look, there's toast and jam. We had toast for breakfast. Do you like toast?"
- ▶ **Focus and ask questions.** As you dive deeper with older children, encourage them to examine the clues on each page. What might the cardboard box be for? What time of year is it? How do you know? What kind of pet lives in the house? Why did the dog run around the birdhouse? Why do the tracks stop at the pine tree?
- ▶ **Consider beginning, middle, and end.** Talk with your older child about the sequence of the story. What happened first? What happens next? How does the story end? These early experiences build children's literary understanding.



Extend the Learning

- ▶ **Go for a nature walk.** Take a stroll with your baby or toddler. Point out any tracks you see. Notice seasonal changes such as blooming flowers, falling leaves, or snow.
- ▶ **Offer loose parts.** Offer older children props from the story such as a cardboard box, rope, sticks, fabric, etc. What would they like to make? What else do they need?

Don't Miss This!

Don't miss this month's riveting video episode of the 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!

Growing Readers
Book Club

This month's video features the book "Brown" by Nancy Johnson James where readers celebrate all the beautiful shades of brown in one child's family. Join Teacher Nate as he explores how we can create the shade of our unique skin by mixing paints to create beautiful skin tones.



[Watch the video here!](#)

We are proud to partner with **The Book Vine for Children** on our Growing Readers book selections. [Click here](#) to order these books and more.

Notable Books *Continued...*

SCHOOL-AGE (K-2)

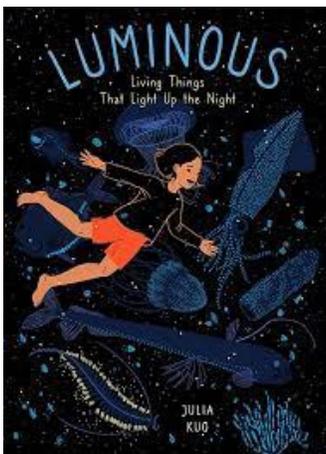
Luminous: Living Things That Light Up the Night

Written and Illustrated by Julia Kuo

This eye catching book gives children an introduction to an incredible natural phenomenon called bioluminescence – light made from living things. Illustrations set upon black pages create a uniquely beautiful visual experience for readers.

Storytelling Tips

- ▶ **Read at your child's pace.** Take time to examine each illustration or explain unfamiliar words.
- ▶ **Dive deeper.** Ask and answer questions to encourage your child to think more deeply about the text:
 - Do any bioluminescent animals live near us?
 - Why do most of these animals live in the ocean?
 - Are any plants bioluminescent? Are fungi plants?



Extend the Learning

- ▶ **Visit the [Smithsonian website](#).** Check out the images of real bioluminescent animals and invite your child to choose a few to learn more about. Draw the chosen animals and write notes about them.
- ▶ **Learn from Julia.** Visit [Julia's website](#) to read about how she developed her artistic ability as a child by re-drawing her favorite comic strips. Soon she began creating her own art. Offer some art materials, and invite your child to imitate a favorite artist's style.