

# The Early Years Count **Literacy** Connection



## Just Like my Brother

Written and illustrated by  
Gianna Marino

*Infant/Toddler edition*

### Overview of Book

Little giraffe is playing a game of hide and seek with its older brother. On the search, the little giraffe describes different traits of its brother and is surprised to find out the other animals see those same qualities in the little giraffe. What do you see hidden in the African landscape of every page? Will brother be found?

Genre: Picture book

### Vocabulary

Books are a rich source of words new to children. Here are some words from *Just Like My Brother* to introduce in your room:

animal names	
number words	
tall	behind
brave	spots
howdy	definitely

Each time you read the book, highlight 2 or 3 words.

Use age-appropriate definitions and/or refer to the illustrations to help children understand each word's meaning.

Use the new words throughout the day, reminding children, "That's a word from our story!"

### Connecting with **HighScope Curriculum** COR Advantage 1.5

Language, Literacy  
and Communication  
Item L (*Speaking*)

Mathematics  
Item S (*Numbers and  
counting*)

Creative Arts  
Item AA (*Pretend play*)

Science and  
Technology Item BB  
(*Observing and  
classifying*)

Social Studies  
Item FF (*Knowledge of  
self and others*)

### Reading Tips

As you read the story, ask the children if they can see something that the little giraffe is not seeing. Allow lots of time before turning pages for the children to really examine each page. Ask, "I wonder why all the flamingoes flew away? What would make them be afraid?" At the end ask, "Why do you think the little giraffe wasn't scared of the leopard?"

Three readings are recommended to familiarize children with the story. During each reading the adult can introduce new vocabulary words, pose open-ended questions, and engage children in activities that make the story "come alive."

### **Throughout the Routine**

Refer to the book throughout the day and use new vocabulary words in meaningful ways. Active engagement with the story helps the content come alive.

Play hide and seek at **Outside Time**.

At **Small Group Time**, provide materials for the children to sort: spots/no spots for example.

Have the children choose an animal to be at **Large Group Time**. Ask children to act out the qualities that Little Giraffe used to describe brother, like fast and brave.

At **Transitions**, hop while counting to 10.

### **Around the Room**

Highlight the book's content and build on the children's excitement in a variety of locations.

Add animals from the story to **Toy Area**.

Find books that are about family and how children see themselves. Examples include *Are You My Mother?* by P.D. Eastman and *Maple* by Lori Nichols to add to the **Book Area**.

Post adult and baby animals pictures in the **House Area** for comparisons.

Hide a giraffe in different areas of the room and invite the children to seek him out.

### **Open-ended Questions**

Enhance active engagement and early critical thinking skills by asking open-ended questions. These "wondering aloud" questions support children's developing focus and attention as they encourage young children's capacity to make connections and see possibilities.

Here are some questions you might ask for *Just Like My Brother*:

How would you describe your brother/sister?

Which animal in the story would you want to be? Why?

Why do you think the leopard was sneaking up on the giraffe?

*For more information on how to use books and stories with children to enhance your curriculum, contact*  
***The Family Connection:***

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[www.famconn.org](http://www.famconn.org)

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### **@ Home**

Since many children in our county will have this book at home, use it to further the home-school connection. In your daily contact—in person or by text, email or other notes home—encourage families to share *Just Like My Brother* with their children. Here's a sample message you can send:

While reading *Just Like My Brother* to your child, feel free to replace "brother" with *sister* or *daddy*, or what makes the most sense to you and your child. Ask open-ended questions as you read like, "Why do you think the animals are hiding?" or, "Why does the giraffe think the elephants know everything?" The back and forth conversations you and your child have at these times will add to the joy of sharing the book together as well as offer a window into your child's thinking. Take a walk after reading to look for "wild animals," count to 10, and look for things with spots. Ask your child, "What makes you brave?" Share a story about when you were brave. Enjoy the conversations!