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The Boy Who Loved Everyone

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Editor's Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

Dimitri is new at nursery and this friendly happy little boy wants to share the love he feels. Starting with his classmates during storytime, 'I love you' is what he tells them all. He continues so doing at playtime, telling not only the children but also the ants and trees in the playground. This utterance is repeated throughout the afternoon to pretty much everything and everyone he encounters by which time the children at least, feel Dimitri's loving rather too much of a good thing. The trouble is, nobody, not even the old man he and his mum pass on the way home, say it back: the only 'I love you' comes from his mum at bedtime.

Next morning Dimitri doesn't want to go to school, telling Mum how he feels. She in turn explains that people are different and consequently have different ways of showing their feelings. As they walk along she shows examples of this in practice: saying 'I love you' need not be spoken: actions can be equally effective.

When they arrive in the playground, Dimitri still feels a bit unsure of his welcome but it's not long before both the actions and words of his classmates let him know he's okay. Gradually he begins to feel a warmth spreading right through him and come storytime it's clear to everyone that Dimitri is accepted.

I love that circularity with the narrative starting and ending with storytime. Both Jane Porter's telling, which was inspired by a little boy from her nursery art sessions, and Maisie Paradise Shearing's richly detailed illustrations exude warmth and tenderness, and perfectly capture Dimitri's vulnerability, showing how the power of kindness eventually wins. Perfect for sharing with little ones at home or in early years settings.

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