

Grace and Family by Mary Hoffman

This is an engaging picture book which deals sensitively with the important experiences of family, difference, separation and reunion. The illustrations in this book are detailed and vivid, allowing children to explore the emotions and relationships they describe and the worlds they bring to life.

A sequel to *Amazing Grace*, this book concerns Grace's feelings of difference from conventional family groups and her emotions and dilemmas when invited to visit her father and his new family in the Gambia. Accompanied by her wise Nana, Grace gradually learns to deal with her feelings of being an outsider to her Gambian family. Their warm welcome enables Grace to accept them and to enjoy being a loved member of two families.

As someone who enjoys stories, Grace begins hopeful of a happy ending, with her family reunited. She wants her mother and father together under the same roof, just like the 'storybook' families she reads about. But by the end of her physical and emotional journey, she understands that the concept of 'family' can include different patterns and experience.