

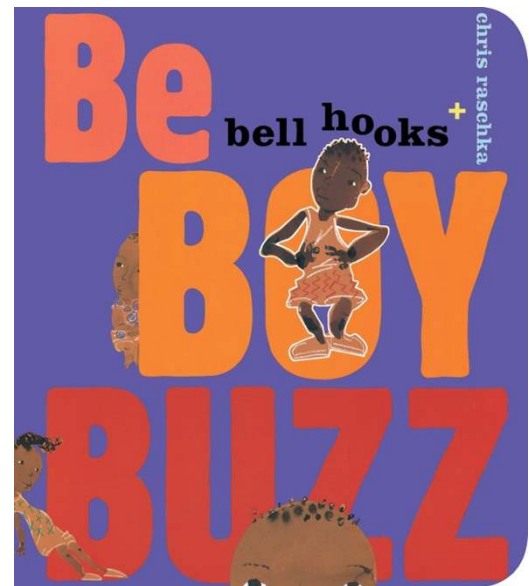


A discussion guide provided by MERGE for Equality

Be BOY BUZZ

By bell hooks

Illustrated by Chris Raschka



Book Summary:

Famed author bell hooks brings us a tight, exuberant story that captures the essence and energy of what it means to be a black boy.

Why has MERGE selected this book?

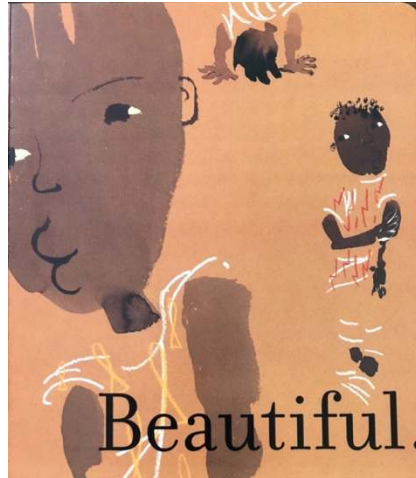
MERGE selected *Be BOY BUZZ* at a time when racially biased media portrayal, public messaging and police brutality toward black boys and men have rightfully raised public consciousness about racism. Our book selection committee loved the way the narrative of *Be BOY BUZZ* simply celebrates the joy and beauty of black boys, reinforcing the core MERGE belief that all boys are born loving, caring and sensitive.

Before reading you may wish to develop background knowledge and anticipation by asking questions such as:

- What are the different feelings you have?
- How do you express those feelings?
- Do you think all children express feelings the same way?
- How might other children express their feelings?

Invite children to be active participants in making meaning of what they see and hear. This helps children think critically about the book. While you are reading the story, as questions such as:

- What do you think the title means?
- Who do you think the book may be about? What makes you think that?
- Throughout the book ask, what do you see happening in this picture? Tell me how the picture says that.



After reading you can help children communicate what they have learned by asking the following questions. Ask them how the words and pictures communicate ideas to them. This assists them in thinking critically about what they are seeing and hearing.

- What ideas about boys' feelings and actions are presented in this story? How do words and pictures communicate these ideas?
- Do boys you know show similar feelings and actions? What are some examples?
- How many times does the author use the word "all" in this story? What message do you think the author is communicating by using the word "all" so many times?
- What do you think the author means with her last words, "in love with being a boy"?
- How might this story help your friends and family reconsider ideas about how people should behave based on whether others see them as a boy or a girl (gender norms)

About the author: bell hooks is a cultural critic, feminist theorist, and writer. Celebrated as one of our nation's leading public intellectuals by *The Atlantic Monthly*, as well as one of *Utne Reader's* 100 Visionaries Who Could Change Your Life, she is a charismatic speaker who divides her time among teaching, writing, and lecturing around the world.

About the illustrator: Chris Raschka is a two-time Caldecott Medal Winner and is the recipient of numerous awards and honors for his illustrations. He has been hailed by *Publishers Weekly* as one of the most original illustrators at work today, and continues to create stories and art that appeals to readers of all ages.

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