

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

Created by SHELIA BURLOCK

Note to Educators:

This educator's guide for **MY CURLS BOUNCE BACK** is for use by parents, teachers, counselors, ministers and all adults working with children ages four to seven years old. The intent of this educator's guide is to give the educator reference, resources and structure in guiding the child through understanding the deeper concept of God-given individuality, self-image and representation, social awareness, appreciating differences, and interacting with their community.

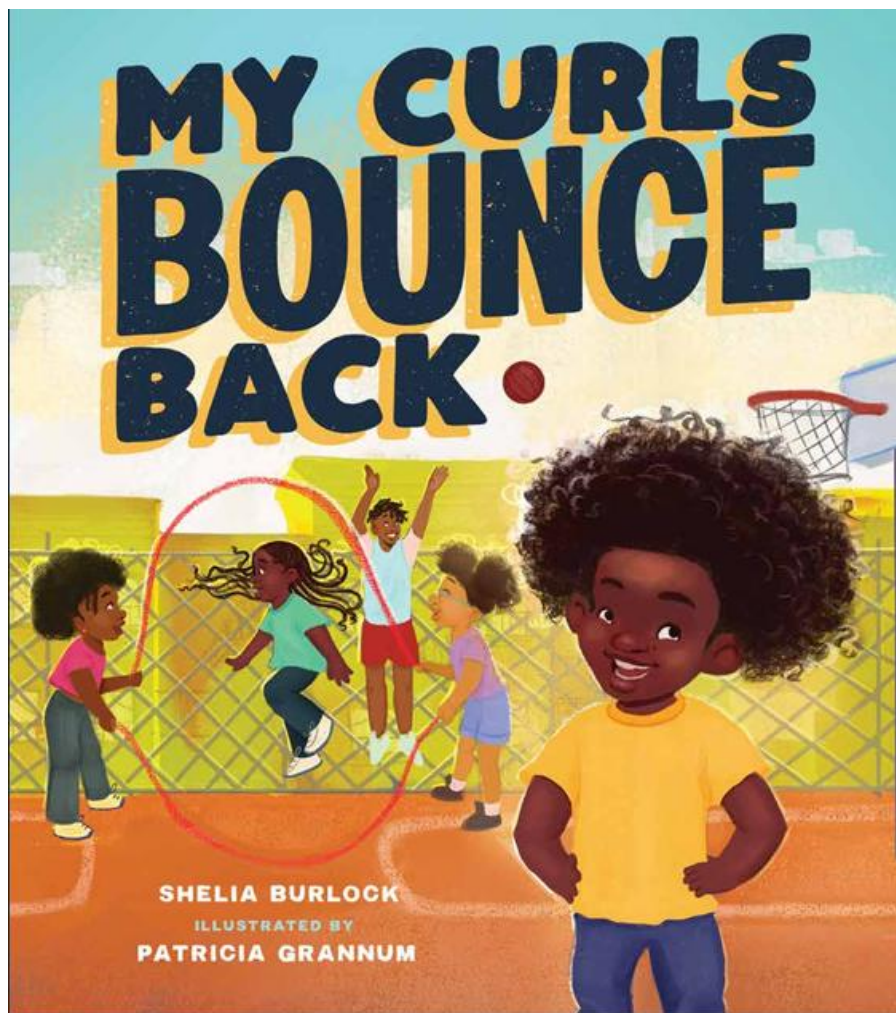
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What this Book is About

My Curls Bounce Back is a story about how much a little African American boy loves and accepts his God-given coily, gravity-defying, bouncy hair. He tells his story in the form of a prayer. At the park, while he plays basketball, and as he watches his big sister and friends jump rope, he begins to observe all the different ways his hair can move and be. He explains how much he loves his hair by comparing it to other bouncy, twirling, stretchy, spongy things he sees throughout his day. He sees representation of his bouncy hair in his day-to-day environment. He is filled with gratitude to God for making his curls bounce back and concludes with a thank-you prayer for his bouncy hair.



Shelia Burlock is a seasoned K-12 educator whose articles have been published in *Moody* and other magazines. She is a recipient of the Excellence in Educational Leadership Award from the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc., Beta Lambda Chapter. She and her husband reside in Indianapolis.



Patricia Grannum is an illustrator from Trinidad and Tobago. Her work is fueled by a passion for ensuring that children of color see themselves in the books they read. Her art reflects the cultural vibrancy of her Caribbean upbringing, with a focus on conveying a sense of wonder in the books she illustrates.



Hair Themes: Here are some themes we can focus on when we talk to our children about hair.

Purpose; Preparation; Protection; Potential.

Instruction for educator: Read the definition of each theme and the Bible verses that goes along with it.

Talk about each statement with your child.

HAIR THEMES	MEANING	SCRIPTURE REFERENCE	DISCUSS THE STATEMENTS WITH YOUR CHILD
Hair Purpose	Understanding and fully accepting who you are and that you are designed on purpose and with a purpose in the eyes of God.	Verses Psalm 139:14 Colossians 1:16	Be happy with how God made your hair because it was his idea, his good intention to create your hair.
Hair Preparation	Harmonizing your strengths and talents with the strengths and talents of others to enhance community and a sense of belonging.	Verses Hebrews 10:24-25	When you see other's hair and it may not curl or bounce like yours, know that God made lots of beautiful lines to people's hair. Some hair has straight lines, some wiggly lines, some twirling lines, some smooth lines and some thick and thin lines. Just remember that everyone is important and needed.
Hair Protection	Building a secure and safe space for individuality and healthy self-image.	Verse Psalm 23:5	No one needs to touch your hair or make you feel out of place because your hair does not move or look like theirs. It is okay to say, "Don't touch my hair!"
Hair Potential	Seeing your worthiness and ability to be a difference and make a difference in this world.	Verse Luke 18:16	Remember that you are created by God with worth and valued with love. You have a lot of worth and love to give to others wherever you go or whatever you do.



A Child's Hair Prayers

Instruction for educator: These are short prayers that you can pray for your child or help your child paraphrase in his/her own words. Write your own prayer on the lines below.

Gratitude Prayers

Dear God, thank you for my teeny-weeny Afro. It frames my high cheekbones like you frame the dark sky with the stars.

Amen

Dear God, thank you that I am your child.

I am wonderfully created by you. Every coil on my head is shaped by you and I am royalty.

Amen

Dear God, thank you for your unchanging love for me, for being my God and designing me by your hand. Thank you for the family you placed me with and the natural hair type you've put on my head.

Amen



Self-Esteem Prayers

Dear God,

I like how my tiny coils fly upwards from my scalp, and I like the beauty and wonder of how my hair grows up!

Amen

Dear God with my voice I shout hallelujah to you when I awake and look in the mirror because this very word "hallelujah" is how I express my praise to you and the satisfying truth that I am happy with myself and my hair.

Amen

Dear God,

Thank you for valuing me just as you made me with my natural Afro hair and all. You demonstrated how deeply you value me in the way you love me.

Amen

ACTIVITY PAGES

Action Words | Picture Words.

*Look at these ACTION WORDS and PICTURE WORDS from the book
MY CURLS BOUNCE BACK.*

Coil and twirl



Shrink and puff



Spring and stretch



Thick and Springy



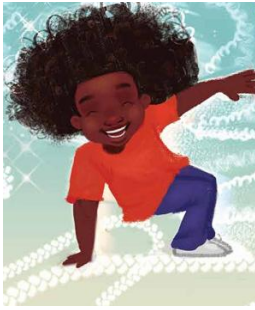


Write an action word in first column to describe your hair. In the second column draw a picture of the action word.

ACTION WORD	DRAW A PICTURE

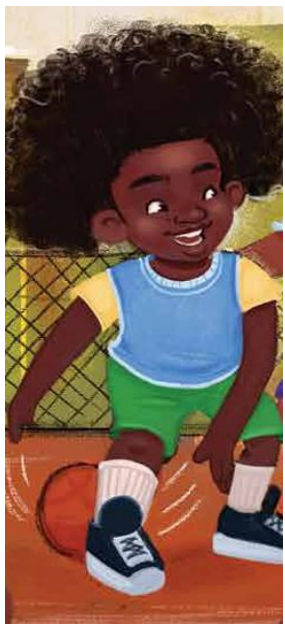
Mirror Drawing (“I See Me”) Coloring Page

Look at yourself in the mirror. Draw yourself and hair shape. Fill in with color.



Puzzle Maze

Help your friend reach the basket.



SUMMARY (Author's Note)

STAGES TO HAIR LOVE

There are stages to get to Hair Love. Moving from Hair Dislike to Hair Appeasement to Hair Discovery to Hair Appreciation to Hair Love takes time.

Hair Dislike is basically feeling ashamed of one's hair and having poor hair esteem. I was like this as a little girl. Even though in my household my mother's love and care for my hair was done with the good intentions of making my hair "pretty," which to my mother meant pressing with the hot comb to make my hair straight, I never felt that my hair was good enough. I was inundated by commercials and advertisements only showing white dolls with straight blonde hair, so quite naturally I wanted a white doll, and I also wanted my hair to look like the hair on my doll's head. Straight to me meant pretty and perfect with no "kitchen" (which meant the hairline at the base of my neck) to have to press.

Hair Appeasement is trying to wear your hair in styles that "fit" in with societal norms. It means since you don't like your hair, you want to appease others with how you wear your hair. This was me as a teen. I was always trying different styles after getting my hair pressed to please others around me. It was a challenge to be satisfied with my hair. I hated getting it wet on swim days during gym time, so I avoided those days a lot because this meant having to get my hair re-pressed after my "kitchen" turned back "nappy."

Hair Discovery is learning about your hair's unique texture, coil pattern, hair care process, and preferred hair care products as well as learning about natural Afro-textured hair history and hair spirituality. It wasn't until I became an adult and married with kids that I began to connect with discovering profound truths about my hair. I learned of the history of Black hair and how faith and hair impact not only hair esteem but hair care as well. As a result of discovering my hair potential I began to appreciate my hair.

Hair Appreciation is the awakening to understanding your hair as it naturally grows from your scalp. It is having a sincere satisfaction for not only how it grows but how it frames your face and shapes your image. My appreciation of my hair also influenced how I helped my own daughters and son find representation of themselves in books and media. Focusing on appreciation of my hair led to hair love because I was able to dispel all negative voices and images by acknowledging how God's plan to uniquely design my Afro-textured hair was enough to please me since it pleased him to create it.

Hair Love is when you reach the firm, unshakable conviction that you absolutely love your hair and see its miraculous value and therefore your care of it brings you joy.

It's taken me more than thirty years to reach this stage of Hair Love. Since I have been an adult there has been a resurgence of the Natural Hair Movement in online communities and social media. Also, the House of Representatives passed The CROWN Act (Create a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair) in 2022, which prohibits discrimination based on hair texture or style in workplaces and schools. Even still, in spite of the CROWN Act, which has been passed in 27 states at the time of writing this book, Black girls and boys still face disciplinary action or expulsion from school for wearing their natural hair. Black women are still pressured to straighten their hair in the workplace.

There is still more for all cultures to learn about Black hair, its care and history.

A way to build that knowledge is to change the narrative around natural hair care.



GUIDE CREATOR

Shelia Burlock is a seasoned K12 educator with a master's in education and bachelor's in child development. She has had articles published in Moody and other magazines. She is a recipient of the Excellence in Educational Leadership Award from the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc., Beta Lambda Chapter. She is also a member of Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators SCBWI Indiana. She and her husband reside in Indianapolis.