

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

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

WHAT IF THE ZEBRAS LOST THEIR STRIPES? - Lesson 3 for Preschool

Adapted by Patti Withers

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From:

Reitano, John. *What if the Zebras Lost Their Stripes*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1998.

Orange Promise Story

Adapt your story from the text. Please consider these notes from our editor as you adapt the text:

- Be careful any time you imply it's what's on the inside that matters most. Racial and some ethnic differences are based on what you can see. It's not fair to spend generations separating people on that basis causing people to take pride in those differences to erase that importance in a sentence that says they don't really matter: they do.
- Having the white horse swim to the black horse's land implicitly reinforces White people as explorers and adventurers and makes Blackness a passive condition.
- The story is very much an allegory about Black/White racism and that is a bit restrictive. Consider creating zebras with different stripe patterns or have some of the zebras always have stripes even when they're living in separate lands. Try to avoid reinforcing that there were White lands and Black lands, that was never entirely true.
- Be careful with the implication that we can outsmart racial distinctions and oppression based on race.

Materials:

Orange felt circle- 28" in diameter

Four zebras

One white horse, one black horse

Two green felt circles – 8" in diameter

Mirror

Basket with Peace Symbol or Orange triangle.

Presentation:

Watch carefully where I go to get this story so that later, if you wish to make it your work, you will be able to find it. Ah, here it is...one of the stories about Peace and Social Justice.

Point to the Peace Symbol on the basket.

What could help me tell the story?

Look into the basket and remove the orange felt circle.

I wonder what this could be?

Spread out and explore the orange felt. Let the children guess what it could be.

I remember that Orange is the color of the Second Promise: Offer fair and kind treatment to everyone. I wonder if the story is about that.

Let's begin our story.

Wondering Questions:

I wonder if you have seen or heard any of this before?

I wonder which part of this story is the most important?

I wonder where you might be in this story?

I wonder how the zebras got their stripes?

I wonder if the zebras and horses have names?

I wonder how you would feel if you looked changed?

I wonder how it would feel if your friends and family didn't remember you?

I wonder, if what a person looks like is the first thing we notice about them?

I wonder if this story reminds you of any of our other Unitarian Universalist Promises?

I wonder where the Spirit of Love and Mystery might be in this story?