

*Growing Anti-racist UU's: A Curriculum for Children*  
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MY COUNTRY, MY WORLD - Lesson 5 for Grades K-2

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## LESSON OVERVIEW

This sixth lesson makes kindergartners and first graders aware of the concept of race and how attitudes have resulted in unfairness based on race alone. Many times before, and now, people of different shades were harmed and treated without respect. Continuing our goal to respect and treat people of different shades is peace and justice for all. The principle of “insist on peace and justice” starts with recognition and respect of difference in skin shade.

## GOALS

This session will:

- Teach that, although equal and fair treatment for all is our goal, injustice has happened in our country for years, from segregation to denial of opportunity, to harm. It continues to happen.
- Explore the concept of race and injustice in our country.
- Experience the sixth principle of “insist on peace and justice”.
- Teach that we are important in the world, that justice for all is everyone’s responsibility.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Make connection between “all are created equal” to “justice for all”.
- Recognize that unfair treatment of people of different shades continues
- State the meaning of the principle of “insist on peace and justice”.
- Learn the origin and the song “He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands”.
- Connect that our own actions are important in the world for justice.

## LESSON-at-a-GLANCE

Opening: (5 min)

Activity 1: Look at the map of the US and recall the end of the pledge of allegiance. Talk about concepts of equal rights and justice. (10 min)

Activity 2: Create bookmarks. (15 min) OR alternate Activity 4

Activity 3: Read story, *One World, One Day* (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.)

Activity 4: Beach ball world game (10 min.)

Closing (5 min)

Use typical closing established within this classroom.

## LEADER PREPARATION

Often, the word 'justice' is used with insufficient reflection. What does 'justice for all' truly mean to you? Is everyone to be regarded and treated equally? Think of the many occasions where equality does not apply, e.g., parking spaces for persons with disabilities, stools for young children to reach areas in their home, food banks for people. These examples are not equal, but provide equity (accommodating to the needs of individuals requiring assistance). If you are not familiar with concepts of "equality" and "equity", see reference:

## 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
- Map of the US and small US flag
- Materials to make and illustrate bookmarks with "Justice for All"
- Book:  
Kerley, Barbara, *One World, One Day*. Washington DC: National Geographic, 2009. Print

## Description of Activities

- Today, we'll talk about our country and our belief that all are created equal.
- In the United States (show map), lots of people talk about how we are all equal. When we say the pledge of allegiance, think of the end: ("justice for all). What does that mean? (Look at paperdolls, is it justice for light shades only?) Even with the words, "justice for all", people were still not treated fairly (hard work

without pay, segregation, no voting, houses, jobs, cruelty). It took lots of years to give equal rights to all. Still, people with darker shades of skin are treated unfairly today. What have you seen at school, playground, bus? What have you noticed on TV, the news or some television shows? What have you heard other people talk about?

- Many people believe in equal rights, but unfairness continues, even now. Some people treat others of different shades unfairly by their shade of skin. Some people talk about shade as a race. But we know that a person is more than a shade. We know that people can play and go to school together, and have lots of wonderful things about them. Also, we learned that people can marry who they love. But unfair treatment hurts people, remember the apples?
- To remind ourselves that we want 'justice for all', let's make a bookmark to take home. You may also give the one you make away to someone special. Use typical cardstock sizes for bookmarks. Allow children to design including the words "Justice for All". Tie into the punched hole the ribbons of the rainbow chalice colors (red, indigo, and orange) which relate most directly to the lessons. By doing so, the ribbons will hang from any book with the bookmark inside it.
- You might know the song, "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands". Did you know that this song is a spiritual song created by African Americans, in 1927 (over 70 years ago)? This song reminds us of our value for others and our goal of justice for all. Let's sing it together.
- This beach ball reminds us of the world. Let's play a game when we toss it to someone. To do so, instruct children to say something about difference, fairness, justice or one of the UU principles. Adults might model some of the following:
  - "Each of us has a different skin shade"
  - "Each family is different and likes different things"
  - "We can play with children of a different shade"
  - "We can go to school with children of a different shade"
  - "People can marry someone they love of a different shade (or woman or man)"
  - "Kind words makes a person feel happy; hurtful words are unfair"
  - "Justice is for everyone"
  - "Sometimes justice means extras for people"
  - "Everyone must be treated fairly and with justice and not only people with light-shaded skin"
  - "Everyone is important"

Including all Participants

- Provide assistance to children who need help in attending to the group activity. Assist a child who may need help printing words on bookmark.

## 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 6

This Sunday is the sixth racial justice session and the K-1 class explored the meaning of justice. At school, most children say the pledge, which ends in "justice for all." Justice might mean providing extras sometimes, for example, closer parking for people who use a wheelchair. It may not be equal but it surely is equitable. We introduced the concept of race (which until now we have said different "shade") and how justice was denied to people based on race. Finally, we celebrated our wish for "justice for all" with a game of ball toss, sharing our learnings.