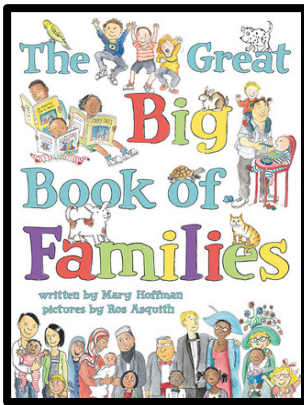


# The Great Big Book of Families

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## Elementary Activity and Discussion Guide

by the Oakland Unified School District,  
edited by the Oakland Public Education Fund



**OAKLAND UNIFIED  
SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
*Community Schools, Thriving Students*



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### BACKGROUND INFORMATION BEFORE READING “THE GREAT BIG BOOK OF FAMILIES”

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Reading and discussing *The Great Big Book of Families* introduces alternatives to families typically included in picture books. The discussion questions and activities below will help students increase their understanding about different families, including families with two moms and two dads.

**If you don’t have the answer to a question:** *That’s a good question, but I’m not sure of the answer. I will find out and get back to you.*

**If a question is not appropriate:** *We aren’t talking about that in class. Please ask an adult at home.*

Some students may feel excited to share information about their family and other students prefer to be more private. Students should decide for themselves what they would like to share.

### VOCABULARY WORDS:

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**ADOPTED FAMILY:** A family that includes at least one parent and one child who are not biologically related.

**FAMILY:** A group of two or more people who are related by birth or by choice who may or may not live together, but have a shared bond and commitment to one another.

**FOSTER CHILD:** A child who is temporarily cared for by a family who is not their birth or adopted parents.

### PART ONE: REVIEW CLASS EXPECTATIONS AND INTRODUCTION

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Ask the Class: What is a family? What do all families have in common?

## **PART TWO: PRE-READING REFLECTION AND INTRODUCTION**

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Show the class the cover of *The Great Big Book of Families* and ask the students to share prediction about the book.

Ask the students to look for families in the book that are similar to their own family.

## **PART THREE: READ *THE GREAT BIG BOOK OF FAMILIES***

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Discussion Questions:

1. On the first page of the book, the author describes a family that used to be the only type of family represented in most picture books. Why do you think that only one type of family was portrayed in books?
2. Why are current picture books more likely to include different types of families?
3. Are there any types of families that you wish were included in stories but aren't?
4. On the second page of the book, the author lists a few different family structures. Be explicit in defining the different types of families. Ask the students if they have any questions about the families described.
5. As you go through each section of the book, ask your students to think how the families are the same as their family.
6. What is important about your family that you didn't see in this story?

## **Part Four: Suggest that Students Write Their Own Family Story**

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Idea 1) Create a class *Great Big Book of Our Families*:

Idea 2) Individual Family Books

Idea 3) Extended Family Book

