

# The Question Song

by Kaethe Zemach

Published by Little, Brown and Company, 2003



Reviewed by  
Cindy Teresi

**T**he *Question Song* is one of those special books equally at home in the preschool classroom or with a parent reading to a child. Written for children ages 2 to 6, the repetitive text of this lovely picture book facilitates adult-to-child interaction through singing, vocalizing or movement.

Zemach uses traditional folk art "theorem painting," which involves oil paint and hand-cut stencils applied to a velvet canvas. The result is soft and child-friendly. Illustrations suggesting a multicultural family add to the universality of the book.

Childhood accidents like, "My ice cream is melting! What are we going to do?" are treated lovingly:

"We'll get a cup to catch the drips. Now gobble it up and lick your lips! That's what we will do!"

"It's raining! It's pouring! What are we going to do?" is

answered: "Here's an umbrella. Now you're set! You can play in the rain, and you won't get wet. That's what we will do!" Opportunities for imaginary play and creative movement are numerous.

The questions in the book are all examples of real-life dilemmas in which children may find themselves. Each is answered by a calm adult who soothes the child's fears and lovingly provides creative solutions to life's little problems, from broken toys to spilled juice. This book encourages

children to talk about their frustrations and possible solutions, leading to new question-and-answer phrases as well as creative problem solving. Whether the questions are used individually or inclusively there is something here that can become the context for many lessons in music and in life. This is a great a book about problems because the eventual outcome is always positive: if things do go wrong, then we fix everything by singing our *Question Song*!

