

# SMARTS!

Everybody's Got Them



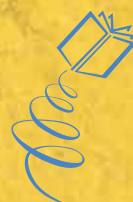
# SMARTS!

Everybody's Got Them

Thomas Armstrong, Ph.D.

Illustrated by Tim Palin

free spirit  
PUBLISHING®



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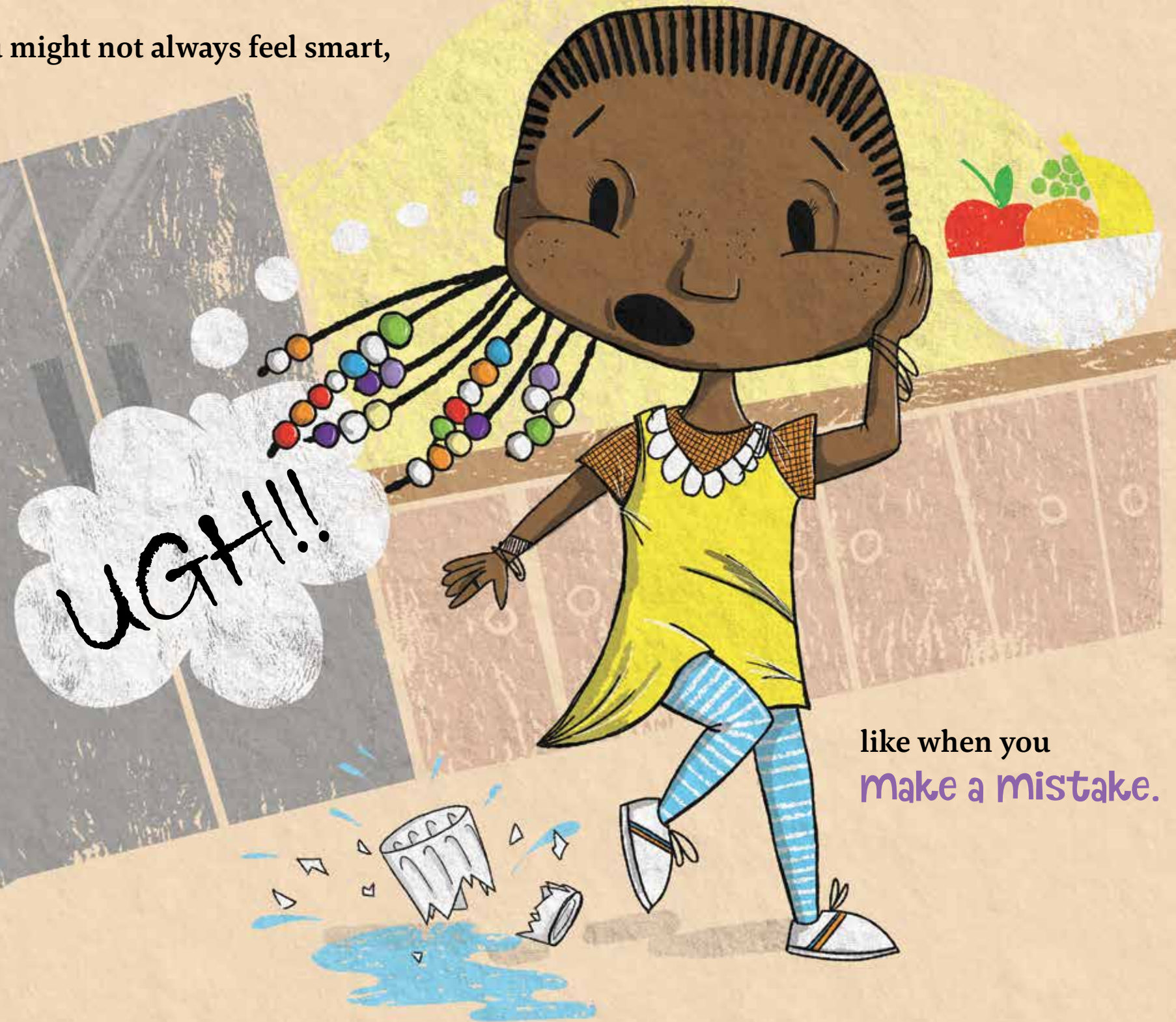
For Maddie and Ollie



Everyone is smart in **lots of ways.**



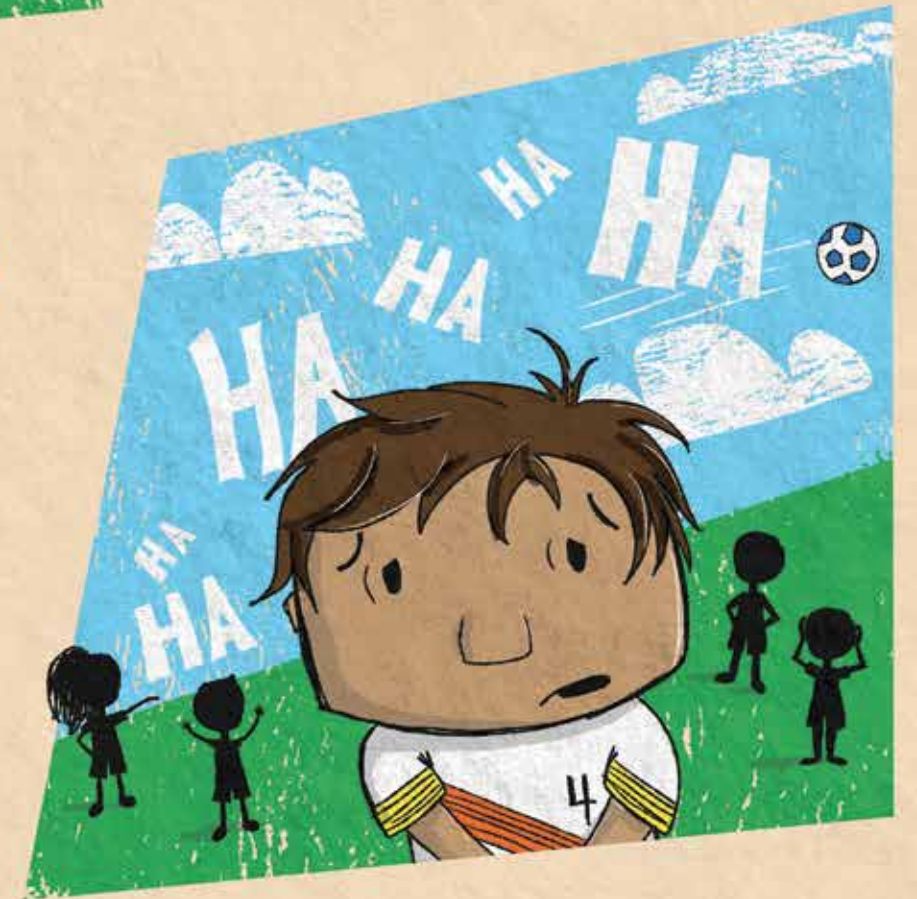
You might not always feel smart,



like when you  
make a mistake.



Or if people  
make fun of you.



## Helping Kids Build All Their Smarts

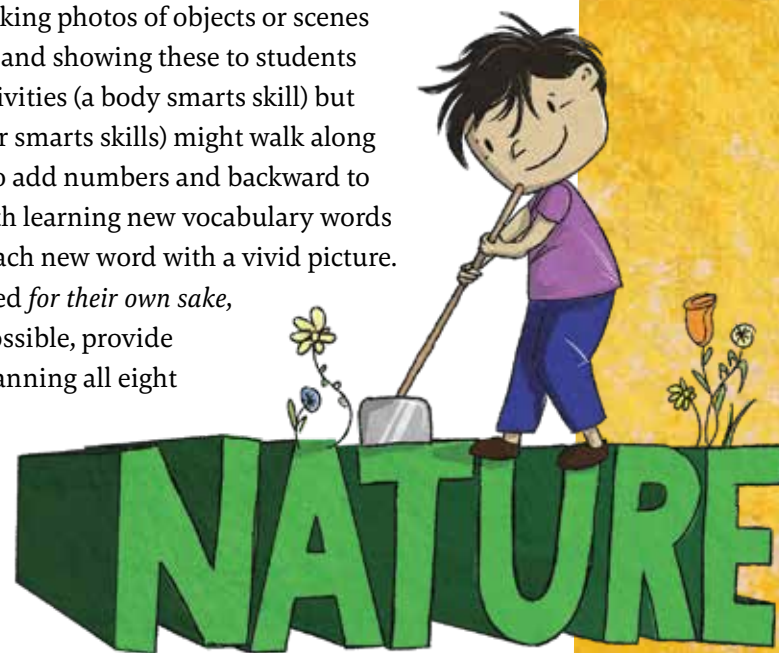
### A Guide for Teachers, Counselors, and Other Caring Adults

The ideas in this book are based on the theory of multiple intelligences, first presented in 1983 by Howard Gardner, a professor of education at Harvard University. Gardner identified eight separate intelligences that everyone has: word smarts, music smarts, number smarts, picture smarts, body smarts, people smarts, self smarts, and nature smarts. This theory not only helps explain a wide range of ways in which children learn but also suggests practical methods for developing learning tools to help them succeed.

All children are unique in the way the eight intelligences function in their brains. Most kids are highly developed in one or two intelligences, moderately developed in two or three others, and relatively little developed in one or two more. It's most effective to identify a child's most highly developed intelligences first, build confidence in those areas, and then use these intelligences to help strengthen less developed areas.

For example, to help a student who shows drawing abilities (a picture smarts skill) but has difficulty with reading (a word smarts skill), you could provide highly illustrated books such as graphic novels or picture books. Another powerful strategy is to build vocabulary by associating unfamiliar or challenging words with images. Similarly, you might try developing reading comprehension by taking photos of objects or scenes that help illustrate some of the main ideas of a text and showing these to students as they read. A student who is adept at physical activities (a body smarts skill) but has difficulty with adding and subtracting (number smarts skills) might walk along a number line taped to the floor, moving forward to add numbers and backward to subtract numbers. Or a child who has difficulty with learning new vocabulary words but loves to draw might illustrate the meaning of each new word with a vivid picture.

It's crucial that all kinds of smarts are developed *for their own sake*, not only to strengthen weaker areas. As often as possible, provide resources that allow kids to engage in activities spanning all eight intelligences. Many curricula offer natural tie-ins to certain smarts, such as English language arts to word smarts, math to number smarts, and physical education to body smarts. It may be necessary, though, to be creative when there are



no clear connections between an intelligence and the curriculum, or if the curriculum is in some way lacking. For instance, if your school doesn't have a music program, you could play soft music during reading or quiet working times so kids can listen and analyze. If your school doesn't have an arts program, incorporate visual learning into everyday curricula by allowing students to draw pictures that demonstrate their comprehension of concepts being taught. In other areas of the curriculum, you can brainstorm ways to expand instruction beyond fundamental skills and ideas. Math instruction can include rich real-world examples, including architecture, statistics in the news, and the mathematics of living forms (such as the dimensions of the chambered nautilus shell, which follow a numerical pattern called the Fibonacci sequence). Physical education activities can go beyond jumping jacks and dodgeball to include activities such as weight training, yoga, and rock climbing. The possibilities are vast!

Outside of school, parents and guardians can engage the whole family in activities that develop the intelligences by visiting places where the smarts are emphasized, such as:

- › libraries (word smarts)
- › indoor and outdoor musical concerts (music smarts)
- › science museums, shopping centers, or grocery stores (number smarts)
- › sculpture gardens, outdoor murals, or art museums (picture smarts)
- › playgrounds, basketball courts, swimming pools, bowling alleys, or miniature golf courses (body smarts)
- › community centers or neighborhood activities (people smarts)
- › meditation groups or places of worship or spirituality (self smarts)
- › parks, trails, urban gardens, zoos, or aquariums (nature smarts)

