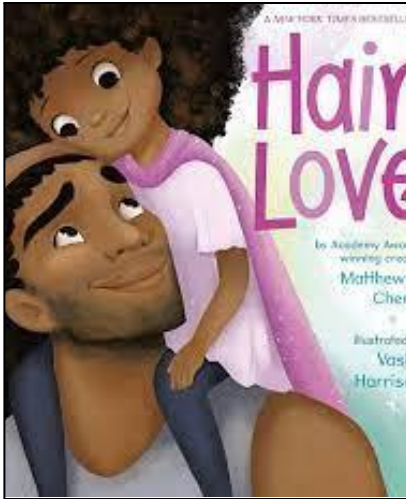




Elementary Book Lesson for Caregivers and Educators



Book Title

Hair Love by Matthew A. Cherry, illustrated by Vashti Harrison

Recommended Ages

5 and up

Book Summary to Share With Children

In this book, a young girl named Zuri embraces her natural hair texture that kinks, coils and curls every which way. Zuri knows her hair is beautiful, but it has a mind of its own! Mama is not home, so it's up to Daddy to give his daughter an extra-special hairstyle. Tender and empowering, Hair Love is an ode to loving your natural hair - and a celebration of daddies and daughters everywhere.

Reflection Questions for the Caregiver/Educator

1. Where and from whom did you learn hair care as a child? Who primarily helped to style or maintain your hair as a child?
2. What memories do you have of special occasions as a child? Did you wear a special outfit or have your hair styled or cut for this? What emotions come to mind when you think back to preparing for this big moment or day?

Reader's Note

Hair Love celebrates natural Black hairstyles and father-daughter relationships. The book originates from a short animated film that was written by former NFL wide receiver, Matthew A. Cherry. (You can also watch the [Hair Love Oscar®-Winning Short Film from Sony Pictures Animation](#).)

In the Black community, the ritual of doing a child's hair is often seen as an expression of love. As in many communities, the task of grooming and styling children has often fallen to the mothers or other female members of the family/community, but this has begun to change. More and more fathers and men are learning how to style the hair of their daughters and other females in their lives. Although the thought of combs, brushings, curlers, hair pins, barrettes, and bows may be daunting at first, their efforts pay off when their loved ones smile and show pride in their hair.

There are several examples of traditional hairstyles for Black hair in its natural state (curly, tightly coiled or kinked texture), and Black hair can be very versatile. Note that some Black people may choose to wear their hair naturally, some may straighten it with heat, chemical relaxers, and some may wear protective styles such as wigs or weaves. All forms of Black hair are beautiful, and love is felt whenever someone cares for their tresses.

Note: Be aware of the issue of cultural appropriation of Black culture by non-Black/non-African American



people. Cultural appropriation is the adoption of something from a minority culture for the benefit (often for entertainment) of the dominant culture. Non-Black/non-African American children might want to wear afro wigs, dreads, or braids with traditional African beads for Halloween. It is important to learn more about the history of Black hairstyles and what they represent to Black/African American people and then engage students in a conversation about what might be problematic about donning certain styles for fashion or entertainment.

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 (*essential questions in bold)

1. **Zuri says that her hair “has a mind of its own”. What does she mean by this?**
2. **Zuri feels like a princess when her hair is in braids. Do you have a hairstyle or way of dressing that makes you feel special?**
3. **Why is Zuri’s appearance so important to her that day? What was she looking forward to?**
4. What are some of the fun things that Zuri gets to do with her dad after school?
5. Why doesn’t Zuri want to wear a hat?
6. In the end, Daddy makes Zuri’s hair look great. Where do you think he learned how to style Zuri’s hair?
7. **Zuri refers to her hair as love. How is the love and care of her family reflected in her hairstyle?**

Journal Questions

- What is your favorite way to express your style, whether through your hair or hats/scarves, clothing, accessories, etc.? How does expressing yourself make you feel?
- *Hair Love* demonstrates care that Zuri’s dad shows to her by grooming her hair. Who in your life takes special care of you? What activities do you really enjoy doing with them?