

## Picture Books on Kindness

(\* denotes series)

### General

*The ABCs of Kindness* by Samantha Berger (JBO)

A diverse cast of children shows everyday acts of kindness and generosity through thoughtful and vibrant illustrations. Whether it be donating blankets to the animal shelter, helping with chores, or standing up for what's right, this is the perfect book to spark conversations at home or in the classroom about the concepts of empathy and compassion.

*Try a Little Kindness* by Henry Cole

Each page features a different way to be a good person, like using proper manners, telling someone they are special, or sharing a treat! The text is accompanied by two or three related vignettes of different animals giving examples of ways to be good. And in one illustration out of each set, one animal (like a cat peering into a fishbowl!) may not be doing the best job of being kind!

*Pete the Cat's Groovy Guide to Kindness* by Kimberly and James Dean (JPN 177.7 DEA)

Cool cat Pete adds his own spin on well-known classic quotes from luminaries ranging from Booker T. Washington to Henry James. Everyone's favorite blue cat reminds us that "it's cool to be kind."

*Not Yeti* by Kelly DiPucchio

Monsters are loud. And rude. They like to smash things and they always need to be right. But not Yeti. Yeti bakes banana bread and sings to whales and always has a nice word to say. But sometimes you find yourself alone when you're different. And Yeti doesn't know there's a special surprise in store for him.

*Where Happiness Begins* by Eva Eland

A spare text and simple illustrations encourage readers to find happiness even if it feels far away. The book gives it a shape, turning this elusive emotion into something real while acknowledging that you can't be happy all the time. The thoughtful text reassures readers that when happiness is hard to find, they can look for it in many places. Sharing something with a friend or reaching out to someone who needs it can lead to happiness. Recognize and treasure it when you experience it, knowing that happiness begins with you.

*Kind* by Alison Greene

Imagine a world where everyone is kind. How can we make that come true? A heartwarming and visually diverse book about the fundamental value of kindness and how kids can join in.

*Tomorrow I'll Be Kind* by Jessica Hische

Immerse yourself in the beautifully hand-lettered words of wisdom, hope, and positivity alongside adorable illustrations of love and caring. This book is a reminder to all readers, young and old, that the smallest kind gesture can make the biggest difference in the world--we just have to remember to be kind to one another.

*Do Unto Otters: A Book About Manners* by Laurie Keller

Mr. Rabbit's new neighbors are Otters. OTTERS! But he doesn't know anything about otters. Will they get along? Will they be friends? Just treat otters the same way you'd like them to treat you, advises Mr. Owl.

*Harold Loves His Woolly Hat* by Vern Kousky

What makes a bear special? For Harold, it is his beloved striped woolly hat. He wears it when he sleeps, when he goes to school, and even when he takes his monthly bath. But when a crow whisks the hat off his head and high up into a nest, Harold doesn't feel so special anymore. He tries everything to get it back--offering the crow blueberries, worms, and even shiny objects--but alas, the crow will not budge. Turns out that the hat has a new special purpose: keeping three baby crows warm.

*Superbuns!: Kindness is Her Superpower* by Diane Kredensor

Some superheroes can leap tall buildings in a single bound, some can crawl up a wall, some grow wolfsharp claws, and some have superhuman speed. And Superbuns? Her superpower is being kind. Super kind. Superbuns's older sister Blossom is a super know-it-all who doesn't believe kindness is a superpower. Not one bit. And all this kindness is slowing them down on their way to Grammy's house, where a yummy carrot cobbler awaits. But the sisters are being followed by a little fox, and when Blossom learns the fox is not after their cobbler but is lost, she discovers kindness really is a superpower after all.

*The Power of One: Every Act of Kindness Counts* by Tracy Ludwig

When one child reaches out in friendship to a classmate who seems lonely, she begins a chain reaction of kindness that ripples throughout her school and her community. One kind act begets another, small good deeds make way for bigger ones, and eventually the whole neighborhood comes together to build something much greater than the sum of its parts.

*The Kindness Book* by Todd Parr

No matter what other people choose to do, you can always choose to be kind -- and what a wonderful thing to be!

*Speak Up* by Miranda Paul

Join a diverse group of kids on a busy school day as they discover so many different ways to speak up and make their voices heard! From shouting out gratitude for a special treat to challenging a rule that isn't fair, these young students show that simple, everyday actions can help people and make the world a better place.

*The Heart of a Whale* by Anna Pignataro

Whale's beautiful song winds its way through the ocean, reaching the farthest of faraways. His song is one of happiness and hope, magic and wonder--and Whale's fellow sea creatures are calmed, cheered, and lulled by it. But though Whale sings his tender song day after day, night after night, Whale wonders why he has no song to fill his empty heart. So when he lets out a mournful sigh, the ocean carries it like a wish through its fathoms, bringing it to just the right place.

*Little Book of Kindness* by Francesca Pirrone

It's easy to be kind. Offer a smile. Say thank you. Lend a helping hand. You'll see that when you are kind, others are kind too.

*The Star Keeper* by Faith Pray

When a girl finds a fallen star, she decides to keep it hidden. But this star encourages kindness and needs to shine, so it comes out from the shadows. At first the glow from the star starts to fade, and the girl worries--maybe she's not a very good starkeeper. Then a chance gesture of kindness seems to brighten the star, and soon this kindness leads to a chain of good works that light up the once-dreary town.

*Sometimes It's Hard to Be Nice* by Maggie Rudd

Sometimes being nice means being patient with your little brother who doesn't know how to treat your favorite things. Being nice can mean going to your sister's boring dance recital. Or tasting a tuna noodle casserole your grandma made—when you can't stand tuna noodle casserole. Being nice takes practice, and that's okay. You just keep trying, and soon you discover how GREAT it feels...to be nice!

*When We Are Kind* by Monique Gray Smith

This book celebrates simple acts of everyday kindness and encourages children to explore how they feel when they initiate and receive acts of kindness in their lives.

*Share Some Kindness, Bring Some Light* by Apryl Stott

Bear is sad. All the other animals think he's mean because he's so big. But his human friend, Coco, offers to help him. Coco shares her grandmother's advice: "When life gets dark as winter's night, share some kindness, bring some light."

They decide to bake cookies to “share some kindness” and make lanterns to “bring some light.” But when the cookies and lanterns don’t work, they must look for another way to win over the other animals. And while they’re at it, Coco and Bear just might discover that kindness is a gift that only comes from the heart.

*The Little Things: A Story About Acts of Kindness* by Christian Trimmer

The day after a mighty storm, a little girl finds a sea star that has washed up on shore, and she returns it to the ocean. Seeing her small act of kindness, an old man heads to an animal shelter with his grandson to pick a dog in need of a home. His grandson feels inspired to help an elderly woman clean up her yard, which inspires a teenager to pack an extra lunch for someone in need, and on and on until each small gesture builds toward a magnificent conclusion.

*Finding Kindness* by Deborah Underwood

Celebrate kindness in all its many forms. This is a powerful story of community, compassion, and generosity of spirit—perfect for sharing!

*I Am Love* by Susan Verde\*

Love means showing kindness, living with gratitude, and taking care of our minds and bodies. Letting our hearts lead the way can help move us closer to a better world.

## Friendship

*Our Favorite Day of the Year* by A.E. Ali

Musa's feeling nervous about his first day of school. He's not used to being away from home and he doesn't know any of the other kids in his class. And when he meets classmates Moisés, Mo, and Kevin, Musa isn't sure they'll have much in common. But over the course of the year, the four boys learn more about each other, the holidays they celebrate, their favorite foods, and what they like about school. The more they share with each other, the closer they become, until Musa can't imagine any better friends.

*My Friend* by Elisa Amado

Friendship — to be known, to be accepted as you are, to feel safe, especially when you are vulnerable. The girl in this story has recently arrived in Brooklyn with her family. On her very first day at school she meets a girl who almost instantly becomes her very best friend. She feels known, loved and accepted by her. But when she invites her friend to come for dinner with her family — a family that feels free to eat weird food and, even worse, burst into song with their version of a sentimental classic of longing and homesickness — something shifts and she no longer feels safe at all. What will it be like tomorrow at school?

*What about Harry?* by Derek Anderson

Harry and Sam are best friends who do everything together. Like build castles. Jump into ponds. And swing on swings. But when Harry realizes that Sam can build bigger, jump higher, and swing better than he can, he decides he'd be happier without Sam. All by himself, Harry can be the greatest! All by himself, Harry is... Well, Harry is...alone. Is being the best at everything worth it if you don't have a friend to share the fun with?

*What's the Matter Marlo* by Andrew Arnold

Marlo and Coco are best friends. They do everything together—they read together, laugh together, and play games together. After all, they're best friends. And that's what best friends do. But one day, when Coco asks Marlo to play, he doesn't answer. Instead, Marlo turns away ignoring Coco, until he's lost in his anger. Coco is worried about her friend, but then she remembers she can always find Marlo.

*Phoebe Dupree is Coming to Tea!* by Linda Ashman

To Abby, her friend Phoebe can do no wrong. Phoebe is speedy. Phoebe is smart. She's equally brilliant at science and art. So when the budding hostess invites Phoebe over for a tea party, everything from the sugary treats on the menu to Abby's dog, Louie, must be, well . . . perfect. But when life—and possibly Louie—send a clear message to let loose, the girls indulge in a perfectly imperfect playdate.

*Sheep Dog and Sheep Sheep* by Eric Barclay\*

Sheep is an expert at protecting sheep—or so she thinks until one happy afternoon when she bumps into a very hairy someone on the farm, the sheep dog. Holy begonia! Sheep knows this can't be right. After all, she's the pro! So Sheep goes off to get everything Sheep Dog needs to get the job done, but each time she goes, something almost happens to Sheep... And it's Sheep Dog who saves the day!

*There's Something about Sam* by Hannah Barnaby

There's something strange about the new kid, Sam—though Max can't quite put his finger on it. But EVERYONE else in his class is invited to Max's birthday sleepover, so his mom invites Sam too. Sam is just as strange at the party as he is at school: he's wary of the full moon, prefers his hamburgers rare, and can't help but bite the other kids during an innocent game of Twister. But despite his initial hesitation, Max discovers that what makes us different is actually what makes us special, and that new friends can come in all shapes, sizes, and species.

*Hedgehog Needs a Hug* by Jen Betton

Everyone needs hugs, even if they're prickly. When Hedgehog wakes up feeling down in the snout and droopy in the prickles, he knows a hug will make him feel much better. But none of his animal friends are eager to wrap their arms around

Hedgehog's prickles, and he's too smart to fall for Fox's sly offer. Then Hedgehog gets a surprise: Another animal in the forest is feeling exactly the same way. Luckily, both are kind and brave enough for the perfect hug.

*How to Spot a Best Friend* by Bea Birdsong

"Today, I will find a best friend!" announces a little girl to her mother as they walk to school. Her mother reminds her that it's only the first day of school, and finding a best friend might take some time. But the girl isn't worried, because she knows exactly how to spot a best friend. "A friend lends you a crayon. A best friend lends you a brand-new, extra-sharp green crayon," she explains. And so begins a whimsical exploration of what it means to be a best friend.

*The Purple Puffy Coat* by Maribeth Boelts

It's almost Stick Bug's birthday, and his fashionable friend Beetle can't wait to give him his present—a purple puffy coat! The coat draws a lot of attention and makes Stick Bug really stick out in the crowd. Beetle thinks that's terrific! He brings Stick Bug all over town, happily boasting and bragging (while Stick Bug waits behind a tree, in a pile of leaves, or under a bench). Oh, dear—maybe Stick Bug isn't as wild about the purple puffy coat as Beetle is! What can the two friends do?

*Where is Bina Bear?* By Mike Curato

Tiny is having a party, but Bina Bear is nowhere to be found. Is that Bina hiding under a lampshade? It looks like Bina . . . but it must be a lamp. Is that Bina beneath the fruit bowl? It could be . . . but it's probably just a table. Searching for Bina, Tiny realizes something is wrong—and sets out to make it right.

*Save the Day, Wonder Woman!* by Michael Dahl

As one of the World's Greatest Super Heroes, WONDER WOMAN has many powers and abilities, including lightning-quick speed, super-strength, and a golden lasso. But her most important skill of all? Being a friend!

*Rita & Ralph's Rotten Day* by Carmen Agra Deedy

Every day best friends Rita and Ralph meet to play beneath the apple tree. It's always fun and games -- until one roundly rotten day when a new game means someone ends up crying. Who knew it could be so hard to say "I'm sorry"? Just when it seems nothing will ever be right again, a surprising thing happens. The old friends try something new, that isn't new at all. Something they've done a hundred times.

*The Love Letter* by Anika Aldamuy Denise

Hedgehog, Bunny, and Squirrel are best friends. One day, they each find a letter. But not just any letter... a love letter. Someone loves them. But who? The answer may surprise you!

*Band Together* by Chloe Douglass

Duck loves peace and quiet! But when Seagull gets sick and can't perform, will Duck jump in to join the band?. Why would they even want him around?

*Marsha is Magnetic* by Beth Ferry

Marsha's birthday is coming up, and she needs to make some friends to invite to her party. She's a little stumped...but a scientist knows how to solve problems: the scientific method!

*Sealed with a Kiss* by Beth Ferry

What's a seal to do when she's new to the zoo? Make new friends, of course! But when the other animals aren't so friendly, a wise sparrow inspires them to surprise Seal with a special treat.

*Stick and Stone* by Beth Ferry\*

When Stick rescues Stone from a prickly situation with a Pinecone, a friendship is born. But when Stick gets stuck, can Stone return the favor?

*My Best Friend* by Julie Fogliano

What is a best friend, if not someone who laughs with you the whole entire day, especially when you pretend to be a pickle?

*Finding François* by Gus Gordon

Alice, a little piglet, loves life with her grandmother, making lists and crème brûlée, organizing buttons, and taking walks. Still, Alice wishes she had a sister--or even a brother. So, she does the sensible thing: She writes a note, tucks it into a bottle, and tosses it into the river, where it drifts out to sea, is captured by an octopus, picked up by a seagull, and arrives at a faraway lighthouse. There, François, a little dog, lives with his dad. François is everything Alice could wish for in a friend, and soon the seas are busy with their bottled correspondence. But when a big change comes, and Alice can't bring herself to write François more letters, will the simple comforts of time, love, and friendship restore the light to Alice's life?

*Bear's Scare* by Jacob Grant\*

Bear likes to keep his house clean and tidy. In fact, the only thing Bear loves more than cleaning is taking care of his small stuffed friend, Ursa. Then Bear sees a sticky spiderweb . . . and where there's a web there is certainly a spider! The

messy guest must be found, but what Bear and Ursa finally discover might just be an unlikely friend.

*Cyril and Pat* by Emily Gravett

Cyril is a squirrel. Pat is a rat. They have a lot of adventures and fun together. But no one else thinks they should be friends.

*Itty-Bitty Kitty-Corn* by Shannon Hale

Kitty thinks she might be a unicorn. She feels so perfectly unicorn-y! “Neigh!” says Kitty. But when Unicorn clop clop clops over, sweeping his magnificent tail and neighing a mighty neigh, Kitty feels no bigger than a ball of lint. Can this unlikely pair embrace who they are, and truly see one another?

*Bikes for Sale* by Carter Higgins

Maurice rides his bike to his shop every day. Lotta rides her bike to collect sticks every day. Both go about their separate routines, unaware of the friendship that awaits them just a few blocks away. But what happens when a branch and a lemon peel get in the way?

*Elmore and Pinky* by Holly Hobbie

Elmore the porcupine feels warm and comfortable in his neighborhood, and has many friends. But lately he has been feeling that he is missing someone, someone who will always be there -- a best friend. His uncle assures him that those kinds of friendships just happen over time, but determined Elmore goes out in search of one anyway. Then Elmore meets Pinky, a skunk who has a similar problem. As the two commiserate and spend time together, they accept each other's shortcomings and develop what each of them wants most: a real friendship with a best friend.

*Hudson and Tallulah Take Sides* by Anna Kang

Hudson and Tallulah may be neighbors, but the fence between their yards isn't the only thing that divides them. They can't see eye to eye on anything. One day they venture out, and after nonstop disagreement, they realize something surprising: they don't always have to agree to be on each other's side.

*We are (not) Friends* by Anna Kang\*

Two fuzzy friends are having a fun playdate when a new pal hops in. As the day continues, each friend feels left out at times. It isn't so easy to figure out how to act when everything seems to change.

*It Will Be Ok* by Lisa Katzenberger

Giraffe and Zebra meet every day under their favorite tree to walk to the watering hole. But today, Giraffe isn't there! Where could he be? Zebra spots him hiding in the tree; Giraffe has seen a spider and is scared silly. Zebra patiently talks to

Giraffe and does the very best thing: supports Giraffe for as long as Giraffe needs it.

*How I Learned to Fall Out of Trees* by Vincent Kirsch

Roger and Adelia are the very best of friends. They've spent many springtimes collecting birds' nests, autumns jumping into piles of colorful leaves, and winters building snowmen. When the time comes for Adelia to move away, the two friends must say good-bye. But Adelia has one parting gift for Roger: She will teach him, once and for all, how to climb a tree.

*The Bear and the Piano* by David Litchfield\*

One day, a bear cub finds something strange and wonderful in the forest. When he touches the keys, they make a horrible noise. Yet he is drawn back again and again. Eventually, he learns to play beautiful sounds, delighting his woodland friends. Then the bear is invited to share his sounds with new friends in the city. He longs to explore the world beyond his home, and to play bigger and better than before. But he knows that if he leaves, the other bears will be very sad.

*Eunice and Kate* by Mariano Llanos

The girls live with their moms next door to each other in the heart of the city and have a lot in common—even though they have different dreams for the future: Kate wants to be an astronaut and Eunice wants to be a ballet dancer. But when they draw portraits of each other in art class, things get mixed up. Eunice draws Kate as a ballet dancer and Kate draws Eunice as an astronaut, and they both get more than a little annoyed. Can their friendship survive? With a little help from their moms, the girls come to learn the value of respecting each other's different dreams.

*Strictly No Elephants* by Lisa Mantchev

Today is Pet Club day. There will be cats and dogs and fish, but strictly no elephants are allowed. The Pet Club doesn't understand that pets come in all shapes and sizes, just like friends. Now it is time for a boy and his tiny pet elephant to show them what it means to be a true friend.

*The Invisible Bear* by Cecile Metzger

A bear sits in his quiet, colorless home in a forgotten place. He feels invisible; no one comes to see him, and he spends his days alone. Then someone moves in next door. Madame Odette is sound and sunshine, and at first, the bear isn't sure about this colorful new neighbor. But through an act of kindness, the bear and the Madame Odette meet, and as time goes by, they become friends. And in the end, they are both forever changed by the gifts they bring each other.

*Can Cat and Bird Be Friends?* by Coll Muir

Cats and birds can't be friends! They have absolutely nothing in common. After all, cats are supposed to eat birds, not play with them! But there's something special about this prey-and-predator pair...and they may just find that it's our differences that bring us closer together.

*A Friend Like You* by Frank Murphy

There's nothing in the world like a wonderful friend. Friends are there to laugh with you and ready with a hug when you need one. There are forever friends and brand new friends. Friends for adventures and friends for cozy days indoors. Friends who are just like you and friends who are nothing like you at all.

*Sharky McShark* by Alison Murray

Sharky McShark is the meanest, most fearsome creature in the ocean. When she's around, the clownfish clear out, the flatfish flee, and even the rocks get out of her way. As the biggest bully in the sea, Sharky doesn't think she needs friends. But then one day—with a plink! plank! plonk!—a tiny crab tumbles into her world and proves that everyone, even the scariest underwater bully, needs a friend.

*Words to Make a Friend* by Donna Jo Napoli

When a young Japanese girl moves into her new house, she is happy to see a girl her age playing in the snow just outside her window. The only problem is the Japanese girl doesn't speak English and the American girl doesn't speak Japanese. How will these two girls have any fun at all? As it turns out, it's not that hard when both girls are looking for a friend! What starts with a simple "hello" and "konnichiwa" becomes a day filled with fun in the snow. Each girl's love of play, snow, and making a new friend transcends the need to speak the same language, and the girls find they have all they need to build a snow creature.

*Out of Nowhere* by Chris Naylor-Ballesteros

Beetle and Caterpillar are best friends. Every day, they sit together on a big rock, sharing a picnic and looking out over the forest. But one day, Caterpillar goes missing and Beetle cannot find her. Beetle sets out on a long journey through the forest, but Caterpillar is nowhere to be seen. Beetle's just about to give up when a friendly (and rather familiar) butterfly appears out of nowhere. Can it be Beetle's friend? She may look different, but the love they feel for one another is the same as ever.

*Goat's Coat* by Tom Percival

Alfonzo couldn't be happier. He just got an amazing new coat, and he feels like a million dollars. But when he discovers some creatures in need of help, will Alfonzo be able to give up his treasured possession to save the day?

*I'm Sticking with You* by Smriti Prasad-Halls

Bear and Squirrel are best friends. Wherever Squirrel goes, Bear follows. Bear vows to stick with Squirrel whether he's grumpy, or silly, or mad—which is put to the test when Bear sinks Squirrel's canoe. And catapults him from the seesaw. And breaks his favorite mug. Finally, Squirrel has had enough. He tells Bear he needs his space—only to realize he has much more fun with his best friend around.

*Turtle and Tortoise are NOT Friends* by Mike Reiss

Ever since they were little hatchlings, Turtle and Tortoise decided that they'd forever be separated due to their different shells. As years and years go by, the two reptiles stay on opposite side of the pen and embark on their own adventures, while holding an everlasting grudge. Until one day, Turtle and Tortoise get into a bit of pickle and need each other's help!

*Gnu and Shrew* by Danny Schnitzlein

When Gnu says that there's a cave filled with diamonds across the river, Shrew is intrigued. But Gnu seems to be all talk, fantasizing about riches yet dismissing all of Shrew's suggestions. As Gnu dreams his days away, tossing out one big idea after another, Shrew spends his nights trying to make those dreams a reality. Will Gnu's big ideas ever be able to mesh with Shrew's hard work to make something remarkable happen?

*Felipe and Claudette* by Mark Teague

Each adoption day, all of the pets at Mrs. Barrett's adoption shelter are sure to look their best. And each adoption day, all of the pets are adopted, except for two -- Felipe and Claudette. Felipe is always grumbling. He is sure they are not being adopted because of Claudette. Claudette is messy and noisy and always has food on her nose and mud on her fur. But then, one of the two friends is adopted and taken to a new home. When they are apart, Felipe is no longer quite so talkative. And Claudette doesn't bark or chew or play in circles. Could Felipe and Claudette actually miss each other?

*Brave Enough for Two* by Jonathan D. Voss\*

Olive is a little girl who likes the types of adventures that exist in books. Her best friend Hoot, a stuffed-animal owl, prefers the ones that take place in the real world. Today, Hoot gets to pick the adventures. At first, Olive isn't sure if she's brave enough for the activities Hoot has picked: flying a makeshift hot-air balloon and navigating raging rivers. But when her dearest friend gets hurt, Olive discovers that she's not only brave, she's brave enough for two.

*The Big Hug* by Megan Walker

On opposite sides of a quiet street lived two inseparable friends. From morning to evening, they played. So it was a shock when, one day, they had to stop and go inside. Between them now was only space. Suddenly, outside was scary and felt

very large. Their parents were full of whispers and frowns and the worry inside felt heavy. Where can you put friendship when friends are apart? Slowly, they learned. They found that, across the street and through windows, they could give each other a hug. They discovered that a smile is a hug. A wave is a hug. And funny faces, a phone call, a song. They discovered that when you're apart a friendship doesn't leave. With time and effort it will grow and grow, until it is big, bigger than all fears.

### *Introducing Teddy* by Jessica Walton

Errol and his teddy, Thomas, are best friends who do everything together. Whether it's riding a bike, playing in the tree house, having a tea party, or all of the above, every day holds something fun to do. One sunny day, Errol finds that Thomas is sad, even when they are playing in their favorite ways. Errol can't figure out why, until Thomas finally tells Errol what the teddy has been afraid to say: "In my heart, I've always known that I'm a girl teddy, not a boy teddy. I wish my name was Tilly, not Thomas." And Errol says, "I don't care if you're a girl teddy or a boy teddy! What matters is that you are my friend."

### *Sometimes a Wall* by Dianne White

An afternoon in the playground introduces different kinds of walls: a brick wall to draw on with chalk, a water wall, and a climbing wall. What follows is a playful yet profound exploration of the many ways walls can divide us or bring us together. When one child is excluded from a game, another builds a castle to leave him out. When the builder declares the castle MINE, other kids feel alienated—but the builder becomes lonely, too, when the others have fun without him. The book ends with the optimism of a new start: friendship, forgiveness, and imagination give the wall new meaning.

### *Hooray for Amanda & Her Alligator!* by Mo Willems

Having a stuffed alligator for a best friend can be surprising. Sometimes Amanda surprises her alligator with books. Sometimes Alligator surprises Amanda by eating them. But what happens when Amanda brings home a special—and not entirely welcome—surprise? The result might be unexpected indeed.

### Welcoming Everyone

#### *Avocado Asks: What Am I?* by Momoke Abe

Avocado is feeling just fine in the produce section at the supermarket until a young customer asks a difficult question: Is an avocado a fruit or a vegetable? Avocado doesn't know the answer either, and the question won't seem to go away! Soon, avocado is in the midst of a full-on identity crisis.

### *Neither* by Airlie Anderson

In the Land of This and That, there are only two kinds: blue bunnies and yellow birds. But one day a funny green egg hatches, and a little creature that's not quite a bird and not quite a bunny pops out. It's neither! Neither tries hard to fit in, but its bird legs aren't good for jumping like the other bunnies, and its fluffy tail isn't good for flapping like the other birds. It sets out to find a new home and discovers a very different place, one with endless colors and shapes and creatures of all kinds. But when a blue bunny and a yellow bird with some hidden differences of their own arrive, it's up to Neither to decide if they are welcome in the Land of All.

*Ways to Welcome* by Linda Ashman

When everyone knows they're welcome, the world is a better place--and you might just make a new friend.

*Perfect Pigeons* by Katherine Battersby

A colorful flock of pigeons pride themselves on their perfect unity. All except one: a bespectacled pigeon who is happiest doing its own thing. While the flock all looks the same, this pigeon enjoys wearing cowboy boots. While the flock flies in perfect formation, this pigeon soars like a superhero. When the flock finally confronts their contrary friend, they learn a thing or two about true perfection—and that we don't all have to be the same to belong together.

*The Buddy Bench* by Patty Brozo

Having seen what being left out is like, children become agents of change, convincing their teacher to let them build a buddy bench. Introduced from Germany in 2014, the concept is simple: When a child sits on the bench, it's a signal to other kids to ask him or her to play.

*Oddbird* by Derek Desierto

It's SO hot outside. All the fancy birds are gathered around the water, wishing they could cool off. But they don't want to get wet and ruin their fine feathers. Oddbird isn't worried about his feathers; he wants to go for a refreshing dip. But he doesn't fit in. He's not fancy, or colorful. He's just...different. The other birds don't want him around. How can he join them?

*They're So Flamboyant* by Michael Genhart

Each band of birds—a gaggle of geese, a dole of doves, a charm of finches, a brood of chickens, a scream of swifts, and an unkindness of ravens—all have their feathers ruffled and express their apprehension about the new and different arrivals. Bright pink colors, long legs, how dare they! Even a watch of nightingales patrols after dark. When the band of jays decides it is time to settle down the neighborhood, the pride of peacocks takes the lead, with support from a waddle of penguins, a venue of vultures, a mob of emus, and a gulp of cormorants. Finally, they all land at the flamingos' welcome party only to realize that they had all

been birdbrained. Their new neighbors are actually quite charming, and not so scary and different after all.

*Jacob's School Play: Starring He, She, and They* by Sarah and Ian Hoffman\*

As Mrs. Reeves class plans for their school show, *Life on the Farm*, all of the students, including Jacob, find themselves unexpectedly trying to understand Ari's identity as they. Ms. Reeves helps Jacob through his confusion by saying, "From the outside, we can't see who anybody is on the inside. So we have to trust them when they tell us." After the show premieres and is a hit with family and friends, Jacob comes to full realization of what he, she, and they means and embraces Ari as who they are and the whole class reaches a new level of identity comprehension.

*My Shape is Sam* by Amanda Jackson

In a world where everybody is a shape and every shape has a specific job, Sam is a square who longs for softer corners, rounder edges, and the ability to roll like a circle. But everyone knows that squares don't roll, they stack. At least that's what everyone thinks until the day Sam takes a tumble and discovers something wonderful. He doesn't have to be what others want or expect him to be.

*All Are Welcome* by Alexandra Penfold

Discover a school where all young children have a place, have a space, and are loved and appreciated. Readers will follow a group of children through a day in their school, where everyone is welcomed with open arms. A school where students from all backgrounds learn from and celebrate each other's traditions. A school that shows the world as we will make it to be.

*A Church for All* by Gayle Pitman

On Sunday morning, we gather together. We are every color. Every age. Rich and poor. Our church is open, affirming, and accepting. We believe in love instead of hate. There's room for everyone! This book celebrates a spiritual community that embraces all people—no matter their age, race, class, gender identity, or sexual orientation—in love and faith.

*One of These Things is Not Like the Others* by Barney Saltzberg

One of these is not like that other--and that's great! This gently subversive picture book points out-- and celebrates!-- the differences between subjects.