



## *The Barefoot Book of Children* Guide for Grown-Ups

*The Barefoot Book of Children* is a meaningful exploration of our similarities and differences, designed to engage its readers in conversation by raising a number of thought-provoking questions.

This is a unique book, perhaps unlike any you have ever read before with children. The purpose of this guide is to provide guidance for the conversations and storytime behaviors that could be sparked by a book with this many layers. We hope you find it useful!

### Tips for Reading Aloud

#### Let your child set the pace

There is no need to rush through the book or even finish reading it in one sitting. Perhaps a certain illustration is fascinating to your child. Allow your child to look at it and ask any questions until he or she is ready to move on.

Words to say:

*"I can see that you're very interested in this page. What are you thinking about it?"*

#### Pause to let your child answer the questions posed throughout the book

This is especially important the first few times you read it. It's okay if your child doesn't answer every question. You can even just pause to let them take in the questions and continue looking at the illustrations before moving on.

Words to say:

[Allow for a pause.] *"Should I keep reading?"*

#### Respond to questions throughout

Children may ask questions as you read. It's fine to pause your reading to respond. Again, there is no pressure to rush through the book or finish it in one sitting.

Words to say:

*"You are asking such interesting questions! I like having these conversations with you."*

#### Model acceptance

Your child will learn as much from your responses to the book as from the book itself. You might be surprised at some of the things you see in this book. One illustration that elicits many responses from adults, for instance, is the illustration of the children in Peru eating a traditional meal of guinea pig. While this may not be a food you would choose to eat, modeling a respectful attitude and open mind will help your child learn to respect the customs of others.

Words to say:

*"I'm learning a lot from this book. It's fun to learn about other people, isn't it?"*



### The Barefoot Book of Children

Written by Tessa Strickland  
and Kate DePalma

Illustrated by David Dean

AGES 3 – 10



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## Frequently Asked Questions

### What if I don't know the answer to a question my child asks?

**Admit when you don't know something.** There will probably be times when you don't know the answer to a question your child asks! This is a wonderful opportunity to demonstrate how to find information about a topic. Suggest looking for the answer together in another book or online.

### How do I handle it if my child inadvertently uses offensive or politically incorrect language when talking about the illustrations in the book?

**Gently correct misconceptions.** If your child expresses a stereotype or an incorrect idea about others, this is a great opportunity to present the correct information gently and factually. Research shows that children actually need this type of adult intervention in order to prevent them from forming stereotypes.

### What should I do if I'm not comfortable talking with my child about something in the book?

**Use your discretion.** We feel that the book shares information at a level that is appropriate for children ages 3 through 10. It's up to you to determine how much to expand on the information we've provided.

### How can I make adaptations if my child cannot respond verbally to the questions in this book?

Many of the questions in this book are designed to promote thought rather than an actual spoken response, so we encourage you to ask the questions in the book to all children. Children can respond to some of the more concrete questions by pointing to aspects of the rich, detailed illustrations, if they are able, or by communicating with you as you point to them.

### The endnotes seem like a lot to read. How do I handle that if I don't want to read them every time?

**Allow your child to pick a few sections each time.** The first few times you read the book, read all the endnotes if your child seems interested. In subsequent readings, just like you limit the number of bedtime stories, you can limit the number of endnotes you read by allowing your child to pick a few. You can always allow your child to look at the pictures or read the endnotes independently as well.

## Follow-Up Questions

Ask these questions to further stimulate children's thinking about the topics in the book. (Choose the questions that you think are at the right level for your child.)

- Why do you think people are sometimes not welcoming to people who are not like themselves?
- How would it make you feel if someone was unkind to you because of how you look, the religion you practice or the family you come from?
- What could you do if you overheard someone saying something unkind about someone else?
- Why is it helpful for society if its citizens learn about all kinds of people?

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