

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

MY CITY, MY COMMUNITY - Lesson 5 for Grades K-2

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LESSON OVERVIEW

This fifth lesson makes kindergartners and first graders aware that negative or harmful attitudes have resulted in unfairness, frequently based only on shades of skin. Often, throughout history and currently, people of different shades are hurt and treated without respect. The lesson will include some history of separation to show how some communities did not always value its people. This session will continue to focus on recognizing and respecting people with different shades of skin within the community. Highlighted is the principle of “belief in our ideas and act on them” through justice.

GOALS

This session will:

- Teach that our communities and country have treated people of different shades differently.
- Explore the concept of separation and .
- Begin to develop an understanding of the fifth principle of “belief in our ideas and act on them”, particularly in matters of respect and justice.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Show understanding that treating people negatively because of skin shade has always been unfair and continues today.
- Discover that separation is not just, nor equal, and results in unfairness.
- Show empathy when others are not treated fairly.

LESSON-at-a-GLANCE

Opening: (5 min)

Activity 1: Discussion of schools and separation of children by shade of skin (10 min)

Activity 2: Fruit Activities (15 min)

Activity 3: Story: *This Is Our House* (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

Recall your own experiences when others have received accolades and you have not been acknowledged, or have been criticized in different ways. Your own feelings of self-esteem may or may not have been harmed, but if this has happened, you have empathy for others. If you are, or you know, a person of color who has experienced harm or disregard, imagine the distress at being ignored or taunted while others are valued in a group or publicly. Consider your own awareness of positive reinforcement and recognition. Consider also your recognition and value of others, and their presence and achievements.

WELCOME AND ENTERING

Use typical opening as established by this classroom, i.e. chalice lighting, joys/concerns, circle time.

Materials for Activity

- Chalice, candle and lighter with cloth for centering table
- Previous work from children - paper dolls display
- Fruit - apples (not perfect color and shape) and bananas - for illustration and sharing; plates, bowls and cloths; small amount of vegan butter or olive oil for polishing
- Books:
Rosen, Michael, *This is Our House*. Somerville: Candlewick Press. 2005. Print.

Description of Activity

- Talk about the lesson during which children made paper dolls with different shades and different hair. Explain how children were taught separately by race. Use children's work to separate paper dolls by shade and hair. Ask how someone may feel if this happened to them. Talk about our country's separating children into different schools based on skin shade. Talk about how children of darker shades called black or colored did not attend school for several years in some parts of the country, due to the resistance of white parents and leaders.

- Separate fruit by type and color and ask which plate is liked by each child. What if you couldn't have a banana that you wanted or If you were given only apples. Next, cut an apple into 4 slices and distribute one each to 4 children. Then give a whole apple to each of the remaining children. Ask, is this equal? Is it fair? (Everyone has an apple, however.)
- Illustrate fairness with different treatment of apples. Each child is given an apple to wash, rinse, dry and polish (with vegan butter or oil) carefully, fostering the care and ownership of his/her apple. Keep some apples to the side. In a circle, taking turns, ask children to give their apple a positive compliment. Continue until everyone has shared all their statements and reflections. Pass around an unshined apple and ask children to comment, again in the circle. With each negative comment, (it's not clean, not shiny, etc.) prick the apple with a toothpick (if you choose). Ask if their feelings have ever been hurt? Like the fruit, bruising and harmful treatment hurts people.
- Read *This is Our House* and ask the children to imagine a person telling the story who is a different shade. Ask children how they think others felt.
- What is our response to treating people respectfully? How can we help people feel safe and valued?

Including All Participants

- There may be children who need assistance with focusing and participation. Assist a child, only if needed, with the care of the apple. Respect that some children may not be able to articulate reflections on their own; use sentence starters as necessary, e.g. "my apple is..."

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 action 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

Session 5

The K-1 class explored the principle of belief in our ideas and acting on them through the window of respect and equal treatment of people with different skin shades. Using fruit, the separation and offering of limited choices will be presented to children.

What if a choice was not allowed? What if they received a different amount of the fruit, or none at all? What if they could not play with or go to school with others of different shades, as it happened in some communities? Each child washed dried and polished an apple and shared comments about their fruit, as well as considered the unwashed and unshined fruit. Feelings, both good and hurtful, will be explored with fairness and justice as themes.

