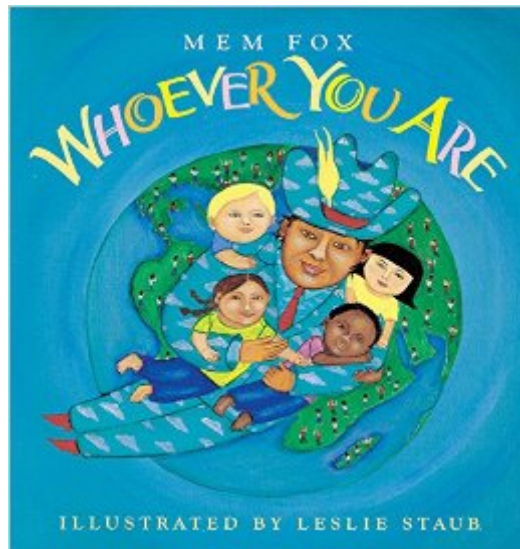


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# Whoever You Are (Reading Rainbow Books)



## Synopsis

“Little one, / whoever you are, / wherever you are, / there are little ones / just like you / all over the world.” So begins the Australian author Mem Fox’s joyful picture book *Whoever You Are*, a celebration of the world’s diverse cultures, both our similarities and differences. Leslie Straub’s innovative, colorful, folk art–style oil paintings of children from all corners of the globe are bordered with photographs of hand-carved, bejeweled frames—and they all reflect Fox’s message that no matter where we come from, within our hearts “Joys are the same, / and love is the same. / Pain is the same, / and blood is the same.” A gem!

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 280L (What’s this?)

Series: Reading Rainbow Books

Paperback: 32 pages

Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers; 1 edition (September 1, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0152060308

ISBN-13: 978-0152060305

Product Dimensions: 8 x 0.1 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (160 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #3,223 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #14 in [Books > Children’s Books > Early Learning > Poetry](#) #18 in [Books > Children’s Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World](#) #46 in [Books > Children’s Books > Literature & Fiction > Poetry](#)

Age Range: 4 - 7 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## Customer Reviews

I am a Lutheran church librarian and I am glad I bought this very satisfactory book for our church library. Its text stresses that children are the same the world over. They have the same feelings and needs, and have the same hopes and dreams. The illustrations are a nice change from the usual. Each page is surrounded by a gold picture frame in which faux jewels are embedded. The illustrations appear to be tempera or opaque watercolor, drawn in Persian style. The colors are very saturated. The book’s cover gives you an idea of what they look like. The message of this book is one of diversity--that even though children live in different parts of the world and may have different

nationalities, races, ethnicities, languages or faiths, they still have the same hopes, dreams and daily needs. This is a very important message for children to hear in today's world where there is so much suspicion of those we "perceive" to be different. The more children realize that kids are the same everywhere, the more tolerant they will be. Children pick up prejudice by the time they are three years of age, say researchers, so you have to nip it in the bud very early, and this book does that in a wonderful way.

As the home educator of children from toddler to pre-school, representing a wide range of cultures, this wonderful inclusive book is soothing and almost prayerful. I discovered it on a list of books recommended by Heifer.org, a non-profit organization bringing respectful solutions to many nations affected by poverty. The drawings by Leslie Staub, gently framed with "jewelled" borders, are universal. The text, by Mem Fox, reaches deep inside of us. Indeed, every child, every adult, has hearts that are "just the same" regardless of all the differences that separate us. It is hard to imagine anyone who can think war is the answer to anything, after reading this book. I heartily recommend it.

" Little one, whoever you are, wherever you are, there are little ones just like you all over the world." This very simple opening starts a paean to the universality of the human experience. As humans we experience sadness and joy, tears and laughter, and it is these common experiences that unite all people for "their words may be very different from yours. But inside, their hearts are just like yours." Staub's illustrations seem to underscore this message. Diverse people, lands, and languages are presented in a folk art style with surrealistic touches. Our guide through these pages is a man in a "cloud" suit who carries four children of different races as they view people all over the world. But what unifies the poem, beside the guide, is that each of the pictures is placed in a hand-carved frame with encased gems. It feels like we are looking at pictures of someone's family. That the human race is a family is also underscored with these framed pictures. This would be an excellent book for teaching tolerance and understanding of others.

After falling in love with TIME FOR BED, I thought for sure I'd enjoy WHOEVER YOU ARE, especially given the rave reviews here. Unfortunately, I had a very different reaction to the book than evidently everyone else who wrote a review here. The central theme is great (and I hope I can find more books espousing the same idea that are more fun to read), and the illustrations are very attractive, but the writing is less than stellar. First of all, it's extremely repetitive. You've got the same sentence on several pages in the beginning with only one word being different. Some repetition, like

in TIME FOR BED, is good, but to repeat entire sentences and only change one word is boring. Second of all, the writing is unimaginative (which is a similar complaint to "repetitive" but reflects a deeper problem with the book overall). "Joys are the same, and love is the same. Pain is the same, and blood is the same." Blah blah blah blah blah. Speaking of "blood," what is the deal with "...blood is the same"? Seems like an odd thing to say. Why not say something like "sorrows are the same"? I apologize in advance to all of the die-hard fans of this book who read my review and feel annoyed by it. I just felt like I should add my comments since I spend a lot of time looking at and buying books for my 14-month old son, I worked for several years as an editor, and I think my reaction may be shared by others who simply haven't added a review to the site. My suggestion to anyone considering this book for a baby/young toddler is to look at it in person before buying it.

This book is a big hit with my PRE-K class! I was pleasantly surprised at how responsive and attentive they were while I was reading this. They have memorized most of the book. They all loved it! An excellent resource for teaching about diversity and various cultures! I'd definitely recommend reading this book to/with ages four through maybe second grade.

What better way to begin teaching your child how to be a citizen of the world than by sharing this book with her? Though recommended for ages 4 - 8, it is my 17 month old's favorite book. The illustrations are colorful and enchanting, the text rhythmic and clear. The story is simple, yet profound: "love is the same, pain is the same, joy is the same, blood is the same..." "Whoever you are, whoever they are, all over the world."

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