

Lovely by Jess Hong Curriculum Guide



Lovely

By Jess Hong

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Big, small, curly, straight, loud, quiet, smooth, wrinkly.

Lovely explores a world of differences that all add up to the same thing: we are all lovely!

Background Information:

“What is lovely?” asks newcomer Hong at the outset of a book that celebrates seeing the beauty in everyone. She answers her own question by introducing a cavalcade of individuals young and old, with an emphasis on individual. “Lovely is different,” she writes as a girl with heterochromia looks at herself in the mirror. A young white woman in a Goth ensemble represents “black,” while a brown-skinned woman with flowing white hair and a garland of flowers signifies “white.” Other opposite pairs include “soft” (a baby clutching a stuffed bear) and “sharp” (an elderly woman with lavender hair, a nose ring, and a spike-covered leather jacket), and spreads featuring arms and legs showcase bodies with tattoos, freckles, vitiligo, and prosthetic limbs. Hong’s digital cartooning is clean and bright, and her portraits casually reflect a diversity of ages, skin colors, abilities, occupations, and family types; a mixed-race gay couple stands opposite a brown-skinned woman carrying her son on her shoulders. It’s easy to see beauty in people simply being themselves in these pages, a clear, direct message that readers can carry into their lives. Ages 4–up. (Publishers Weekly)

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Kindergarten through Grade 2 Standards covered in Lovely

Concepts about Print

- 1.1 Identify the front cover, back cover, and title page of a book.
- 1.3 Understand that printed materials provide information.
- 1.4.M Describe characteristics that make each individual unique.

2.0 Reading Comprehension

Students identify the basic facts and ideas in what they have read, heard, or viewed. They use comprehension strategies (e.g., generating and responding to questions, comparing new information to what is already known).

- 2.2 Use pictures and context to make predictions about story content.
- 2.3 Connect to life experiences the information and events in texts.
- 2.5 Ask and answer questions about essential elements of a text.

3.0 Literary Response and Analysis

Students listen and respond to stories based on well-known characters, themes, plots, and settings.

Narrative Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text

- 3.1 Distinguish fantasy from realistic text.
- 3.3 Identify characters, settings, and important events.

Standard 7: Practicing Health-Enhancing Behaviors

- 7.1.M Express emotions appropriately.
- 7.2.M Describe positive ways to show care, consideration, and concern for others.

Standard topics:

- Diversity: How we are special and unique.
- Empathy: Practicing Theory of Mind by understanding someone else's point of view.
- Compassion: What does it mean to truly accept a friend just the way they are?
- Inclusion: What does it mean to accept a friend's differences?

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Objectives:

- Connect with literature.
- Teaching children about diversity.
- Empathy: Help children understand what it means to consider other people's feelings.
- Tolerance: Encouraging children to show kindness and acceptance towards themselves and others.
- Inclusion: Learning ways in which we can be inclusive, no matter our differences.

Key Terms/Concepts:

- Diversity
- Perspective taking
- Inclusion

Discussion Questions:

- Have you ever had a friend who is different?
- Have you ever felt different? Was that a positive or negative experience? Why?
- How can you show a friend that you love/like them just the way they are?
- How can you help a friend be included?
- How does it feel when you are included in a group?
- Have you ever seen anyone being treated unfairly because they are different?
- Are there characteristics that you have that make you feel different? That make you feel lovely?
- Have you ever felt left out? What does that feel like?
- Why do you think people exclude one another?
- What things can we do to promote fairness?
- What is something that is unique about you?
- How does it feel when you are included in a group?

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Activities:

- ***Play I love My Neighbor:*** Seat the children in a circle. Have them take turns saying, “I love my neighbor because....” About the person to their left.
- ***Make a Self-Esteem Mirror:*** Have the children make a mirror surrounded with words about what makes them special. You can find the full directions on [Mosswood Connections](https://mosswoodconnections.com/activities/new-social-emotional-page/self-esteem-mirror-social-skills-activity/).
(<https://mosswoodconnections.com/activities/new-social-emotional-page/self-esteem-mirror-social-skills-activity/>)
- ***Play If You Really Knew Me:*** Again, Seat the children in a circle. Have them take turns saying, “If you really knew me...” and have them share something about themselves. Discuss with the children about what they learned about each other. Were there any surprises?
- ***Do the Crack an Egg Demonstration:*** Bring eggs with different colored shells. Have the children observe how they look different. Then crack the eggs. Do they look different on the inside? Explain how this relates to people, too.
- ***Step Forward to the Finish Line:*** Have some students line up on one side and choose another child to be the volunteer on the other side. Put a line or marker between them. Instruct the children to give the volunteer compliments about traits that are special about that person. For every compliment, the student takes one step closer to the line until s/he has crossed it. Repeat with as many students as are in the class.
- ***Share What We Have in Common:*** Have the students bring three of their favorite items in a bag. Then have them share what they brought to share. Talk about why those items are important to each child. Compare and discuss how some the items the children brought to share are different and how some are the same.
- ***Lead a game similar to the game Simon Says:*** But for this version have the children do actions based on directions such as:
 - Simon says: "Anyone with brown eyes, stand up."
 - Simon says: "Anyone who has a dog as a pet, put your right hand on your head."
 - Simon says: "Anyone whose favorite ice cream is chocolate, stand on one foot."
 - Simon says: "Anyone who has a brother, jump up and down."

At the end of the game, have students sit in a circle. Ask each student to name one way in which he or she and another student are alike and one way that they are different. Does this change the way they feel about each other?

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Printable Coloring Pages and Worksheets:

- **Dabbles and Babbles:** Faces coloring page. (<https://dabblesandbabbles.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Blank-Faces2.pdf>)
- **EduPics:** Coloring page of children from all over the world. (<https://www.edupics.com/coloring-page-children-of-the-world-i9308.html>)
- **Keep Your Child Safe:** Multi-cultural flowers coloring page. (<http://www.keepyourchildsafesafe.org/pdf/multicultural-flowers-coloring-sheets.PDF>)
- **Popping Wheelies:** has a variety of coloring pages on the topic of children with special needs. (<http://poppingwheelies.net/friends1.html>)

Resources:

- **West Virginia University Inclusion Activities:** A great list of activities educators can do with groups of children. (https://www.uh.edu/cdi/diversity_education/resources/activities/pdf/Inclusion_Activities_Book.pdf)
- **Penn State:** A Collection of Ice Breakers Designed to Start Conversations about Diversity. (<https://www.mentoring.org/new-site/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Diversity-Discussion-Starters.pdf>)
- **Mosswood Connections:** An activity that encourages children to get involved in erasing racism along with more resources for teaching children about diversity and inclusion. (<https://mosswoodconnections.com/teaching-children-diversity-compassion/>)
- **Eastern Kentucky University:** Printable Diversity Posters (<https://diversity.eku.edu/diversity-posters-printable>)
- **Tolerance.org:** Mix It Up at Lunch Day activities that present a great, low-stakes opportunity for students to engage with one another and cross some common social boundaries. (<https://www.tolerance.org/mix-it-up/activities>)



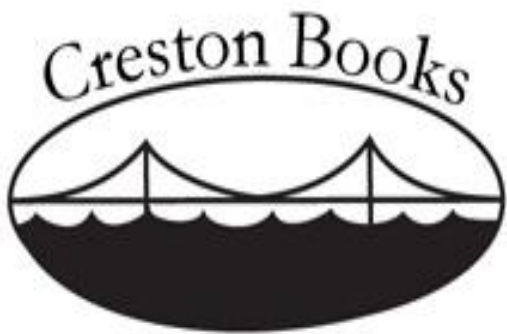
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About [Jess Hong](#):

Jess Hong is an illustrator based in Oakland, CA. She specializes in children's book illustration and all that is silly. She studied and received a BFA in illustration at the Academy of Art. She is fond of cats, noodles, and fine cheeses.

Jess creates her digital illustration work in Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop. For traditional mediums she uses watercolor and ink.



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This curriculum was written and developed by [Mosswood Connections](#).

