

Lesson 21:

Every Day, Everywhere...Babies Are Loved

"I loved you before I met you. Before I held you in my arms I sang you down from the stars." —Tasha Spillett Sumner

Social Justice Standard: Diversity 7

Summary

Just as there has been under-representations of children of color in books, so has there been in toys and dolls. Many families' playthings don't reflect the full vibrancy and diversity of our communities and region. Children learn a lot of important messages from the toys and books to which they are exposed. Just as it's worthwhile to consider "who is missing?" and "who is present?" when you look at the books your child reads, it is also powerful to do so when thinking about your child's toys and dolls.

In the following lesson , you will find stories that celebrate the beautiful differences in babies and children in many everyday shared experiences.

Booklist

- Little You by Richard Van Camp, illustrated by Julie Flett
- We Sang You Home by Richard Van Camp, illustrated by Julie Flett
- "More, More, More," Said the Baby by Vera B. Williams
- Everywhere Babies by Susan Meyers, illustrated by Marla Frazee
- Homemade Love by bell hooks, illustrated by Shane W. Evans
- Girl of Mine by Jabari Asim, illustrated by LeUyen Pham
- Peekaboo Morning by Rachel Isadora
- I Sang You Down from the Stars by Tasha Spillett-Sumner, illustrated by Michaela Goade

Consider This

- Did you have diverse dolls, toys, and books as a child? Do you remember it ever being a conversation in your home?
- How have you seen toys and books change over time related to diversity?
- Do you think there are still holes in who or what is represented in children's products?
- If you're a caregiver, how have you been intentional about exposing the children in your life to a wide variety of people?

Talk Together

- What is your favorite toy? What do you like about it?
- Do you have toys and books with people that look like you? What about ones with people that don't look like you?
- Do you remember anything about being a baby? What stories have you been told about some of your favorite things as a baby?
- Would you want to be a baby again? What is fun, or not fun, about being a baby?

Engage

Recreate stories with dolls. Here are some ways you can use the books in the lesson

- Have a doll practice walking like the baby in *Everywhere Babies*.
- Try loving the baby the same way they do in *Little You*.
- Enjoy playing peekaboo like in *Peekaboo Mornings*.

Explore More

- BabyCenter's "How to talk to your child about how babies are made"
- Watch *Babies* on Netflix
- Parents with Confidence's "72 Incredibly Simple Ways to Show Love for Children" (February 10, 2021)
- All About Kids' "5 Ways Kids Express Love"