

The  
Early Years Count  
**Literacy**  
Connection



## I am a Rainbow

Written by Dolly Parton and  
illustrated by  
Heather Sheffield

*Infant/Toddler edition*

### Overview of Book

Emotions and colors are paired with a poem to help young children begin to identify and describe their feelings.

Genre: non-fiction

\*In HighScope classrooms time-out is not used as an option for disciplining children. While families may use this technique at home, there are other effective strategies used in classrooms like conflict resolution, along with proactive strategies like consistent daily routines, partnering in play and engaging in authentic conversations with children.

### Vocabulary

Books are a rich source of words new to children. Here are some words from *I am a Rainbow* to introduce in your room:

dandy  
jealous  
courage  
filter

Each time you read the book, highlight 2 or 3 words.

Use age-appropriate definitions and/or refer to the illustrations to help children understand each word's meaning.

Use the new words throughout the day, reminding children, "That's a word from our story!"

### Connecting with HighScope Curriculum

#### COR Advantage 1.5

Social and Emotional  
Development

Item D

(Emotions)

Item F

(Building relationships with  
other children)

Item H

(Conflict resolution)

Language, Literacy  
and Communication

Item L

(Speaking)

### Reading Tips

Read this book slowly and offer opportunities on each page for group discussion. Ask questions like, "Have you ever felt this way? What did you do?" or, "What makes you feel (jealous, courageous, joyful...)?" Ask the children to help create a more complete list of feelings and emotions. Label and write down how the children define or explain them. Ask, "What color best describes this one?" Add a color swatch to the list.

Three readings are recommended to familiarize children with the story. During each reading the adult can introduce new vocabulary words, pose open-ended questions, and engage children in activities that make the story "come alive."

### **Throughout the Routine**

Refer to the book throughout the day and use new vocabulary words in meaningful ways. Active engagement with the story helps the content come alive.

Develop a feelings chart with the children during **Greeting Time**.

Use the book as a resource at **Group Time** as children make feelings pictures with a range of media.

Provide puppets for children to act out feelings at **Choice Time**.

Ask children how they might move to reflect different emotions at **Group Time**.

### **Around the Room**

Highlight the book's content and build on the children's excitement in a variety of locations.

Place the feelings chart the children developed in the **Quiet or Cozy area**.

Place prisms in the **Toy Area** for children to explore colors and light.

Have paints of the colors in the story at the **Art Area**.

Take a look at the books in your **Book Area** to ensure there are a range of books about emotions.

### **Open-ended Questions**

Enhance active engagement and early critical thinking skills by asking open-ended questions. These "wondering aloud" questions support children's developing focus and attention as they encourage young children's capacity to make connections and see possibilities.

Here are some questions you might ask for *I am a Rainbow*:

What other colors could be a feeling?

What have you done to give yourself a feeling of courage?

What do you do when you feel \_\_\_\_\_?

*For more information on how to use books and stories with children to enhance your curriculum, contact **The Family Connection:***

website—  
[www.famconn.org](http://www.famconn.org)

Facebook—  
@famconnsjc

phone—  
574-237-9740

### **@ Home**

Since many children in our county will have this book at home, use it to further the home-school connection. In your daily contact—in person or by text, email or other notes home—encourage families to share *I am a Rainbow* with their children. Here's a sample message you can send:

While at school we are reading *I am a Rainbow* and the children have been talking about feelings. Continue this conversation at home with your child, using the book as a resource. This is a difficult but important topic. The more ways your child can define and explain their feelings, the better. Ask, "How did that make you feel?" when your child shares a story or relates an incident. Positive and difficult feelings can be talked about and made clearer. It is natural for all of us to have a range of emotions and some are very complicated (jealousy and loneliness for example). Gentle and authentic conversations about these and others will increase your child's "emotion vocabulary".