

Hair Love by Matthew A. Cherry

# Hair Love

Read about how a young girl and her father work together to have a “perfect” hair day!

*“I love that Hair Love is highlighting the relationship between a Black father and daughter. Matthew leads the ranks of new creatives who are telling unique stories of the Black experience. We need this.” — Jordan Peele, Actor & Filmmaker*

A New York Times Bestseller!

**Title:** Hair Love  
**Author:** Matthew A. Cherry  
**Illustrator:** Vashti Harrison  
**Genre:** Realistic Fiction  
**Lexile:** AD480  
**Page Count:** 32  
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## ABOUT THE BOOK

### Plot Overview

Zuri is a 5-year-old African American girl with hair that has a mind of its own. At the beginning of the story, we learn that this is a big day for Zuri. Her mother is coming home and she needs the perfect hairstyle.

However, Zuri’s dad is exhausted from working, so Zuri decides to fix her own hair. When Dad wakes up, he offers to help fix Zuri’s hair for her special day. Together, through trial and error, the two experiment with different hairstyles.

By the end of the story, Zuri and her dad come up with the perfect hairstyle (with the help of an online video). With her new hairstyle Zuri feels like a superhero. In the last scene we see her rushing to the door to welcome home her mother.

## Theme Overview

**Hair Culture** Our hair and hairstyles are part of who we are and how we express ourselves. Beautiful hair might be any color, thin or thick, straight or curly, short or long, braided or twisted or loose. For many African Americans, like Zuri, the main character in *Hair Love*, her natural hair is a symbol of pride and self esteem. As Zuri says, “My hair is Mommy, Daddy, and me. It’s hair love!”

**Family Relationships** The book also explores family relationships, and how people express their love for one another. One way that Zuri’s father shows his love for her is by learning how to help Zuri style her natural hair. This book celebrates how their bond grows stronger as they spend quality time together, united in the common goal of helping Zuri achieve “perfect hair” in time for her mother’s return, thus showing their love for one another and for Mommy.

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### AFTER READING

## Project-Based Learning

### How do I show people who I am?

Have student pairs choose one of the project ideas below. Allow students to choose other project ideas as long as the ideas attempt to answer the Big Question. Then, distribute the [Project Rubric](#) to students.

1. **Book Report:** Students draw the beginning, middle, and end of the story, focusing on the ways Zuri shows who she is throughout the book.
2. **Character Trading Cards:** Students create trading cards that illustrate the characters and how they express themselves. See the Activity Support for more information.
3. **Movie Poster** Students design a movie poster for the film version of the story. Tell students to keep the Big Question in mind as they create their poster.

### Activity Support: Character Trading Cards

1. Create a template for the character trading cards (there are many examples online).

2. Discuss with students the types of information included on the trading card (character's name, picture, symbol, description, etc.).
3. Have students choose a character from the story and create a character trading card using the template.

### **Project Rubric**

Review and discuss the 4-Point Project Rubric with students before beginning the project.

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## **Share & Celebrate**

### **Prepare to Share**

Provide time for students to practice sharing their culminating project, reminding them that each partner should have a significant role in sharing the information. Partners should work collaboratively and follow agreed upon rules, norms, and protocols.

Use the bulleted points below to model good speaking and listening skills.

- When I share my project, I look at the audience. I don't keep my eyes down.
- As I speak, I make sure that everyone can hear what I am saying.
- I pronounce each word clearly and correctly.
- I do not rush, but speak clearly and at a natural pace.
- I pay attention with my eyes and ears when others are speaking.

### **Celebrate!**

Have students share their projects with the class. As students share, be sure to model and encourage strong listening skills.