

Growing Anti-racist UU's: A Curriculum for Children

www.uucharlottesville.org/anti-racist-curriculum/

WHO ARE THE "THEY"? - Lesson 9 for Grades K-2

by Elaine Chapman

LESSON OVERVIEW

This third lesson makes young elementary children aware of the difference between immigrants in this country, people who lived here first as Indigenous Americans, and those forced to live here under slavery. Children will explore why it is necessary to defend the rights of people who are not valued and begin to understand the meaning of 'white privilege'. This session focuses on the principle of ongoing search for truth and meaning as well as continues to acknowledge true justice.

GOALS

This session will:

- Teach that our respect for everyone is central in the UU principle of the "search for truth and meaning"
- Explore the concepts of immigrant, indigenous and enslaved
- Experience that the principle of growing in our ongoing search for truth and meaning includes valuing everyone as well as the interconnectedness of all of us

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Continue to explore the "other" and the "possibilities" of others in our world
- Make the connection that the immigration in this country is a part of our heritage, but also, or more importantly, acknowledge indigenous culture and the slavery culture
- Discover that valuing everyone in every culture requires greater action toward justice
- Explore the meaning of "white privilege"

SESSION-at-a-GLANCE

Opening (5 min)

Activity 1: Teachers presentation of their own immigration stories. (5 min)

Activity 2: Mapping of children's family journeys to this country (10 min)

Activity 3: Discussion of indigenous people and "unwilling" travels to this country (10 min)

Activity 4: Drum chanting (15 min)

Activity 5: Read from the book *America the Beautiful* and recite UU welcome verse - or another verse unique to a congregation (5 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

Continue with the importance of acknowledging unlimited possibilities about a person. A judgment about anyone cannot be made on the basis of skin shade alone. Think of all the people you know who are of mixed backgrounds. Then consider your own heritage and the countries of your ancestors. Except for the indigenous Americans, all other people have come to this country from somewhere else. Generally, immigrants who came to this country wanted to do so. The enslaved Africans certainly were not privileged to have made this choice. In different but similar ways, freedom was taken from both the indigenous Americans and enslaved Africans of this country. Immigrants, particularly white Europeans, expected freedom from this country.

WELCOME AND ENTERING

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

Materials for Activity

- Chalice, candle and lighter with cloth for centering table
- Map of the world with pins and variety of string colors
- Drums or adapted material (coffee tins wrapped in brown paper)
- Book: Bates, Katherine Lee, *America the Beautiful*. New York: Orchard Books. 2013. Print.
- Welcome verse (attached)

Description of Activity

Activity 1:

- In the two lessons before this (# 7 and 8 in section C), we drew and interviewed each other, and also looked at pictures of well-known people. We learned that we never really know people by what they look like, right?

Activity 2:

- Today we are going to talk about our heritage (where our birth comes from). Most of us have families that came from other countries way back. Let's call them WILLING IMMIGRANTS who for some reason came to America. I'll show you mine (use map), from the countries of origin to places in this country. Ask those children to share and pin their heritage on map.

Activity 3:

- Ask who lived here before the WILLING IMMIGRANTS arrived? There were people in America, not immigrants, but indigenous people. Who are they? What do you know about them? What did they value about the earth?
- WILLING IMMIGRANTS were mostly light-shaded or "white settlers" who bought people, mostly black, to work for them as enslaved people. These people were not WILLING IMMIGRANTS, were they?
- Both the indigenous and the enslaved people were treated badly. The light-skinned people gave themselves privileges of freedom, owning and getting money, and schooling. Present the concept of "white privilege".
- Both indigenous and enslaved people wanted the same rights as light-skinned people, and their protests are similar.
- Demands for freedom and rights have been much the same.

Activity 4:

- Present drums and demonstrate chant on drum to THEIR LIVES, THEY MATTER HERE and BLACK LIVES, THEY MATTER HERE.

Activity 5:

- Read sections from the book: *America the Beautiful*.
- As we believe all people are welcome, let's read what we say in our church on Sundays. We welcome all.

"Whoever you are, whomever you love,
However you express your identity, Whatever your situation in life,
Whatever your experience of the holy, our presence here is a gift.
Whether you are filled with sadness, Overflowing with joy,
Needing to be alone with yourself, Or eager to engage with others,
You have a place here. We all have a place here. All are welcome here."

Including All Participants

- There may be children who need assistance pinning their heritage or listening in group. Provide adult facilitation

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

Using a map of the world, adults and children talked about their heritage, which countries they or their ancestors traveled from to come to this country. In today's lesson, children talked about willing immigrants, indigenous and enslaved people in our country. Willing immigrants found freedom and rights in contrast to indigenous or enslaved people who did not. Drums and a chant demonstrated the protest for freedom and rights. The concept of "white privilege" was introduced to explain that people with lighter skin shades have historically had freedom and rights in this country.

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.

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whomever you love,
However you express your identity,
Whatever your situation in life,
Whatever your experience of the holy,
our presence here is a gift.
Whether you are filled with sadness, Overflowing with joy,
Needing to be alone with yourself,
Or eager to engage with others,
You have a place here.
We all have a place here.
All are welcome here.

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