

# Curriculum Guide

978-0-310-76928-6



## BUILT TOGETHER

BY  
**Mina Starsiak Hawk**

Star of HGTV's *Good Bones*

ILLUSTRATED  
BY  
**Barbara Bongini**



### How do you build a family?

**Do you use a hammer and nails** like when you build a house? Every family—just like every house—looks a little different. Families are made of people who love and support each other, whether they're related by blood or not. The most important thing about houses and families is that they have a strong foundation—a foundation of trust, kindness, and lots and lots of love.









In this heartwarming picture book, television star and home renovator Mina Starsiak Hawk celebrates families of all shapes and sizes.



The Common Core State Standards addressed by the discussion questions, activities, and worksheets in this guide are noted throughout. For more information on the Common Core, visit [corestandards.org](http://corestandards.org).

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Unless otherwise noted, all discussion questions meet the following Common Core State Standards: [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.1](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.1](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.1](#)

-  Look closely at the illustration on the cover of the book. What can you tell about the main characters of this story? [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.7](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.7](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.7](#)
-  From which character's point of view is the story told? How do you know who is telling the story? [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.6](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.6](#)
-  What does the boy's mom mean when she tells him "we're not related to everyone by blood" when talking about the members of their family?
-  The boy tries to imagine what it takes to "build a family." What are his first thoughts about how this is done?
-  While the boy focuses on tile and grout, circular saws, and nails, how does his mom define the "tools" needed to build a family?
-  The boy's mom shares that love and kindness are very important when building a family. Look through the illustrations and find and discuss examples of the characters showing love and kindness to each other. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.7](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.7](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.7](#)
-  What does the author mean when she states that "family is not just made up of people"? Look at the illustration on the page where this statement is shared for clues as to what the author is suggesting. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.7](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.7](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.7](#)
-  What important lesson does the boy in the story learn about family from talking with his parents?  
[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.2](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.2](#)



The discussion questions, activities, and worksheets in this guide were created by Leigh Courtney, Ph.D. She teaches in the Global Education program at a public elementary school in San Diego, California. She holds both master's and doctoral degrees in education, with an emphasis on curriculum and instruction.

# ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS



## Create Your Own Family Tree

On white art paper, paint a tree trunk and branches with brown paint. Next add handprint “leaves” to your branches—paint one hand with green paint and press your handprint around the branches. Repeat a few times to give your family tree multiple leaves. After washing your hands, cut out rectangles of paper that will be used to put names on your family tree. Write one name per label and remember that your family may include pets and people not related to you by blood. Paste the labels with your family’s names onto your family tree.

## Personal Narrative

The boy’s mother tells him that families can be built “by celebrating the good stuff together. And by helping each other with the tough stuff.” Think of a time in your life when you had the chance to celebrate a happy occasion or when you helped someone going through a hard time. Write a personal narrative about this time in your life. Make sure to include descriptions of the people involved and the setting as well as sensory details to help the reader see, hear, and feel what you’re describing. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.K.3](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.1.3](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.3](#)

## Furry Family

Family is not just made up of people. Create a portrait of the furry, feathered, or scaly members of your family. If you don’t have a pet, are there neighbors’ or other family members’ pets you love? You can also draw a picture of an animal you’d like to have be a part of your family.

## Reach Out with Love

One of the ways to build a family is to include those who might be overlooked. The illustration for this part in the story shows the main characters visiting some senior citizens. Create handmade cards and drawings for residents of an assisted living facility to help the seniors feel included in holidays such as Christmas, Hanukkah, or Valentine’s Day.

## Relative Dictionary

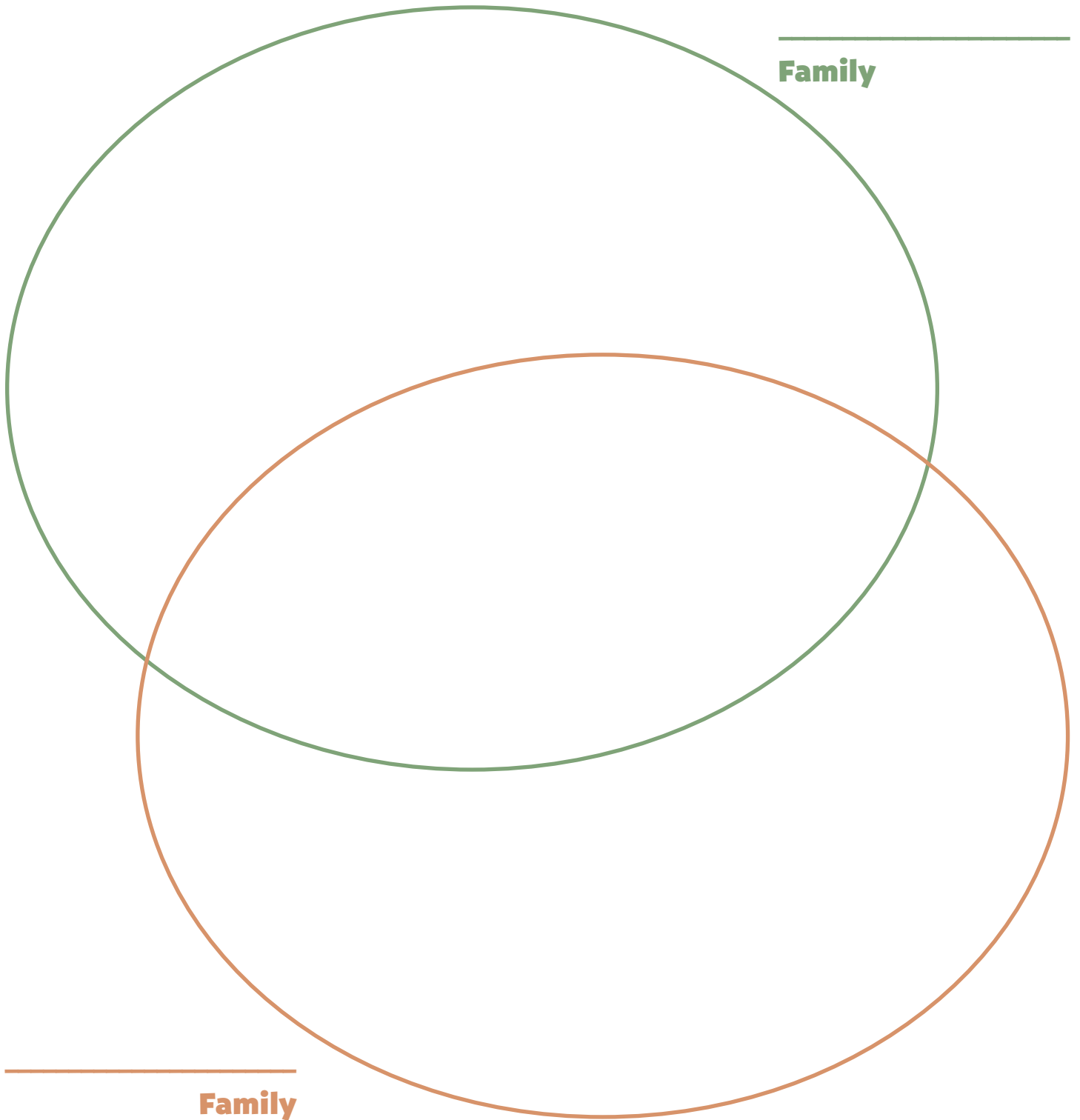
In the beginning of the story, the boy lists all of the members of his “super big family” including cousins, grandparents, aunts, and uncles. Create a dictionary about families by listing all of the types of family members you can think of—from brothers and sisters to nephews and nieces to great-grandparents, and everything in between! Make sure to list the words in alphabetical order. Add a definition of what each family term means. Example: GRANDMOTHER—the mother of a mom or dad in a family. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.2.4.E](#)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Comparing Families

Find a partner in your class and meet to discuss your families. How many people are in each family? Which family members live in your houses? Do your families have pets? Use this information to complete a Venn diagram comparing what is the same and what is different about the two families. [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.1.8](#); [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.8](#)



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Wish List

In *Built Together*, the boy in the story says, “I’d really like to have freckles like Uncle Caz.” What special features or traits do you wish you had from some of the special people in your family? Complete the chart below.



Name of family member	Special trait or feature from this person that I wish I had

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# My Family Is . . .

Families can be big, small, musical, dramatic, loud, quiet, adventurous, sporty. . . What three words would you use to describe your family? List your adjectives below and add a descriptive sentence explaining your word choice.



**My family is**

---

---

**My family is**

---

---

**My family is**

---

---