

Book Reviews

Ada Twist, Scientist

by Andrea Beaty, illustrated by David Roberts, Abrams Books, 2016

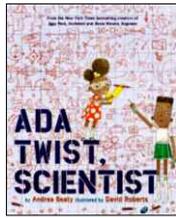
This picture book is about the power of curiosity in the hands of a child who is on a mission to use science to understand her world. Ada spends the first 3 years not speaking; her first word is “Why?” Ada will forever question everything around her.

Young scientist, Ada, is a character of color, and has a boundless imagination. She asks the essential questions like, “Why are there pointy things stuck to a rose?” My favorite question is, “Why don’t we call it a granddaughter clock?”

Inspired by English mathematician, Ada Lovelace, and Polish physicist, Marie Curie, *Ada Twist, Scientist* champions girl power and women scientists. The artwork by British illustrator David Roberts is dynamic and adds to the empowering narrative by showing there is nothing wrong with asking questions. I feel that this is a perfect book to encourage all kids to be curious.

This book is part of Beaty’s series which includes: *Rosie Revere, Engineer* and *Iggy Peck, Architect*

Karen Kosko, Cambridge MA



Classic Resources for Learning about Moral Development of Young Children

The formation of a moral character and a conscience begins at a young age. It has to do with social and emotional development and its part of peace education. Not much on moral development for young children has been done lately but a big body of work has been around for many years. Here are some authors and books that help us think about moral development of young children.

Start with Jean Piaget, of course, in his classic work, *The Moral Judgement of the Child* (The Free Press, 1965). He helped people think about how children think and act during games.

Parents and Peers in Social Development – *A Sullivan-Piaget Perspective* by James Youniss (The University of Chicago Press, 1986) helps show the importance of children’s friendships.

Lawrence Kohlberg helped develop stages of moral development. *Approach to Moral Education*, Power, Higgins, and Kohlberg, (1989) is helpful but done with older children and primarily boys.

Carol Gilligan wrote a lot about the gender disparity in the research when she came out with *In a Different Voice* (Harvard University Press, 1982). Her research shows that girls may be thinking differently than Kohlberg revealed in his work.

Jerome Kagen and Sharon Lamm talked more about young children in their moral development when they published the anthology *The Emergence of Morality in Young Children*, (1987).

With an eye particularly on young children William Damon did much work on development in *The Social World of the Child* (Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1979) and *The Moral Child: Nurturing Children’s Moral Natural Growth*. His later work became more conservative working with the Hoover Institute.

Relevant for classroom teachers is *Promoting Social and Moral Development of Young Children* by Patricia G. Ramsey with Carolyn Pope Edwards (Teachers College Press, 1986). Patricia G. Ramsey went on to write *Making Friends in School- Promoting Peer Relationships in Early Education*. (Teacher College Press, 1991), important for early educators.

More works have come out since but these classics give a foundation for this work.

Craig Simpson, Somerville MA

STRICTLY NO ELEPHANTS

By Lisa Mantchev, illustrated by Taceun Yoo, Simon Schuster, 2015

Pet Day is here and there will be cats and dogs and fish, but *strictly no elephants* are allowed. This charming book shows that friends come in all shapes and sizes. The story is about being excluded and being brave enough to problem solve a solution that includes others. At the end of this picture book, the restrictive message is changed to “ALL ARE WELCOME” and you witness multiethnic, multispecies harmony, a true peaceable kingdom.

I appreciate the storyline showing how friends can work together, showing resilience and self-confidence, and the joy of having a pet.

The cheerful illustrations depict children playing and a wide diversity of pets; including an armadillo, skunk, bat, and porcupine. The story is told in a first-person narrative that young readers will enjoy over and over.

Karen Kosko, Cambridge MA

