

Growing Anti-racist UU's: A Curriculum for Children
www.uucharlotteville.org/anti-racist-curriculum/

REMEMBERING THE PAST - Lesson 11 for Grades K-2

by Elaine Chapman

LESSON OVERVIEW

This session on racial justice makes young elementary children aware of human rights as promised in this country's founding principles. This session ties into the principles of: respect for the inherent worth and dignity of every person, offer fair and kind treatment to others (red and orange) as well as insist on peace and justice (indigo). The session will provide an introduction into the pain and injustice toward children and families when freedoms and human rights are taken from them.

GOALS

This session will:

- Teach that white privilege (and white supremacy) have controlled and restricted indigenous and enslaved people (also known as "persons of color")
- Explore the concept of "persons of color", recalling the previous lessons about knowing a person versus thinking we know about them by simply looking at them
- Experience the principles of respect and justice, highlighting the knowledge that all human beings have rights and freedom

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Continue to explore the concept of white privilege and freedom.
- Develop awareness that persons of color in this country have experienced pain and restrictions and continue to do so
- Discover that human rights are rights for all

SESSION at-a-GLANCE

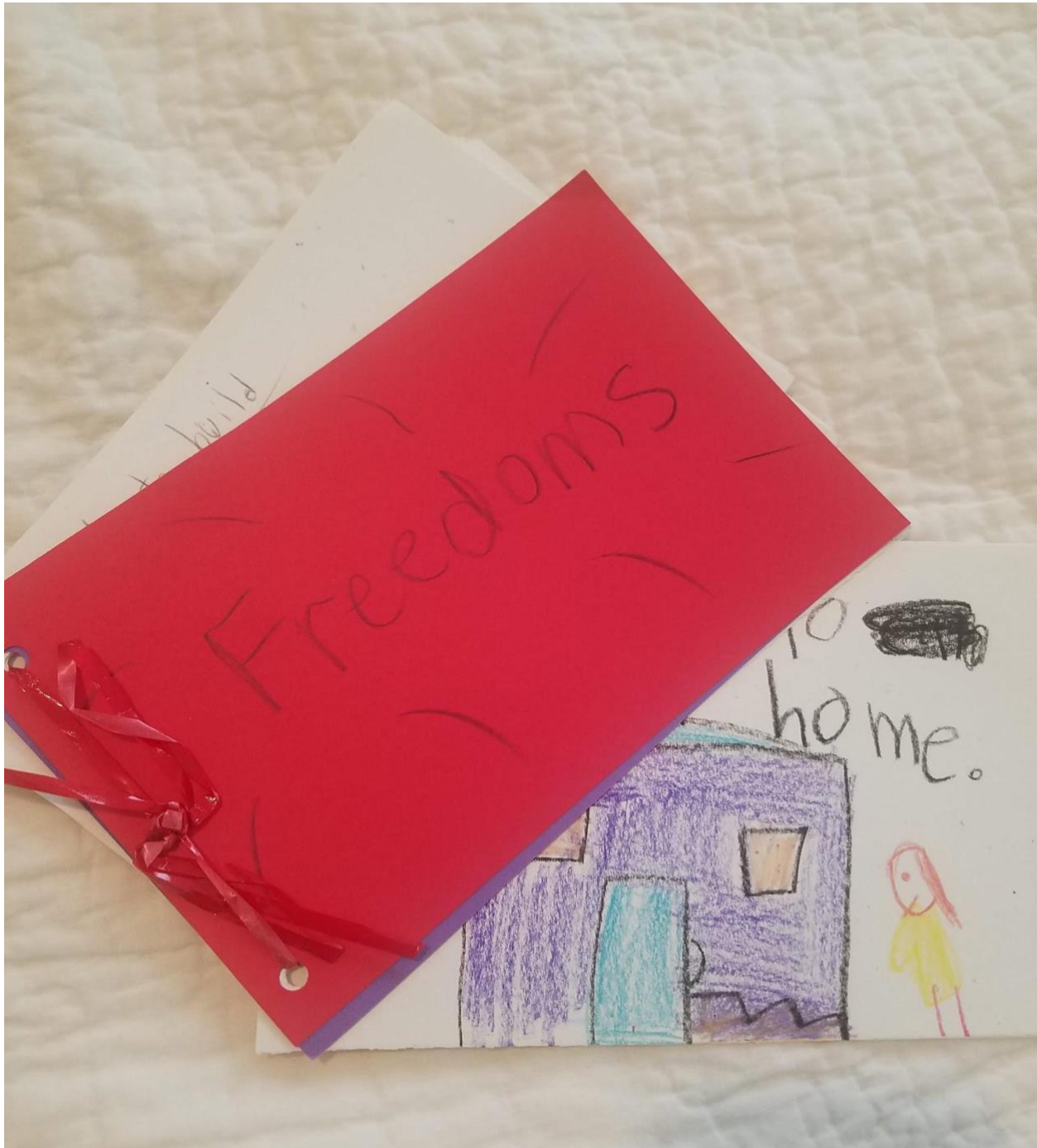
Opening (5 min)

Activity 1: Discuss the concepts of white privilege and introduce "persons of color" (10 min)

Activity 2: Having emptied the freedom box, open to ask children “what if your freedoms were taken away”?

Activity 2: Display freedom cards from previous lessons (perhaps on floor where children can easily see (5 min)

Activity 3: Creation of book pages (20 min)



Activity 4: Read the story of *Through My Eyes* about Ruby Bridges (10 min)

(TEACHERS: When previewing the story before class, please find places to pause and

engage children with a question about a feeling, what might happen, or what the listeners think. This helps children pay attention. Also you may need to define some unfamiliar words used in the story.)

Closing (5 min) Use typical closing established within this classroom.

LEADER PREPARATION

Imagine the size of your box of freedoms and human rights Try to consider the lives of those who have not had these freedoms naturally given to them. What would life be like, if your movements were constricted, your basic needs and privileges lacking, or experience disrespect on a regular basis? Think of fear versus freedom and spend time reflecting on the words of Maya Angelou in the Caged Bird poem. If you identify as a person of color, recall your experiences of discriminatory actions by the dominant, or white, culture in this country.

WELCOME AND ENTERING

Use typical opening as established by this classroom, i.e. chalice lighting, joys/concerns, circle time. Crepe paper streamers interlocking red, orange, yellow, green and indigo colors will assist in emphasizing the UU principles in this session.

Materials for Activity

- Chalice, candle and lighter with cloth for centering table
- 5 x 8 heavy sheets of paper pre-punched to create book
- Art materials, including 3 D objects, yarns, pictures
- Book about Ruby Bridges: Coles, Robert, *The Story of Ruby Bridges*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2010. Print. Bridges, Ruby, *Through My Eyes*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2017. Print

Description of Activity

Activity 1:

- In circle group, ask children to review the concept of white privilege. Ask what they know about the concept, people of color?

Activity 2:

- Next, open the freedom box (having removed the cards). Ask what if your freedoms were gone? Use the freedom box to recall what children have learned about all freedoms.

Activity 3:

- Set up each child with materials to create a book page of human rights. A sheet of cardstock for each child, with coaching about ideas from the cards that were made earlier. Ask children to illustrate one idea per sheet with pictures and words, as they are able.
- Assemble book and review contents with large group. Ask what shall we do with this book?

Activity 4:

- Read the story of Ruby Bridges, *Through My Eyes*. Children seem to appreciate the version with real pictures and also learning about her adult life. Ask what other freedoms did she not have, besides not going to school with everyone else.

Including All Participants

- There may be children who need assistance participating in offering information. Use sentence starters, or allow another point for contributions. For those who may not focus well on book creations, provide adult guidance for children's ideas.

LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

When class ends, please stop for a minute with your co-teacher to::;

- Take a deep breath together and acknowledge that you have taken a small step today for racial justice. Sometimes the problems seem so huge that we need to find specific actions we can take, and this is one of them.
- Discuss if any children were not included in the lesson and how they might be in the future.
- Note any issues that you want to follow up on in the next class.
- Note any issues that you want to mention to your congregation's racial justice curriculum planners or your director of faith development.

TAKE IT HOME

Today, the freedom box was empty, and children were asked to think about what it might be like without their freedoms? The term "persons of color" was introduced to explain that people with darker skin shades did not have freedoms like people of white privilege. After reading the freedom cards from last lesson, children created illustrations of freedoms on pages which were assembled into a book of freedoms. All of the freedoms in the book are human rights for everyone. The story of Ruby Bridges in her own words provided children with a story of someone about their own age who was denied her rights.

FOUR CORE GOALS OF ANTI-BIAS EDUCATION

From Louise Derman-Sparks & Julie Olsen Edwards, 2010. *Anti-Bias Education for Young Children & Ourselves*

1. Each child will demonstrate self-awareness, confidence, family pride, and positive social identities.
2. Each child will express comfort and joy with human diversity; accurate language for human differences; and deep, caring human connections.
3. Each child will increasingly recognize unfairness, have language to describe unfairness, and understand that unfairness hurts.
4. Each child will demonstrate empowerment and the skills to act, with others or alone, against prejudice and/or discrimination.

Caged Bird

BY MAYA ANGELOU

A free bird leaps
on the back of the wind
and floats downstream
till the current ends
And dips his wing
in the orange sun rays
and dares to claim the sky.

But a bird that stalks
down his narrow cage
can seldom see through
his bars of rage
his wings are clipped and
his feet are tied
so he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings
with a fearful trill
of things unknown

but longed for still
and his tune is heard
on the distant hill
for the caged bird
sings of freedom.

The free bird thinks of another breeze
and the trade winds soft through the sighing trees
and the fat worms waiting on a dawn bright lawn
and he names the sky his own.

But a caged bird stands on the grave of dreams
his shadow shouts on a nightmare scream
his wings are clipped and his feet are tied
so he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings
with a fearful trill
of things unknown
but longed for still
and his tune is heard
on the distant hill
for the caged bird
sings of freedom.