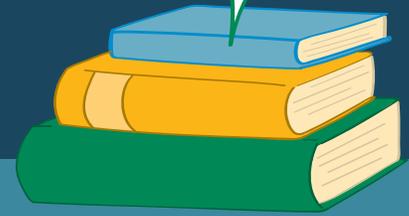


# BRIGHT HORIZONS Growing Readers Review

Celebrating  
**20** Years

October  
2021



*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.*

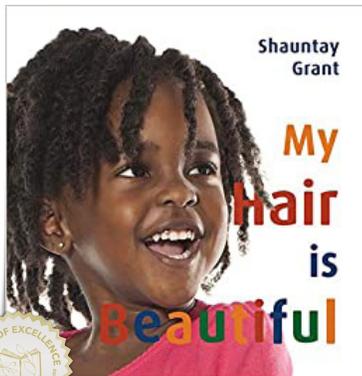
## Book of Excellence

**NEW!**

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

### PRESCHOOL

### My Hair is Beautiful



#### Written by Shauntay Grant

Cornrows, afros, puffs, and twists! While this book is a celebration of the natural beauty of Black hair, many similar books offer depictions of children from other ethnic backgrounds. Use this book and others like it, such as *Tummy Time Friends* by Pat Brisson, to explore differences and similarities in appearance, lifestyle, and perspective.

#### Storytelling Tips

- ▶ **Make it relevant.** Point out how the children in the photos are similar and different to your child, e.g., “Her hair is the same color as yours,” or “Her hair is short. Yours is long.”
- ▶ **Emphasize the alliteration.** Say the words clearly, pointing out the beginning sounds, e.g., “Cornrow, curly, they both start with the c sound.”

#### Extend the Learning

- ▶ **Make positive connections for your child.** We want children to develop a positive self-identity, which starts in early childhood. Describe your child's unique physical and character attributes, e.g., “You have lovely brown skin. It's a little lighter than mine,” or “Look how strong you are. When something's hard, you just keep trying!”
- ▶ **Point it out.** Peek in the mirror at the end of the book. Ask your child, “Where's your nose? Do you see your eyes? Can you point to your mouth?”

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

Other great books we recommend.

Snap a photo to link to the Growing Readers website for more book recommendations.



## PRESCHOOL

### Kind

**Written by Alison Green; Illustrated by 38 kind illustrators with a foreword by Axel Scheffler**

Vibrant illustrations and simple ideas for spreading kindness make *Kind* a joy to share. Proceeds from the sale of this book benefit the Three Peas charity, which works to make a difference in the lives of refugees.

### Storytelling Tips

- ▶ **Note the illustrations.** Almost every page features donated work from a different illustrator (38 in all). Study the illustrations and discuss how they're different. Some illustrators use small details and muted colors while others favor large graphic-style art in vibrant shades.
- ▶ **Discuss the ideas.** This book is full of easy ideas anyone can do to show kindness. Ask your child to think of ways they show kindness.

### Extend the Learning

- ▶ **Make your own page.** Encourage your child to think of one way to show kindness and illustrate it.
- ▶ **Set a kindness goal.** Talk as a family about one thing you'd like to do to show kindness. Maybe you'll rake leaves for a neighbor, write a card for your postal worker, or walk a friend's dog.



**NEW!**

Don't miss this month's riveting video episode of the Growing Readers Book Club! Become Mr. 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 "My Hair is Beautiful" with its powerful message of self-love. Join Mr. David as he guides you through designing a self-portrait using creative materials to represent your own beautiful hair.



**[Watch the video here!](#)**

## SCHOOL-AGE (K-2)

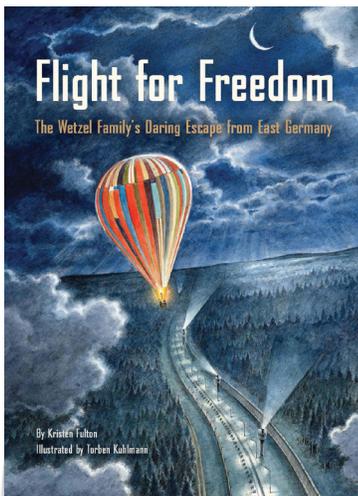
### Flight for Freedom

Written by **Kristen Fulton**; Illustrated by **Torben Kuhlmann**

The inspiring true story of the Wetzel family who escaped East Germany in a hot air balloon, told from the perspective of Peter Wetzel, who was 7 years old at the time.

#### Storytelling Tips

- ▶ **Offer context.** Explain to your child that this is a true story about events that really happened after World War II. Find Germany on a world map and examine the map at the front of the book.
- ▶ **Provide details.** As you read the story, pause on each page to look carefully at the illustrations. Provide simple explanations for things that might be unfamiliar to your child such as the old sewing machine used to sew the parachute or the surveillance equipment used by the government to monitor citizens.
- ▶ **Ask questions.** Deepen your child's understanding with a few thoughtful questions such as "Why do you think they wanted to escape so badly?" or "How would you feel if you were Peter?"



#### Extend the Learning

- ▶ **Follow interests.** Dive deeper into aspects of the story that interest your child, such as an age-appropriate look at World War II or an investigation of how hot air balloons are made. Learn about European geography or find out about what Germany is like today.
- ▶ **Investigate democracy.** Discuss the concept of freedom and why it is so important. Talk about what makes a government a democracy. Describe your ideas and values about voting and participating in a civil society.

## SCHOOL-AGE (3<sup>RD</sup>-6<sup>TH</sup>)

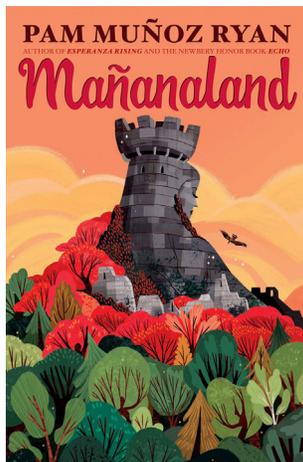
### *Mañanaland*

**Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan**

*Mañanaland* tells the story of Maximiliano Córdoba, a young boy who dreams of playing soccer and longs to know why his mother left. When Buelo tells him stories about a mythical guardian who guides travelers, Max eventually embarks on a journey to find his truth. Filled with compassion, humanity, and hope.

### Storytelling Tips

- ▶ **Learn together.** *Mañanaland* gently introduces many important topics such as family connectedness, political regimes, and immigration. Read the book together and discuss these themes. Offer some historical context, e.g., “This reminds me of what happened during the Civil War and World War II when people were fleeing their homes for a better life.”
- ▶ **Discuss the setting.** Muñoz Ryan intentionally creates an imaginary country somewhere in Latin America. There are old bridges and the relics of European castles combined with jungles and modern scenes. Why do you think she includes both realistic and fantasy elements?
- ▶ **Explore the characters.** Prompt deeper thinking about the characters. “Which character is your favorite? Do they remind you of anyone you know? What would you do if you were Max?”



### Extend the Learning

- ▶ **Learn about immigration.** Read stories about real life immigrants. What makes them leave their countries? What happens when they come to a new place? How can we help?
- ▶ **Study bridges.** The story is full of bridges — both real ones and metaphorical ones — and the author shares several technical details about them. Visit [Building Big](#) from PBS to learn about the physics behind bridges. Offer your child some simple materials such as straws or sticks and have a bridge building challenge.