

New York State  
**BOOK NOOKS**



# Julián Is A Mermaid

Julián is a young boy who wants to participate in the Coney Island Mermaid Parade, as a mermaid. This book beautifully illustrates his transformation and the support he receives from his Nana.

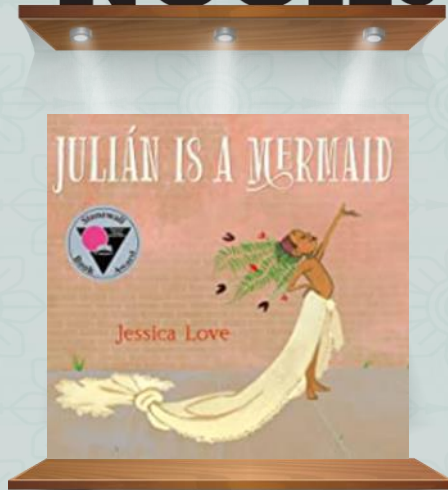
**Title:** Julián Is a Mermaid  
**Author:** Jessica Love  
**Illustrator:** Jessica Love  
**Publisher:** Walker Books, London  
**Date published:** 2019

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| <b>Pyramid Model Skill or concept(s)</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Builds nurturing and responsive relationships</li> <li>• Interacts with children to develop self-esteem</li> <li>• Shows sensitivity to individual children’s needs</li> <li>• Encourages autonomy</li> <li>• Develops friendship skills</li> </ul> |
| <b>Goals/Objectives:</b>                 | This book can create a springboard or platform to guide children through the concept of gender identity. Julián models how your assigned gender at birth does not have to dictate how you choose to express who you are, who you want to be or what you want to wear at any given time.      |
| <b>Emotional Vocabulary:</b>             | Excited, nervous, scared, proud, brave   |

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| <b>Story Time: (Show and Tell It)</b>                  |  |
| <b>Name of Activity:</b>                               | <b>Story Debrief</b>   |
| <b>Ideas of what to say or do:</b>                     | <p>In small groups, discuss how Julián dressed himself as a mermaid.</p> <p>Ask children how they think Julián felt when he showed his Nana his new outfit.</p> <p>Ask the children how they think he felt when his Nana brought him to the parade.</p> <p>Ask them how they think he felt while he was in the parade.</p> <p>Ask the children how they would feel if they were Julián.</p>  |
| <b>What Pyramid Model skill or concept is covered?</b> | Emotional vocabulary, self-expression  |
| <b>Name of Activity:</b>                               | Imagine What You Want to Be  |
| <b>Supplies needed:</b>                                | Shatterproof mirrors, crayons, paper & other art supplies, dress up clothes  |
| <b>Ideas of what to say or do:</b>                     | <p>After reading this book, discuss how Julián imagined himself as a mermaid and then dressed in various types of clothing to represent that idea.</p> <p>Ask the children what they imagine they would like to be. Talk with them about what that may look like and see if they can draw it on paper. Talk with them about their drawings and take dictation. For example, if Jakob draws himself as a fancy cat. Write next to it, “This is Jakob as a fancy cat”.</p> |

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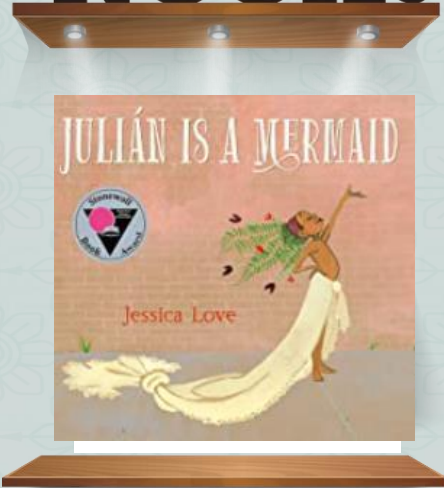
**Ideas of what to say or do. (cont.)** If you have dress up clothes available, have the children dress up as what they were drawing and then talk about it. Children enjoy looking at themselves in mirrors, try to provide them with the opportunity to see themselves in a full-length shatterproof mirror. Use this as an opportunity to model acceptance of how we express and present ourselves in the world.

### Practice It

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|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Name of Activity</b>            | Friendship Parade  |
| <b>Supplies needed:</b>            | Dress up clothes, dancing props, musical instruments, music, camera, paper, crayons  |
| <b>Ideas of what to say or do.</b> | <p>Tell the children they are going to plan a parade to celebrate who they are and the friendships in their care space. Talk about what it means to be a friend and how friends act with each other. Talk about how friends say nice things, give each other compliments and play together.</p> <p>Have the children create costumes, using your dress up clothes, and create items to go with their ideas. Plan to have music for them to march and dance to. Have children make or choose musical instruments or dancing materials such as scarves and ribbons for use during the parade. They can make signs, pictures or flags to wave. Have the children design a parade route. Will you be inside of your care space? Inside and outside of your care space? Do you have classrooms, offices or other accessible spaces you can visit?</p> <p>Do the parade with the children in their costumes with their props. Make it as festive as possible. Take pictures of them in the parade, and in their costumes with their props.</p> <p>After the parade, have the children draw pictures of their experiences and document what they have to say.</p> <p>Develop photographs from the parade, show them to the children and write down what they have to say about the pictures. Make sure to discuss how they felt during the parade and how they felt doing something like this with their friends. You can hang all the pictures up and/or create books for the children to view and read.</p> |

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### Practice It

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|--|---|
| <b>Name of Activity</b>                          | How to support children’s developing gender identity  |
| <b>Ideas of What to Say or Do</b>                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk with children about what pronouns they feel good about being referred to on a regular basis, such as “he, she or they”. You can say what pronouns that people should use when referring to you.</li> <li>• When playing with the children, model the use of all pronouns. For example, if you are rocking a baby doll, refer to the doll as they.</li> <li>• Listen to children and call them what they asked to be called. If one day, a child who has been referred to as a boy, asks you to call him a girl, do it. If the next day, she asks you to refer to him as a boy again, do it.</li> <li>• Talk with families about how to support children’s developing gender identity.</li> <li>• Have a variety of commonly considered male and female dress up clothes available for all children.</li> <li>• Provide children with books, toys, pictures/photographs and materials such as play figures and puzzles, that show people in non-gender stereotyping roles.</li> <li>• Invite people who are transgender into your care space.</li> </ul> |
| <b>What Pyramid skill or concept is covered?</b> | Self-confidence, identity of self   |

