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Here are some resources for using names (of children or adult learners) to explore issues of identity, culture, family tradition, and more. Ideas for how to use the resources are included.

Your Name is a Song

Your Name is a Song may be the best-known children's book about names. It joyfully explores the music and meaning of different names. There are several online versions of the story read aloud, including one [performed by members of the Oregon Symphony](#). Florianna Thompson, a colleague in North Carolina, reads this story to her adult learners at the beginning of each semester, then asks them to sing their names. This Universal Design for Learning strategy creates a memorable and personal way for the faculty member to learn to pronounce each name in the way that her adult learners prefer.

The Boy Who Tried to Shrink His Name

The Boy Who Tried to Shrink His Name, a picture book for ages 4-8, tells the story of Zimdalamashkermishkada, who, when starting at a new school, knows he'll have to introduce himself to lots of new people. He decides to use a shorter name, but it doesn't feel right to him. To accompany this story that encourages young readers to celebrate their authentic selves, there is a [discussion guide for educators](#) and a [discussion guide for parents/family members](#).

Pronouncing Kids' Names Correctly Matters. Here's How to Get It Right.

This [2022 online article](#) highlights several children's books about the importance of children's names. It could be a nice background article for adult learners to read before becoming more familiar with books about children and their names. Using selections from the collections below, adult learners might be asked to select a book and describe how they might use it in a classroom to promote the accurate and respectful use of names.

- [7 Amazing Books that Convey the Importance and Value of Names](#)
- [21 Books About Children and Their Names](#)
- [25 Books to Teach Children About the Importance of Names](#)

Names Carry Stories and Information

In the picture book *My Name Is an Address*, the author uses her name to open windows into her family, history, culture, geography, and more. The author provides a [learning guide](#) that includes extension activities and discussion questions and other resources. For another example watch [A Student Takes Pride in His Name That Everyone Mispronounces](#) in which the author unpacks the full story of his frequently mispronounced name. Consider asking adult learners to explore one of these resources, then share a bit about the story of their own name. This might be followed by a discussion board on ways in which to learn to accurately say the names of children and families. Another extension might be to ask a family if they would be willing to share the story of their child's name or family name.

What Listeners Told Us About the Importance of Getting Names Right

It will only take 3 minutes to listen to this recording from NPR's All Things Considered about the importance of names. Click [here](#) for access to that brief interlude.

Natural Resources is a free, monthly, one-way listserv. Each issue features readily available and free resources on a specific topic related to children from birth through age 8 and their families. [Highlighted resources are in Spanish. Los recursos destacados están en español.](#) Natural Resources is compiled and distributed by Camille Catlett. Past issues are archived at <https://scriptnc.fpg.unc.edu/natural-resources-monthly-newsletter> To subscribe or unsubscribe, please contact Camille Catlett at camille.catlett@unc.edu