

Helping Children Develop Self-Confidence

In this book, Marisol McDonald narrates her own story: her peers tell her she doesn't match, and she takes the challenge of trying to conform. Along the way, Marisol learns to feel confident and proud in sharing her own ideas and preferences. *Marisol McDonald Doesn't Match* is a story that will likely resonate with multiracial children and families.

CORE SKILL OBJECTIVES

INTENTIONAL TEACHING PRACTICES

RELATE



- ◆ Explore staying true to themselves
- ◆ Narrate self-confidence
- ◆ Promote child autonomy

Teachers will:

TEACHING TIP

Children's confidence in their own abilities is closely related with their understanding of who they are, along with their feelings of belonging. To feel confident in their abilities and pride in what they do, children need to feel welcomed and valued for who they are, including their social identities (e.g., race, culture, gender, religion), abilities, and interests. As this story shows, teachers can play a meaningful role in supporting students by embracing who they are to help them develop confidence in their ideas and skills. This may be especially important for children from historically marginalized communities such as children of color, immigrants, children with disabilities, LGBTQ children, among others.

1. INTRODUCE

- ◆ "Today we're going to read a story about a girl who learned that staying true to herself made her feel confident and proud to share her own ideas and preferences!"

2. READ THE BOOK

- ◆ Pause occasionally to point out how the teacher valued Marisol's ideas and interests and how Marisol felt proud when she expressed herself.
- ◆ Encourage children to share their thoughts about the story and acknowledge their responses.

Narrate Self-Confidence and Promote Child Autonomy

Read: "...but I love green polka dots and purple stripes..."

Comment: "Her brother tells Marisol her clothes don't match. But Marisol doesn't seem to care. She looks confident and proud of her outfit."
(*Point to her face*)

Connect: "Have you ever felt proud about something you did?"

Read: "Marisol, I want you to know that I like you just the way you are..."

Ask: "How do you think Mrs. Apple makes Marisol feel? How do you know?"

Acknowledge: "Mrs. Apple thinks that Marisol is creative, unique, and marvelous. She values Marisol's ideas and interests."

Read: "... and I don't match because I don't want to..."

Comment: "She chose her own clothes, including the hat her Abuelita gave her. She looks accomplished and proud!"

Connect: "Do you have any special item that your grandparents gave you? What is it?"

3. REVIEW

- ◆ "Marisol learned that when she stayed true to herself, she felt proud of what she did, including calling her new puppy Kitty! Embracing who you are is important to feel confident in your ideas and interests!"

4. KEEP IT GOING

- ◆ Make intentional efforts to let children know that you value their ideas, interests, and stories. For example, connect with individual children during planned one-on-one time, follow children's lead during play, or have social conversations with them during meals. You can also focus on children sharing their perspectives by talking about their favorite things or what is happening in their life. By letting children express themselves, you're promoting their autonomy and in turn, supporting self-confidence!