After reading *I Am Every Good Thing* by Derrick Barnes, students will create a mixed media collage that is reflective of themselves. They can then use the collage as the cover for a book.

**Age:** 3-9  
**Duration:** 30-60 minutes

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**Materials:**

**Self Portrait Materials**
- Matboard, or cardboard rectangle (with 4 holes if creating a book after)
- Printed Picture of the child (optional)
- Collage decoration supplies (choose from -scraps of colored paper, markers, glue, sequins, tempera sticks or paint, stickers, etc.)
- White glue (bowl and paintbrush)
- Scissors

**Book Materials:**
- Dry self-portrait from previous step
- Another matboard or cardboard piece matching size and hole placement.
- 4 or more rectangular sheets of white paper matching size and hole placement
- 1 chenille stem

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**Watch the video Here:** https://vimeo.com/513454399
After reading *I Am Every Good Thing* have students brainstorm things that make them special. Pull examples from the book. Students will be making books and decorating the covers by creating a collage about themselves.

Write the word "self-portrait" on the classroom board. Explain to students that a *self-portrait* is a picture of you created by you. You can show them self-portraits of famous artists like the ones shown below.

Explain that they can incorporate their likes or interests in their self-portrait like Frida Kahlo did with the monkey and ribbon.

Write the words "collage" and "geometric shapes" on the classroom board. A *collage* is a piece of art made by sticking different materials such as pieces of paper, photographs, drawings, magazines, *geometric shapes*, or fabrics on to a backing. *Geometric shapes* are circles, squares, triangles, rectangles, and polygons. There are many geometric shapes in the world.

The books can be kept at school and used for later classroom activities.

A wonderful teacher’s guide to *I Am Every Good Thing* with discussion questions and more activities can be found at: https://storage.googleapis.com/classroom-portal-production/uploads/2020/08/88490d05-i-am-every-good-thing-guide.pdf

Scaffolding:
When using white glue with young children place a small amount of glue in a bowl and have them use a small paint brush to apply.
You may want to line up the holes and complete the first stich for young children.
### Instructions

1. Use one piece of the matboard or cardboard to create your self-portrait collage. You can begin by cutting out a picture of yourself to glue to the center, or you can use paper and other objects to create a picture of yourself.

2. When you glue paper onto your collage it's a good idea to spread the glue thinly on the surface, then paint the glue over the top of the paper as well. This will make your art very sturdy and a little shiny.

3. You can also decorate your collage with tempera paint sticks, but you may want to avoid areas with wet glue or wait until the glue dries.

4. Decorate all areas of the front cover filling the space. Then wait for it to dry if you will be turning the self-portrait into a book.

5. Place 4 or more sheets of white paper between the back and front covers of your book (the front cover is the self-portrait). Be sure to line up the holes.

6. Thread a chenille stem through the bottom hole, fold it over the edge of the book, and twist it around the larger part of stem.

7. Thread the chenille stem through the next holes starting at the cover and pushing down each time. This will cause the steam to wrap around the outside edge and is called a whip stich. You don’t need to wrap tightly, but don’t leave a lot of extra space between the stitches.

8. On the last stitch, thread the stem under the last stitch and wrap it to secure. Cut any extra length off of the chenille stem and fold the tips under so they are not scratchy.

9. Now you can use your book to write all the great things about you!

### How Was It?

Thank you for taking part in this activity! We would love to hear about your experience. Take our feedback survey here: [http://bit.ly/3alQBOW](http://bit.ly/3alQBOW)