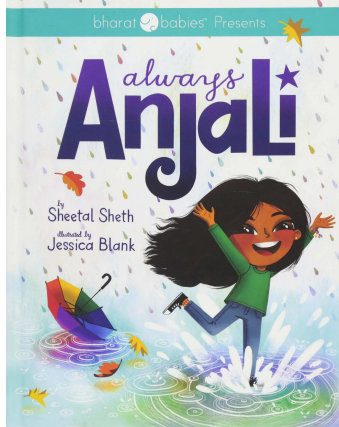


Elementary Book Lesson for Caregivers



Book Title

Always Anjali by Sheetal Sheth, illustrated by Jessica Blank

Recommended Ages

5 - 12 years old

Book Summary to Share With Children

Anjali and her friends are excited to get matching personalized license plates for their bikes. When Anjali can't find one with her name, she is discouraged and teased for her name. Listen to hear how Anjali learns to embrace her name as she takes action and stands up for herself.

Reflection Questions for the Caregiver

- What meaning does your name hold for you?
- Has anyone ever said or spelled your name incorrectly, made jokes about your name, and called you by a nickname you didn't like?
- How did it feel? What did you do?
- Do you know any children or adults who are or have been subject to microaggressions involving their names or nicknames?
- How can you encourage your own and your child's commitment to correctly pronouncing others' names when you meet people who have culturally different names than what you are familiar with?

Reader's Note

Many children are regularly subjected to having their names mispronounced or teasing regarding the pronunciation or spelling of their name. While these microaggressions may seem harmless, it can have a negative effect on their sense of self and result in disengagement in relationships and school. As a caregiver modeling respectful behavior for your child, it is extremely important for you to commit to learning the proper pronunciations of other people's names, as you play a key role in setting the tone for how your child will treat each others who are different from them. It is also important to correct others (children and adults) when you hear them mispronounce a person's name, as your child will look to see your response.

After reading the book, read some of the quotes in the front and back covers. These can help provide even more windows and mirrors for your child and emphasize how personal it feels to have one's name mispronounced repeatedly.

Vocabulary

- Sanskrit - an ancient language from India in which many Hindu scriptures and classic works are written and from which many other languages are derived
- Bindis - a colored dot worn on the center of the forehead, originating in India. It is traditionally worn for religious purposes or to signify a woman is married.

Microaggressions: “The everyday slights, indignities, put-downs, and insults that people of color, women, LGBT populations, or those who are marginalized, experience in their day to day interactions with people. Microaggressions often times appear to be a compliment but contain a metacommunication or a hidden insult to the target groups in which it is delivered. People who engage in microaggressions are ordinary folks who experience themselves as good, moral, decent individuals. Microaggressions occur because they are outside the level of conscious awareness of the perpetrator.” (Derald Wing Sue, What Is a Microaggression? <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/what-is-a-microaggression>)

Connection to Social-Emotional Learning and Anti-Bias Education

SEL

- √ Self-Awareness
- √ Self-Management
- √ Social Awareness
- √ Relationship Skills
- √ Responsible Decision-Making

ABE

- √ Empathy and Understanding
- √ Healthy Complex Identities
- √ Respect Across Differences
- √ Notice, Name, and Reject Bias
- √ Responsiveness and Action

Discussion Questions

1. Anjali was so excited about getting a new bike for her birthday. Tell me about a time when you’ve been so excited to get or do something that you couldn’t wait.
2. How did Anjali’s feelings about getting a bike for her birthday change throughout the story?
3. Why do you think Anjali couldn’t find her name on a license plate? How did she feel when that happened?
4. What happened when the boy started calling Anjali “peanut butter and ann-jelly with a dot on top”?
5. How did Anjali react when that happened?
6. How would you have reacted?
7. How do you think Anjali’s friends, Courtney and Mary, felt when Achary was teasing Anjali? Why don’t you think they said anything to him?
8. How is teasing someone about their name or giving them a nickname hurtful?
9. What does Anjali want to do with her name when she gets home?
10. How does Anjali’s mother’s words help her?
11. How is being different also being marvelous?
12. How does Anjali take action and stand up for herself? Why is this important?
13. What can you do when you hear someone mispronounce or make fun of someone’s name?

Journal Questions/Activities

- What do you know about your name? Do you know what it means and why it was chosen for you? Draw or write about your name and its significance.
- Has anyone ever said or spelled your name incorrectly or made jokes about your name? How did it feel? What did you do?
- Draw or write the story from one of Anjali’s friend’s perspectives (Courtney or Mary). What might they have been thinking about before, during, and after the teasing incident with the boy?
- Name Plates - Invite your child to make their own unique name plates. Provide a wide variety of materials, so your child can make it special and personal.