

Everybody is Unique:
Teaching Respect in a Racially Diverse Classroom

First Grade

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Unit Rationale and Link to Common Core Standards

This lesson plan is designed for use in the classroom to help encourage respect and acceptance of racially diverse classrooms. I believe it is important to establish acceptance early in the classroom so students understand that certain behaviors will not be tolerated, and to help all students feel safe in the classroom environment.

I used several different sources such as *Read-Write-Think*, *Teaching Tolerance*, and *Education World* to adapt my unit lesson plan on racial diversity and acceptance. Each lesson is geared toward creating a classroom environment that is accepting of all races. The lessons will also help students develop empathy and understanding towards others. The unit will introduce concepts that many students may or may not have dealt with before, depending on the level of awareness they have towards racial diversity. This unit meets several Common Core Standards in Language Arts such as Speaking, Literature, Writing, and Language.

Relevant Common Core Standard

Language Arts Common Core Standards

Reading: Literature

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.1.1 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.1.2 Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.1.3 Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.1.4 Identify words and phrases in stories or poems that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.1.7 Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events.

Speaking and Listening

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about *grade 1 topics and texts* with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1.1a Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1.1b Build on others' talk in conversations by responding to the comments of others through multiple exchanges.

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1.1c Ask questions to clear up any confusion about the topics and texts under discussion.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1.2 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1.3 Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to gather additional information or clarify something that is not understood.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1.4 Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1.5 Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.

Unit Objectives

Students' will-

- Activate prior knowledge about diversity by exploring the words *different, similar, unique*
- Gain knowledge by learning what the term diversity means
- Apply and further that knowledge in class discussions about diversity
- Demonstrate comprehension and practice writing skills by writing about diversity
- Practice collaboration by working in small groups to generate ideas and create books
- Use oral and listening skills during shared readings of the books they create
- Students will learn why it is important that we respect and accept others that may be different from them
- Learn how to give compliments and receive compliments

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Lesson 1: Introduction to Diversity

Objectives- Students will activate prior knowledge about diversity. Learn about the word *diversity*. Students will discuss thoughts and ideas about diversity.

Duration- 40 minutes

Materials-

- *It's Okay to Be Different* by Todd Parr
- Chart Paper
- Markers

Procedures-

Part One: Introduction (15 minutes)

1. Introduce the topic of diversity by drawing student's attentions to their differences and similarities. Present four or five criteria statements for the class to consider and ask students to stand up. Some examples of criteria statements are:

- All the 6 year olds stand up
- Everyone wearing shoes with shoe laces stand up
- If you like football stand up
- Stand up if you are wearing a gray shirt

Ask students if they can think of other differences that the above criteria statements did not address. Ask the student's why it is important to share these differences? What can they help us understand about each other?

2. Write the word *diversity* on the board and ask students if they know what it means. Write down their responses on the board working towards the definition: *being different from each other*.

Part Two: (15 minutes)

3. Read *It's Okay to Be Different* to class. Stop to discuss the text throughout the book and the pictures. Questions for discussion:

- Do you know anyone who is like the characters in this book?
- What do you think of the illustrations? Why do you think the author uses the color he does?
- Which, if any, of these characters is like you?

Part Three: Closure (10 minutes)

4. After reading the book, ask students to share their thoughts and ideas about what makes us all different and what makes us the same. Write down students' responses on the chart paper. Save the chart paper for Session Three.

Lesson Two: Lesson About Being Unique

Objectives- Students will talk about the word and meaning of *unique*. Draw a unique person once part at a time. Create a unique person with one student creating the head, another student creating the torso, and another student creating the lower body separately. Define the most positive qualities of the person. Write about this person.

Duration- 70 minutes

Materials-

- 2 inch squares of plain, white paper (one for each student)
- 3 inch squares of plain, white paper (one for each student)
- 4 inch squares of plain, white paper (one for each student)
- Crayons, markers, color pencils
- Writing paper
- Pencils
- Tape

Procedures-

Part One: (5 minutes)

1. Begin the lesson by writing the word *unique* on the board. Ask students what the word means to them and work towards the definition.

Part Two: (10 minutes)

2. Draw a model person on the board. Draw two horizontal lines across the person's body. One line should divide the person's head (including the neck) and torso (shoulders to waist); the other should divide the torso and leg area (from the waist-down). Talk about one section of the body at a time. Discuss features that make up a person's head such as hair, eyes, lips, dark/light skin etc... Next discuss how a person's body can be different, skinny, muscular, heavier etc... Discuss what kind of clothes people wear. Discuss features that make up the lower half of a person's body such as skinny or muscular legs, skin color, what shoes people wear etc... Draw the person on the board as you are discussing the features.

Part Three: (30 minutes)

3. Pass out the 2 inch pieces of paper to students. Have each student write their name on the back of the square. Then tell the students to draw their person's head on the other side. Tell the students that this person should not be someone they know. Tell the students to be as detailed as possible while creating their person. Once students are finished with the head, collect the papers with the head on them and pass out the 4 inch squares and have them draw the body. Have students put name on back of paper and on front draw the body being as detailed and unique as possible. After students have completed the body, collect those. Pass out the 4 inch squares instructing them to draw the lower half of the body, following the same directions as the other pieces. Once the students are done with the lower half of the body, collect those pieces.

Part Four: (15 minutes)

4. Pass out to students one of each lower body, head, and torso piece. Students should not receive one that they created. Have students tape together the pieces to create a unique person. Once students construct their person the student will then write about the person that was created.

Direct the students to write a brief story about their friend discussing what their friend's unique qualities are, what their new friend likes, what they have in common with their new friend, and why they like their new friend.

Part Five: Closure (10 minutes)

5. Have the students share their new friend and their stories about their friend.

Lesson Three: Lesson About Diversity and Differences

Objectives- Students will apply knowledge that they learned in whole class and small group discussions. Practice collaboration. And further understand what diversity is.

Duration- 40 minutes

Materials-

- Chart paper from day one
- Markers
- Pencils
- Group Exploration Worksheet

Procedures-

Part One: Introduction (5 minutes)

1. Remind students about the chart paper that was created on day one. Talk a little about differences and similarities on it and ask them if they can think of additional kinds of differences they have experienced.

Part Two: (20 minutes)

2. Have students get into small groups and hand of Group Exploration worksheet. Explain to students that they will discuss about how they and their friends are different from each other and other people in the world. Each group should use the Exploration sheet to make lists of differences that are not included on the list from Lesson one. Students should take turns writing ideas on the list; every student should write at least one idea. Remind students that they all need to make sure that their group members are sharing positive ideas that will not hurt anyone's feelings. Walk around the classroom to insure discussion is staying on topic and students are not being offensive.

3. Gather students back to a whole class discussion. Ask them what kinds of differences they discovered in their groups. Ask students what was the most surprising difference to them? What did they learn from their group discussion? Do they have more in common with the students in their groups than with people in the rest of the world?

4. Ask students to pick one difference that their group talked about; it should be one that has affected them personally. Let students know they will be writing about this topic and also creating a page on this topic for a book they create with their group.

Part Three: Closure (15 minutes)

5. Have students write about the difference that they are focusing on in their journals. Questions for them to consider include:

- Has anyone ever made you feel especially good or bad about this difference? Who and why?

- What do you like the most about this difference? What do you like the least?
- Do you have to do things differently because of this difference?
- Do you know anyone else who has the same difference?

Lesson Four: Positively Respectful

Objectives- Students will learn about each other. Practice sharing compliments. Learn how to give a compliment and receive a compliment. Learn about citizenship and manners.

Duration- 60 minutes

Materials-

- White drawing paper
- Crayons, markers, pencils, color pencils
- Worksheet, *What I Like...*

Procedures-

Part One: Introduction (5 minutes)

1. Explain to students that they are going to learn about their classmates and what their interests, likes and dislikes are.

Part Two: (15 minutes)

2. Provide each student a piece of paper measuring 5 by 4 inches. Have students draw a self-portrait on the paper. When students are done creating their self-portrait have them glue the picture on to an 8x10 sheet of construction paper. Have them write their names in the upper left corner.

Part Three: (15 minutes)

3. Gather students for a class discussion. Start the discussion by introducing the following ideas:

- What I Like About Me
- What I Like to Eat
- What I Like About My Family
- What I Like About School
- What I Like to Do
- What I Like to Think About

4. Talk about each topic and ask a few students to discuss. Then have students return to their desks to complete worksheet: What I Like... Have students attach their list to their self-portrait.

5. Gather students again and ask if a student would like to share. Have the student read their list, and then model the act of compliments. Once you have given a few compliments to the student that shared, have the class offer compliments about the student that is sharing.

Part Four: (10 minutes)

6. When students are comfortable giving compliments, continue the activity by having each student share his or her list or essay. Encourage students to listen carefully to one another and think about a compliment they might give in response. Instead of having classmates share aloud their compliments, have them think about their compliments.

Part Five: Conclusion (15 minutes)

7. When all students have had a chance to share their lists or essays, have them return to their desks and pass their self-portraits to the person sitting behind them. Allow students to write one compliment on each of classmate's self-portrait on the part that surrounds the picture. Remind students not to take time to read the compliments others have written; explain that they should be sharing compliments from their own minds and hearts. By the end of the activity each class member's self-portrait should have compliments all around it. Display the portraits in the classroom.

Lesson Five: Creating a Book about Differences

Objectives- Students will continue to practice collaboration in creating a book. Students will share ideas and practice writing skills.

Duration- (80 minutes)

Materials-

- Computers with internet access
- Student writing journals
- Flip book website
- Author's website
- Crayons, markers, color pencils, pencils

Procedures-

Part One: Introduction (10 minutes)

1. Explain to students that they are going to learn about the author that wrote *It's Okay to be Different* on the authors website About Todd Parr. Have students read about him and explore the

“Fun” section on the site making sure they all see the Allen Brook School’s The Okay Book webpage. Tell students they will work in groups to create a book. Each student will contribute to their group’s book. Each page will have text and illustrations.

Part Two: (20 minutes)

2. Have students get in groups from lesson three. Model a sentence for the book page on the board.

3. Have students take out their journals and review what they wrote in during lesson three.

Students should use what they wrote to plan a sentence that will go on their page of the book.

Have students write the sentence they would like to use in their journal, and have other students from their group review it and provide feedback. Walk around the room to offer assistance.

4. Students should write together to decide the book’s title. They also can choose a name for their group that they feel reflects differences they share. The title might highlight each person’s individual difference (ex. Curly hair, pierced ears,).

Part Three: Writing Book (30 minutes)

5. Each group will work on one computer to create the book. Direct students to the Flip Book and show how to use it. Have them enter their first names as the labels for their individual pages.

The first page will be the title page, so the label should be *Title*.

6. After entering the labels, each student should type a sentence on the page that is labeled with his or her first name. Students can choose the templates that they want to use on their pages.

Part Four: Illustrating Book (15 minutes)

7. Have students print off their pages and illustrate them. Then students can assemble their group's book.

Part Five: Conclusion (5 minutes)

8. Explain to students that in a different lesson they will be able to share the books they created with another classroom.

Lesson Six: Sharing What We Know about Racial Diversity and Acceptance

Objectives- Students will display their diversity books and discuss what they have learned about racial diversity and acceptance.

Duration- 60 minutes

Materials-

- Students books that were created from Lesson Five

Procedures-

Part One: Introduction (5 minutes)

1. Explain to class that you have arranged for them to share their book with another classroom.

Part Two: Sharing books (30 minutes)

2. Line each student up in front of class by the order that their pages are in the book. Each student will read his or her page in front of the class.

3. After students have read the book, they can pass it around to show the pictures.

Part Three: Discussion (15 minutes)

4. After each group has had a chance to share, exchange discussion with the new class. Questions to consider include:

- Did any of the students who were listening hear an author share a difference that they also have?
- Do you know anyone who is similar to any of the authors?
- Does anyone have a special difference that has not been mentioned?
- Why do you think it is important to understand our differences?

Part Four: Conclusion (5 minutes)

Wrap up unit by explaining that diversity and acceptance is something they will see and should practice every day, not only in the classroom.

Assessment

Assessment for the lesson unit will be mostly informal. I will make observations during the lessons to record if objectives are being met. I will assess individual student comments to ensure that comments are respectful and constructive. I will informally observe students while they work in their small groups. Read and reflect on students' journal entries and respond to each student's entry, correcting misconceptions and applauding accepting comments. I will review the student's artwork and books for creativity, thoughtful text, and making sure student understands the importance of accepting differences? I will assess students' artwork and illustrations; does it reflect the main idea of the text? I will assess group work. Did the student work with other

members of the group to edit the page? Did the group assign an appropriate title for the book? Did the student read his or her page clearly? Was he or she able to discuss the page and answer questions about it? Did student participate in self-portrait activity? Did students leave compliments? By using these measurements and observation, I will be able to determine if students met objectives.

Appendix

Adapted from Lesson Plan: *It's Okay to Be Different: Teaching Diversity with Todd Parr*

www.readwritethink.org

Adapted from Lesson Plan: *Positively Respectful*

www.educationworld.com

Adapted from Lesson Plan: *A Lesson in Respect for Others*

www.educationworld.com

Name:

WHAT I LIKE...

What I Like About Me

What I Like to Eat

What I Like About My Family

What I Like About School

What I Like to Do

What I Like to Think About

Names of group members: _____

GROUP EXPLORATION SHEET

Directions: Discuss the ways that you are all different than each other and ways that you are different from people outside of our classroom. You should all take turns adding to the list. Write down at least one way that you are different from your friends and at least one way that you are different from people all over the world. If you need more space to write, you can use the back of this paper.

We are different from each other in the following ways:

We are different from people all over the world in the following ways:
