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Please enjoy this complimentary excerpt from More Ramped-Up Read Alouds.

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Make Space for Yourself

Book Title: *BIG* (Harrison, 2023)

About the Book: What does it mean when we say to a toddler, “What a big girl you are!”? How does the meaning of the word *big* change as girls grow older? Vashti Harrison explores these questions through the eyes of a child who finds enough strength and self-love to stand up for herself. *BIG* was the 2024 winner of the Caldecott Medal and a Coretta Scott King Award Author and Illustrator Honor book.

To find a book like this one, look for the following:

- Characters who embrace individuality
- Themes of self-acceptance



Learning Targets:

- I notice and track the words, actions, and feelings of characters.
- I pay attention to my own words, actions, and feelings.
- I talk, write, or draw about how words and actions impact my feelings and the feelings of others.



Comprehension Conversation

Before Reading

Notice the Cover Illustration

- What stands out when you first look at this book cover? [Discuss why they think Vashti Harrison made the title *BIG* stand out.] Vashti Harrison created the illustrations using digital tools and chalk pastel. Notice the colors she chose to use in her pictures.
- Let’s peek at the back cover. Tell a friend something you learned about the girl. [She likes ballet.] [If you are able to reveal the case cover under the book jacket, discuss the words that appear there. Also, notice the phrase “I Love You” hidden among the scribbles on the endpapers.]

Set a Purpose: The title of this book, *BIG*, is a word that we use a lot like when we say things like, “It’s no big deal!” or “Today’s your big day!” Words can have different shades of meaning or make us feel differently depending on the situation. Keep that in mind as we read this story together.

During Reading

- *She learned her ABCs and 123s* page: Look at the girl’s face. Can you infer how she’s feeling? When the adults say, “What a big girl you are!” what do you think they mean?
- *until it wasn’t* page: Tell a friend about what you see happening on these two pages. How is the meaning of the word *big* changing?
- *The words stung and were hard to shake off* page: How does this page make you feel? Explain what you’ve learned so far about the power of words.

- *and started to see things more clearly* page: Notice the words in her sea of tears. Which word is she picking up? Can you figure out what the author means by “she started to see things more clearly”?
- *These are yours* page: Why do you think she’s giving some words back and keeping others? What has she discovered about herself?

After Reading

- What did you learn about the shades of meaning of the words we say to one another? How might you use what you learned when talking to your friends or to family members/caregivers?
- Did you notice that the girl didn’t have a name? Why do you suppose Vashti Harrison chose not to name her?



Extend the Experience

- In the end, the girl makes space for herself and chooses adjectives like “smart, funny, and kind” to describe herself. Make a list of adjectives that you would use to describe yourself. Draw a self-portrait and write those adjectives around your picture. [If needed, co-create an Alphabet of Adjectives Chart to support your writers.]
- If you hear someone using words in a hurtful way, what can you do?

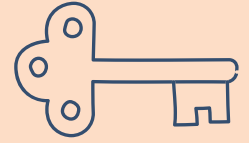
Similar Titles

Baller Ina (Casal, 2023)

About the Book: Liz Casal’s debut picture book features Ina, who loves basketball as much as she enjoys ballet. The rhyming text follows Ina from the ballet studio to the basketball court, where she encounters a player who questions her skills. Ina confidently replies, “Wait until you see me fly.”

Wallflowers (Joy, 2023)

About the Book: Written for all children who prefer to quietly watch and listen but still want to be seen, heard, and celebrated.



Key Vocabulary and Kid-Friendly Definitions:

- **advice:** ideas someone shares to help you solve problems
- **exposed:** feeling like everyone can see you without any protection
- **judged:** when people have opinions about you and/or your actions



Upper-Elementary Extension:

The word *big* took on nuanced meanings. Extend the idea of nuanced meanings by exploring words with multiple meanings. Have pairs of students illustrate the multiple meanings of words using the *Multiple Meaning Word Cards Printable*. [Located on the companion website (resources.corwin.com/more-rampedup-readalouds).]

An Alphabet of Adjectives			
A athletic awesome artful amazing	B Bumpy bright brave beautiful	C colorful creative clever charming	D dazzling delicious deephubble delightful
E energetic easygoing enthusiastic enchanted	F fast Funny fluffy friendly fantastic	G gigantic grateful greasy grateful generous	H hard, happy high humorous helpful
I interesting inventive intense incredible	J Jumpy jolly juicy joyful	K kind hearted knowledgeable kooky kind	L loud lucky lovely loving
M messy magical merry	N nice neat noisy	O outstanding outgoing original	P patient playful polite
Q quirky quiet quick quaint	R rough respectful reliable responsible	S smart slim soft sweet	T talented tall talented thoughtful
U unusual useful ultimate unbelievable	V valiant valuable vast versatile	W witty warmhearted wondering wonderful	XYZ young yummy youthful zippy

Alphabet of Adjectives Chart

Multiple Meaning Words

Teacher Directions: Print word cards. Give one card to each pair of students. Invite them to work together to draw the different meanings of the word.

bark

bat

bowl

rock

Multiple Meaning Word Cards Printable