



Hair Love
written by Matthew A. Cherry
illustrated by Vashti Harrison



Reading and Activity Guide

BEFORE READING

+ Ask *How did you do your hair this morning?* Invite them to look around the room to notice the different colors or lengths of people's hair. Express how each person's hair is beautiful in its own way, highlighting a few students with different hair, or complimenting each child's hair.

DURING READING

+ In the story Zuri's dad was helping her with her hair. *What is something you like help with?*
+ *What did they do to make Zuri's hair SPECIAL?* Ask children which style they liked best. Ask kids to share about a time that someone they love helped make them feel fancy or special - did they feel like a superhero? *What do you think is so important to Zuri about that day? **

AFTER READING

+ *When Zuri's dad did not get her hair right the first time, how did he react? How did Zuri react?* Discuss with children how they can work together with family to get ready for the day.
+ *What is something special about your friends? What is something special about you?* Remind kids how everyone's hair was different. Ask kids to imagine all people with the same hair - short like so-and so's, or blonde like so-and-so's, wavy like this person's, or curly like Zuri's. *What would that look like? 1. It would look kind of silly! And 2. It would look kind of boring! God is the Master Artist and has created us all with different features - and He looks at us with love in His eyes and a big smile on His face and declares, "You are very good." (Gen. 1:31) So, as we notice our special features (hair, noses, eyes, etc.) that make us unique, we can remember our Master Artist and creative God - who made us all different - so we can each add our own special beauty to the world. We can love our hair just the way God made it, and appreciate the beauty of others' hair, just as God designed them!*

Springboard Activities:

Activity #1: Your Unique Self - In our reflection of loving what makes us unique whether it is our hair, skin, smile, laugh, etc. God loves us dearly. He made us how we are and wants us to love and take care of these gifts. Have children create their own self-portrait highlighting something they love about the way God made them. Certainly they can use markers or crayons to draw, but try to include items with different textures as well such as cotton balls, yarn, varying fabrics like silk, fleece, sequins, etc. *What makes you unique? How did you show that in your picture?* If you are working with multiple children, ask them to talk about the differences in the pictures. *What do you like in someone else's picture?* Emphasize how students can love the things that make them special, and at the same time, celebrate the things that make others special and beautiful, too!

Activity #2: Your Unique Family - In the book, Zuri's dad took care of her and helped her feel special before seeing her mom. *Who are some of the people who take care of you? What do they do with you that makes you feel special?* Ask them to pick one of those people to thank. Children can write a thank you note to acknowledge what the person does to care for them or draw a picture of an activity they do together.

*For a deeper conversation, watch the short film that this book is based on. It has an intense ending that may overwhelm some children, but deals beautifully with how illness brings about change in a family. *Even though Zuri's mom was sick, they still cared for each other and made each other feel special just by being together.*

