



WE ARE PART OF A LARGER COMMUNITY – ENCOURAGING KINDNESS, SOCIAL AWARENESS, AND EMPATHY

SUMMARY:

The full collection of Racial Literacy Grade 1 lessons are designed to actively build a positive sense of self and expand students' social awareness in an effort to create a more open-minded, inclusive community — one that celebrates diversity. To enhance communication and social skills, classroom discussions and activities aim to examine the roles we play in larger groups and the impact we can have on the well-being of our peers in the classroom, as well as the larger community beyond school walls. Aspects of our identities will be explored, such as our names, neighborhoods, and cultures/ethnicities, with the goal of developing a sense of pride and a positive awareness of others. An underlying theme is the idea that despite differences, we also share similarities, with the binding force of humanity being love — or our capacity for respect, kindness, acceptance, and empathy. We strongly encourage teachers to read carefully through all lessons, before launching the unit, in an effort to understand overarching goals and to increase comfort with the scope and theme of topics.

GRADE 1 LESSONS BY TOPIC:

- 1 Differences are Strengths: Contributing to the Community
- 2 Filling Our Buckets: A Lesson on Kindness
- 3 The Importance of Inclusivity and “Visibility”
- 4 Finding Beauty in Our Communities (Noticing and Helping Others)
- 5 Developing Our Sense of Self: A Celebration of Our Names
- 6 Our Families: What Makes Us Different and the Same?
- 7 Children Around the World
- 8 Celebrating Our Unique Class Community

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LESSON 1

DIFFERENCES ARE STRENGTHS: CONTRIBUTING TO THE COMMUNITY

Grade: 1 | Suggested Time: 30-45 minutes

Unit: We Are Part of a Larger Community – Encouraging Kindness, Social Awareness, & Empathy

Related Subject(s): Reading/Literacy

Background

OBJECTIVES

- To discuss collaboration and teamwork.
- To explore the value that we each bring to our community.
- To discuss how our unique differences help to make our community stronger.

MATERIALS

- *Swimmy* by Leo Lionni.

ESSENTIAL IDEA

- Often, our differences can make us feel like outsiders. What happens if we view our differences as strengths? Using the picture book *Swimmy*, students will be given the opportunity to explore how our unique differences can be strengths, as they help build our community. With teamwork, we can become stronger.

VOCABULARY

- This picture book uses some advanced and playful concepts and terms, and refers to various animals of the ocean. Reviewing these terms and animals with students may be helpful. The following are listed in order of appearance: school of fish, mussel shell, swift, fierce, darting, wonderful, marvel, medusa, rainbow jelly (jellyfish), lobster (water-moving machine), stranger, invisible thread, forest of seaweeds, sugar-candy rocks, eel, sea anemones, pink palm trees, swaying. The book also draws upon the idea of being lonely and the concept of “SEEing” things. (Written in all capitals in the story). The idea of working together is highlighted.

Lesson Procedure

BACKGROUND

This book is a wonderful way to establish a sense of community in the classroom. With stunning, dreamlike illustrations, Leo Lionni paints a world filled with wonder, yet looming with potential danger. When the little fish are afraid to venture out from their hiding spots, *Swimmy* shows his friends that with some creativity, bravery, and teamwork, they can overcome a great obstacle. Winning a Caldecott Honor in 1964, this book has been cherished for decades as a way to show how working together is beneficial.

OPENING

Before reading *Swimmy*, ask students if they have read or seen this book. Based on the cover and title of the book, ask students what they think the story will be about.

READ ALOUD

Read the picture book out loud, using inflection for words that underscore the message of the book, like “SEE” and “together.”

DISCUSSION AND CLOSING

- After reading, have a discussion of feelings, such as: How did Swimmy feel at the beginning of the story, when the big tuna fish appeared and scared everyone away? Write student suggestions on the board. Ask students about the journey and how Swimmy changed: What did Swimmy experience when he was on his own? What kinds of things did he learn? At the end, why do you think Swimmy served as the “eye” of the collective big fish? Guide students into a discussion in which they note that Swimmy — when serving as the “eye” of the larger fish — was able to “see” when others could not. What was he able to see that the other fish hadn’t yet noticed? An array of activities may follow, such as listing words to describe Swimmy (smart, brave, loyal, determined, wise, etc.). Many of these words may be new to a first grader, so consider adding them to a more permanent word wall, perhaps accompanied with illustrations.
- To expand the lesson, have students think about ways they can contribute to a community. For instance, even though we have similarities, we also have differences. How do your differences help you stand out? If needed, revisit the character Swimmy and how his difference — both physical and experiential — helped the others. How did his differences allow him to “SEE” beyond the “traditional” way of his world. Please note that examples can go beyond physical differences. In fact, that should be encouraged. For example, Swimmy was willing to take a risk. His bravery led to a journey, and that experience helped him collaborate with others. Students can share their ideas out loud. If there is more time, consider having students write and/or draw their ideas about their ability to contribute to the larger community.



Extension Activities

SUGGESTIONS

Another classroom activity and discussion may center on the idea of a “school of fish” serving as a “community” much like a “school community.” Define community and community members. Discuss the needs and wants of Swimmy and his community, followed by a discussion of the needs and wants of the classroom community. A follow-up team building activity is recommended, such as the following: participate in a classroom art project, perhaps using sponges to create stamped art that makes a larger image, as Swimmy and the other fish did when they formed a larger fish; embark on a park or beach clean-up day; organize a physical education course that requires teamwork, such as relay races; etc. Guidelines of how to treat each other and validate each other should be discussed before such activities.

LESSON 2

FILLING OUR BUCKETS: A LESSON ON KINDNESS

Grade: 1 | Suggested Time: 45 minutes

Unit: We Are Part of a Larger Community – Encouraging Kindness, Social Awareness, & Empathy

Related Subject(s): Reading/Literacy

Background

OBJECTIVES

- To think about and identify the benefits of being kind.
- To explore the connection between the behaviors that make us feel good about ourselves and how we can make others feel good about themselves.

MATERIALS

- *Have You Filled a Bucket Today?: A Guide to Daily Happiness for Kids* by Carol McCloud and David Messing.
- Copies of mini-buckets or paper/plastic cups.

ESSENTIAL IDEA

- To build an inclusive community, students should be encouraged to nurture positive social behavior. Students should have and show appreciation for others and for themselves. Using the symbol or idea of a bucket, this lesson will focus on the concept that showing kindness and respect for others may not only impact another person, it can also impact our own self worth and improve our own happiness and joy.

VOCABULARY

- The idea of “invisible buckets” is the major concept/theme of this picture book. Additionally, feelings are explored. It may be helpful to familiarize students with the following terms and/or ideas that appear in the text: feelings, happy, good, sad, lonely, kindness, respect, “make fun of,” ignore, caring, love, joy, “light up their face,” smiling, etc.

Lesson Procedure

BACKGROUND

This picture book uses the idea, or symbol, of an invisible bucket to encourage positive social behaviors from children. Through kindness, appreciation, and love, we can fill each other’s “invisible buckets,” or sense of self. Similarly, we can also “dip” from other buckets when we take actions that hurt others, like teasing or bullying. Rather than qualifying a person as bad, we see the choice as temporary and something we can improve upon, or change, next time we interact.

OPENING

Before reading *Have You Filled a Bucket Today?*, ask students about the meaning of invisibility. If something is invisible, what does that mean? Ask them what a bucket is used for. Tell them that this book will talk about both invisibility and buckets. Have students guess or predict how these two ideas may be connected.

READ ALOUD

Read the picture book out loud. Pay special attention to the physical reactions of people who get their bucket filled, such as how they smile and hug, as well as the referenced examples of how to fill someone's bucket. Encourage students to think about the feelings we associate with acts like smiling and hugging.

ACTIVITY AND CLOSING

- After reading, discuss the “nice things” we can do to fill our own bucket or a bucket that belongs to someone else. The book features examples, revisit them (i.e. saying “hi” to the bus driver, inviting someone to play, writing someone a note or telling a loved one you like spending time with them, etc.). A class activity that incorporates buckets is recommended as a next step, such as using a large illustration of a bucket, fastened to the board or wall, or a form of individual buckets for each student — even plastic or paper cups can serve as buckets. To begin, the teacher may guide the entire class through an activity of sorting comments and behaviors, as either “bucket filling” and “bucket dipping.” (Examples created ahead of time may be helpful. The teacher should know best what kinds of comments can be shared with their community.) Consider distributing strips of paper with actions written on them. Students may then take turns reading them out loud, pouring or emptying their buckets accordingly.
- After reviewing a few examples together as a class, students may work in small groups, designating each example action as either “filling” or “dipping.” When they are done, regroup as a larger class. Ask for student feedback. If desired, the teacher can create a chart to organize students’ responses. For example, you may take the “bucket filling” ideas, organizing them into two parts, “what it looks/sounds like” and “how it feels.” The teacher may take the list, reading the “bucket filling” examples out loud again. If using plastic jugs, consider adding actual water to the bucket. Go through many examples to show what a full, or close to full, bucket looks like. How may someone feel when they have a full bucket? Are those good feelings? How do we feel when we help someone fill their own bucket? Can students fill their own bucket as well? How? If time allows, students can also write and illustrate a bucket filling action they’d like to do later in the day, or in the week. Ultimately, a wrap-up discussion or performance should close activities.



Extension Activities

SUGGESTIONS

To continue the conversation, have students think about their inner selves more. What are their interests? What sorts of bucket filling actions do they enjoy doing for others? What sorts of bucket filling actions do they enjoy receiving? Consider having each student choose one idea for each: a bucket-filling idea they’d like to give to others, and a bucket-filling idea they’d like to receive. Have students write them on paper cut-outs of mini-buckets or cut-outs of droplets. Post ideas on a larger bucket, with the name of the class community nearby.

LESSON 3

THE IMPORTANCE OF INCLUSIVITY AND “VISIBILITY”

Grade: 1 | Suggested Time: 30-45 minutes

Unit: We Are Part of a Larger Community – Encouraging Kindness, Social Awareness, & Empathy

Related Subject(s): Reading/Literacy

Background

OBJECTIVES

- To discuss the benefits of being open to others.
- To recognize the uniqueness of others as a positive aspect of identity.
- To discuss inclusive vs exclusive behaviors and how they affect others.

MATERIALS

- *The Invisible Boy* by Tracy Ludwig and Patrice Barton.

ESSENTIAL IDEA

- While it may not be obvious at first, many of us have experienced feeling like an outsider at some point in our lives. For Brian, our character in *The Invisible Boy*, it seems as if he is overlooked daily. What kind of actions can Brian take to reach out to others? What can other students and teachers do to help Brian feel more included? This story will help foster a dialogue among students, encouraging them to realize that all of us have special abilities. Through advocating for ourselves and others, we can begin to develop a more inclusive community.

VOCABULARY

- The idea of being invisible is explored in this picture book. The story also touches upon the idea that our actions can include and/or exclude someone. For vocabulary, it may be interesting to explore the actions various characters take in this book. By looking at their actions (or verbs), we may see patterns of inclusion and/or exclusion. The following are suggested verbs/actions taken or wished by various characters in this story: noticing, dealing with, waiting, hoping, invited, draws, sneak looks, made up their minds, watch, points, laugh, wondering, team up, scurry, wishing (swallow him up), smiles, waving him over, makes room. Additionally, two key actions are taken, but are not described by narration, such as when Brian reaches out to Justin with a drawing, and when Justin advocates for Brian to join him and his partner for a class project. These actions are worth exploring, as they redirect plot and the characters' outcomes — they go from being excluded “outsiders” to included classmates. Finally, the word “advocate,” while a large word, is a word worth considering adding to the classroom conversation, in both its noun and verb form.

Lesson Procedure

BACKGROUND

With softly rendered illustrations, this book introduces the reader to a young boy named Brian, who “nobody seems to notice.” He isn’t included in groups, games, or parties, until a new student, Justin, arrives. Brian welcomes the boy, and the two work together on a project. Once he has a friend, Brian’s physical (illustrated) self gains more color and he becomes “less invisible.” This story is a great tool for highlighting the importance of small acts of kindness, as well as adding representation for the more quiet, or introverted, students in the class.

OPENING

Before reading *The Invisible Boy*, ask students if they have heard of the words “include” and “exclude”? What do those words mean? Ask students for ideas and write an agreed upon definition on the board. What are some examples of ways we can include and/or exclude others? (This may tap into the discussion from the previous lesson on ways to fill or dip buckets. Allow for and/or encourage such an extension to build more ideas.) Then, revisit the word invisible. (This idea of “invisibility” was also discussed during the “bucket-filling” lesson.) Introduce the book, *The Invisible Boy*. Ask about the title. When students hear *The Invisible Boy*, what do they think the story will be about? Have students make predictions.

READ ALOUD

Read the picture book out loud. Have students make note of actions the characters are taking (or not taking). Are they inclusive or exclusive actions?

ACTIVITY AND CLOSING

- After reading, discuss the characters of the book. For example, how did Brian’s uniqueness help him collaborate with his classmates? Why do you think Justin was able to notice Brian? What did Brian do to start a friendship? How were his classmates not open to differences? To highlight this, focus on Justin for a moment. Mention that because he was eating food that was unfamiliar to some of the students, they teased him. Was that an inclusive or exclusive action? How did Justin help, or advocate, for Brian? How did Justin’s inclusive behavior influence Emilio?
- The conversation may continue in various ways. Another point of focus may be discussing some of the good qualities about being quiet. Another idea is to ask students what they want others to notice about them. Encourage students to think of a quality that may be “invisible” but represents who they are. How can we share that part of ourselves going forward? Additional questions could focus on the idea of reciprocity (or “filling each other’s buckets”), that small acts of kindness can go a long way. Ask what Brian did to reach out to Justin, and how Justin reached back. In other words, how did they fill each other’s buckets? As a result of reciprocated kindness, how do you think they felt? If a teacher wants to demonstrate this concept visually, use food coloring to color a vase or jar of water. Add a color to show how it can change the water from clear to a new color, such as by adding a single droplet of yellow. Add another color, such as blue or red to make either green or orange. As the colors mix and begin to change, remind students how one small act (of either kindness or exclusion) can influence the larger group.
- End by asking students what kind of classroom community they want. How do we achieve this? What kinds of actions should we take? What are different ways we can contribute to our community (i.e. what are our special abilities)? List ideas on the board, or sit in a circle to share ideas.



Extension Activities

SUGGESTIONS

Additional guiding questions are included in the back of the book, and can be used to stimulate discussion in the classroom, such as by asking students to think about a time they may have found themselves in a situation similar to Brian’s and how they coped with it, or asking for examples of how Brian seemed invisible to others. Journaling with simple sentences and illustrations may be beneficial for the classroom community.

LESSON 4

FINDING BEAUTY IN OUR COMMUNITIES (NOTICING AND HELPING OTHERS)

Grade: 1 | Suggested Time: 45–60 minutes

Unit: We Are Part of a Larger Community – Encouraging Kindness, Social Awareness, and Empathy

Related Subject(s): Reading/Literacy

Background

OBJECTIVES

- To develop a positive image and awareness of self and others.
- To find ways to connect to others (through an exploration of daily routines, family, neighborhood, etc.).
- To discuss the importance of helping others.
- To celebrate the idea of community.
- To embrace the idea of diversity.
- To discuss the differences between wants and needs.
- To realize that we each have the ability to help others.
- To recognize similarities and celebrate differences.
- To encourage empathy.

MATERIALS

- *Last Stop on Market Street* by Matt de la Peña and Christian Robinson.

ESSENTIAL IDEA

- It's helpful to stop and notice the beauty of smaller things. Sometimes, we can get stuck on what's fair and unfair. For instance, we may not think it's fair when someone has something we do not have, such as a toy, a car, or a bigger home. Yet, we may also stop to see and appreciate what we do have. What makes our lives beautiful? Rich? Filled with love?
- In this endearing picture book, *Last Stop on Market Street*, Matt de la Peña's lyrical words and Christian Robinson's sweet illustrations combine to create a story that celebrates an ethnically diverse community, the relationship of family (a grandmother and grandson), and the importance of helping others. We can help others by volunteering our time, by playing music, by listening, and by asking questions. All of us can contribute something to this world.
- Diversity is beautiful, as is helping others. We cannot assume we know or understand someone or their circumstances based on appearance alone. For example, all we really know, or can infer, about the main characters is that they like to help others.

VOCABULARY

- Consider introducing words to increase familiarity with the reading material and for the class discussion: freedom, sagged, lurched, rhythm, glanced, broken-door, graffiti-tagged, boarded-up, witness, arcing, spotted. Additionally, consider reviewing the difference between "needs vs wants," as well as the concept of gratitude.

Lesson Procedure

BACKGROUND

Through a celebrated, award-winning book, we are introduced to a grandson and his grandmother, who take the bus across town. At first, it seems like a simple tale of a boy and his grandmother riding through their neighborhood. However, when CJ asks questions that indicate he wants the material things other people have, such as a car or a bicycle, his grandmother encourages him to find the beauty in the mundane — in the immediate world around him. With colorful, lively illustrations, the reader sees the beauty of the city and its residents, landing on the final page, which exposes the true message of the story.

OPENING

- Before reading *Last Stop on Market Street*, ask students if they have read or seen this book before. Based on the cover and title of the book, ask students what they think the story will be about. Consider asking students about routines. How do they get to school each day? What kinds of people or places do they see? If there's time, ask students how they spend their weekends or a day off from school. What kinds of things or activities do they do?
- Revisit the cover. Point out the beautiful orange background. Why might the artist have used that color? What else do they notice? Point out that it looks like an adult is holding a younger person's hand. What is unique about this group of people riding the bus? How could their differences make the bus ride important for Nana and the boy?
- For more guidance, you may want to ask questions or make comments, such as: What genders could they be? Notice their beautiful shades of skin. Discuss some of the differences and similarities. What are they doing? What are they wearing? Where do they think this story is taking place? Since there's a bus, maybe it's a city? Which city could it be? However, beyond their appearances, do we really know anything about the people in this story? (Not until we start talking and listening to them.) If you could talk to them, what would you ask them? In other words, what would you want to know?

READ ALOUD AND DISCUSSION

- Read the story to the class. Make sure to show illustrations while reading, or after reading each page. Continue pointing out the people and places in the story. Notice the buildings (there are churches, apartment buildings and/or houses, trees, sidewalks, the inside of abus, etc.). Notice the people.
- After reading, discuss the story. What happens? How does it begin? CJ asks why they don't have a car and his Nana, instead of answering him directly, points out the magic of the city, specifically the magic of living with diverse people (some who make music, some who have butterflies in a jar, some who are blind but smell and hear the world, etc.). What kinds of things does Nana say? Why does she say such things? (It's likely that Nana is trying to teach CJ about gratitude — to appreciate the world around him for what is there, not for what is missing.) What is a reason CJ and his Nana may be taking the bus? Does Nana enjoy taking the bus? Why? How do you think CJ feels before and after the bus ride? (He changes, and becomes more accepting of it once he appreciates the diverse community that rides the bus.)
- Ask students to point out the clues provided in the story to show that the neighborhood of the last stop on Market Street didn't have as many resources as other neighborhoods may have. For example, the text uses words to suggest an economic difference, such as: broken-door, boarded-up. Even if the neighborhood lacked some resources, what else did it have that felt good (i.e. a rainbow, diverse people, people helping others, etc.)?
- Finally, what was the last stop on Market Street? Where did they go? Why? What kinds of things do you think would fill Nana's bucket? Why? Are there things that she says or does that we can try to borrow for our own lives? Do you know anyone in your life that helps others? What are some things that might fill your bucket, including new things you haven't tried?
- In what ways are CJ and/or Nana both different and similar to you?

ACTIVITY AND CLOSING

- After reading the book, there is an array of activities that would complement the story. We suggest having students create a map of their own journey to school (including people and/or places of magic and beauty along their route, similar to how the book does). For guidance, revisit the illustrations of the book. Who was included? (Different races/ethnicities, someone in a wheelchair, people who were working such as the bus driver, people who were volunteering, etc.) What were their activities?
- If there is time, consider going on a neighborhood walk near the school, if you haven't done so already (or do so another day). If technology supplies allow, bring cameras or notebooks for students to document their "beautiful" findings. Encourage students to view things in a new way. For example, Nana closes her eyes when listening to music. Encourage students to think about the sensory details they associate with their commute, such as the red stop sign, advertisements in another language, fruit stands or flower shops, the scent of food, etc. Encourage students to develop a sense of pride; remind them a commute is something we do almost every day, so it's important we try to find joy in it.
- After students create their maps, consider having them present it to the class, post it on the wall, include it in a book, or share it online via a password-protected class blog.
- If time allows, end class activities by having students say something positive about where they live that speaks to relationships. For instance, in the book, Nana always finds the "beautiful" and "magic" qualities of people and places. Let's try that too. Who in our lives (at home, at school, in our neighborhoods, etc.) can we celebrate? How are they kind? How can we show gratitude? Also, to encourage appreciation for the overall environment, ask students to reflect on what is beautiful and special about our school? About where we live? Finally, summarize ways we can help others, as well as ourselves.



Extension Activities

SUGGESTIONS

- Many lessons can extend from this text. For instance, it can be a segue to begin exploring mapmaking and social studies skills, such as discussing transportation and other city services in greater detail. Students may also learn more about services that help people in the community.
- For a more comprehensive activity, consider getting involved in a community service effort. At the end of the story, CJ and his grandmother went to a soup kitchen — what is that? Who may it benefit? Why is it important to help others? Are there ways to help others that doesn't require a lot of money? Consider having a discussion of wants versus needs. For example, sometimes, because of certain (unfair) circumstances, not everyone has enough to eat. Is food a need or want? We should help others when a "need" is missing. How can we help people in our own community that need something? Finally, for those of us who have their basic needs met, we should exhibit gratitude, as Nana does. Discuss what gratitude looks and feels like.

LESSON 5

DEVELOPING A SENSE OF SELF: A CELEBRATION OF OUR NAMES

Grade: 1 | Suggested Time: 45 minutes

Unit: We Are Part of a Larger Community – Encouraging Kindness, Social Awareness, and Empathy

Related Subject(s): Reading/Literacy; Social Studies/Geography

Background

OBJECTIVES

- To develop a positive image and awareness of self and others.
- To find ways to connect to others, through an exploration of who we are.
- To discuss aspects of our identity. To celebrate our names and cultures.
- To try to understand the viewpoint of others (i.e. what it feels like to be an outsider).
- To discuss and understand the idea of immigration.
- To recognize similarities and celebrate differences.
- To enhance communication and social skills (with a focus on friendship, kindness, and acceptance).
- To discuss ways to extend friendship and show inclusivity.
- To encourage empathy.

MATERIALS

- *My Name is Yoon* by Helen Recorvits and Gabi Swiatkowska.
- Writing materials for students.

ESSENTIAL IDEA

- It is important for all of us, especially children, to learn to accept and celebrate who we are. For instance, we all have names. We all come from some kind of culture, or a mix of cultures. Many questions arise when discussing identity, such as: How have our cultures shaped us? How do we shape culture? Do we like our sense of identity (name, culture, gender, race, etc.)? Are we comfortable talking about our identities, or the identities of others? How can we connect to people “from” our cultures and connect to people “outside” of our cultures?
- In addition to having a sense of identity, like names, we also have a sense of home. But sometimes we move. People emigrate and immigrate. When someone immigrates, what kinds of feelings may they have? Do they get lonely? Do they feel like an outsider? If we are not the ones who immigrated, what can we do to help them feel included? If we are the ones who immigrated, what can we do to embrace change? Can we still be part of our “old country’s” culture, while taking on pieces of our “new country’s” culture?

VOCABULARY

- Consider introducing words to increase familiarity with the reading material and for the class discussion: immigration, emigration, country, settled, symbols, cuddle, mew, robin, patient, proud, culture.
- Exploring larger concepts may be important too, such as what it’s like to be an “outsider” and what it means when we say “lonely”? For example, are these “fixed” feelings, or are they fluid and fluctuating?

Lesson Procedure

BACKGROUND

Dreamlike illustrations capture the story of Yoon, who likes the meaning of her name, “Shining Wisdom,” and how it looks when written in Korean, which she thinks looks like happy, dancing figures. But in English, she sees the letters “YOON” as four figures standing alone, which is how Yoon feels as an immigrant in the United States. Throughout the story she playfully tries out different names, but eventually realizes that being different is okay, and proudly declares herself as Yoon.

OPENING

Before reading the book, ask students what they think the book will be about. Since it’s a straightforward title, some students may say it’s about a girl and her name. Notice the beautiful red font for the title, the thoughtful close-up of the girl’s face. She has beautiful olive skin and dark brown or black eyes. Her name is Yoon, and she is from Korea. (Ask students which continent Korea is a part of, and how she likely identifies as Korean, or, in this country, may be called Asian or East Asian). Give students the task of paying attention to how Yoon changes throughout the story. Introduce and define the word “immigration” and/or “immigrant” (someone who moves from one country, to another country). Yoon is an immigrant. This story is about a girl who moves somewhere new.

READ ALOUD AND DISCUSSION

- Before reading, ask students if they have read or seen this book. Based on the cover and title of the book, ask students what they think the story will be about.
- Read *My Name is Yoon* to the class, make sure to show illustrations while reading, or after reading each page.
- After reading the book, ask students to describe Yoon. How does she feel at the beginning of the book, and how does she feel at the end of the book? Focus on the earlier moments. For instance, why does Yoon write “cat” instead of her own name? (She also writes bird and cupcake.) Why would Yoon want to be a cat? Why would she want to be a bird? How do we think Yoon is feeling in these moments? (The text points to her feeling alone, feeling as if she doesn’t have friends.)
- Sometimes Yoon wrinkles her nose. When her mother tells her that Yoon will be a wonderful student, Yoon wrinkles her nose. When she saw her name written in English, Yoon wrinkles her nose. What could it mean when Yoon wrinkles her nose like that? (Besides words, there are other ways people show comfort or discomfort. Emphasize that not all communication is verbal. Sometimes, when we are trying to “read” someone’s reaction, we can pay attention to body communication too.)
- Mention the teacher. Is she kind? How can we tell? What does she say? Does she have facial expressions that show kindness too? What might the teacher be thinking? (The teacher smiles. By the end of the book, she even hugs Yoon once she accepts her own name.)
- The teacher appears white, as does the student that becomes Yoon’s friend. So even with different racial backgrounds, the three of them are kind to each other. How can we show kindness to people who appear different from us? What did they have in common?
- By the end of the story, Yoon thinks the United States may be a good home. What changed? Why? (Students may mention: Yoon’s teacher was supportive; Yoon made a new friend; and/or Yoon’s mother said she was proud of her daughter.)
- In the final pages, Yoon declares, “I write my name in English now. It still means Shining Wisdom.” What does this mean? Why is this important to her? (Yoon gets to embrace her Korean culture and ancestry, while she is also learning to embrace a new American culture, which will eventually become her own as well.)
- Finally, all of us have value. What sort of contributions do you think Yoon can make to her classroom?

ACTIVITY CHOICES

There is an array of activities that would complement the book. We have suggested two activities to choose from, listed below.

- **Activity 1:** After reading, consider having a discussion that explores Yoon’s feelings. Make a chart to show how Yoon felt at the beginning of the story and at the end of the story. (Consider making three columns. The first column may be who Yoon is at the beginning of the story, the third column may be who Yoon is at the end of the story, and the middle column may be for actions, characters, or conversations that helped Yoon change.) For instance, earlier in the story, Yoon says, “I did not like America. Everything was different here.” What may

it feel like for someone who moves to a new place? How do you think Yoon was feeling at first? What did other people do that might have made Yoon feel better? What did Yoon do to help herself? Encourage personal reflection by asking the students if they have ever felt left out. What made them feel better? What would it be like to move somewhere new? (Perhaps some students in the room have already experienced immigration or have a personal connection to it. If so, let them volunteer to share as opposed to calling on them specifically.) Overall, the conversation should focus more on positive aspects of identity, and how we can learn to like things about ourselves (such as how Yoon did with her name). We should also note ways to help students, or people, when they feel alone. What kinds of things can we do? What can we say? List ideas on the board or on chart paper. Consider having students write or verbally share a sentence or two to capture their thoughts.

- **Activity 2:** One thing that made the story powerful was that Yoon gets to be Yoon. She can still be Korean, even while she begins to adapt to U.S. culture. In the end, Yoon celebrates her name. We can also celebrate our names. For this activity, students may make name tags for their desk, or design art with their name, playing with line, texture, font, size, etc, realizing their name is like art — special, unique, beautiful, a part of them. Acrostic poems may be another way to relish meaning for their name, choosing words or phrases (for each letter of their name) to describe who they are. Students may also look up meanings for their names using teacher-selected resources, such as books or guided internet sources (or by assigning a homework task to speak with their families about the meaning or origin of their name). Once students find a meaning for their name, they may try to reflect that in their name art (or acrostic poem). If there is no “clear meaning” for their name, encourage students to include imagery to capture their hobbies and/or interests and associate that with their name.

Whether activity one or two was chosen, consider wrapping up the lesson by revisiting the idea of cultural contributions. Ask the class to consider and discuss one more time: How do unique differences add to our community?



Extension Activities

SUGGESTIONS

It should be noted that students in the classroom will possess various levels of knowledge about other countries in the world. Locating the country of Korea on a map may be helpful (to increase geography knowledge, and to show distance from Korea to the U.S.). While learning more about Korean culture may be a wonderful experience for students, an in-depth study of another country is not necessarily required at this time. However, this does not mean a teacher should allow for, or encourage, a reductive or stereotypical conversation about immigrants or other countries. Instead, focus more on ways we are similar to Yoon, and other people in the class and around the world, no matter who we are or where we come from, as opposed to focusing primarily on differences. Reinforce human connection and interconnectedness.

LESSON 6

OUR FAMILIES: WHAT MAKES US DIFFERENT AND THE SAME?

Grade: 1 | Suggested Time: 45–60 minutes

Unit: We Are Part of a Larger Community – Encouraging Kindness, Social Awareness, and Empathy

Related Subject(s): Reading/Literacy; Social Studies/Family

Background

OBJECTIVES

- To understand that there are different structures and compositions of families.
- To discuss the idea that the diversity of families makes for a richer community and world.
- To share about our own family in an effort to connect to others.
- To recognize similarities and celebrate differences.
- To understand and embrace the idea of diversity.
- To recognize that a sense of loyalty and/or love envelopes and centers “family.”
- To encourage empathy.
- To find and build connections to others.

MATERIALS

- *One Family* by George Shannon and Blanca Gomez.
- More books about families are recommended in the Extension section. Consider adding them to the classroom library and/or using them in book groups to expand the notion of what constitutes a family.
- Writing and art materials for students.

ESSENTIAL IDEA

- A family can mean so many things! The size of our families can be different. Where our families are from may be different. The colors and racial makeup of our families may be different. The members of our families may be different. Yet, they can also feel the same. What brings all families together? Hopefully, it’s kindness, empathy, and love!

VOCABULARY

- Consider introducing words to increase familiarity with the reading material and for the class discussion: family (parents, children, siblings), extended family (grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, etc.), adoption, single parent, only child, interracial (also biracial, multiracial, etc.), gay and lesbian parents, etc.
- Exploring larger concepts may be important too, such as why “difference” isn’t wrong, and how it is important to “accept” and “embrace” others, and how “diversity” (such as diversity of families) is a good thing.
- Also, consider introducing the word: adjectives.

Lesson Procedure

OPENING

Before reading, ask students what makes a family. Encourage students to include various family structures, such as having two parents, one parent, same-sex parents, adopted families, families of similar and/or different racial backgrounds, etc. Families are both different, and similar.

READ ALOUD AND DISCUSSION

- Begin by asking students: What do you think of when we say the word “family”? Consider writing the word “family” on the board, or on chart paper. Build a web of students’ ideas. To guide them, ask more questions, such as: What do families do together? What are some of the members that make up a family? How are some families different? How are some families the same?
- Read *One Family* by George Shannon. When reading, note the different kinds of families. After reading, revisit the questions, asking students if they want to add anything else to their web of ideas. Summarize how families can be different (encourage the conversation to include social identities, such as gender, culture, language, religion, ethnicity/race, etc.). Ask students why this is a good thing? How does the diversity of people and families impact our community and world? End on a similarity, such as by asking: What do all families have in common?
- After reading, ask students to think about their own families. To encourage the use of the term “adjectives,” have students think of a word to describe their family, or have them write a word or sentence to describe what makes their family special or unique. What is their favorite thing about their family? What makes each member of their family unique? Consider having students write their responses on an index card or Post-it note, to collect and temporarily display (such as by adding to the existing web).

ACTIVITY AND CLOSING

- Consider having students create a portrait of their own families. If using paint, lessons in color mixing ahead of time are important! Apply similar lessons of color mixing, which were mentioned in the Racial Literacy Lessons for Kindergarten, pasted below:
 - There are many ways to make skin colors, and we advise co-teaching this lesson with an art teacher, if available. The way we advise making “skin color” is to start with a “true” color wheel orange. Add white to make orange a lighter tint and black to make orange a darker shade. To change the hue, consider adding yellow and/or red to the mix. Students should have time practicing this (as well as the teacher ahead of time). Using this method will demonstrate how the origin of our skin color is essentially the same, but as we were exposed to geographical differences throughout time and had to adapt, so did our skin colors. If not using paints, skin color crayons or oil pastels may be adequate.
- When students have created their portraits, have them write a sentence to describe their family. What are they proud of?
- Display family portraits. Somewhere near the student artwork, craft a statement that underscores both the beauty of diversity, and how love is our common family bond.



Extension Activities

SUGGESTIONS

- The book, *One Family*, features an interactive quality of counting numbers (one box of eight crayons, one hand of five cards) while also celebrating diverse families — a range of genders and perceived race/ethnicity — in a playful, interactive subtle way. One can count for so much more! Students may mimic the format of this book by finding ways to describe their own family. For instance, they may have “one” sibling, “two pets,” “three uncles,” and so on. Students may also say they have “two races” in their family. Or “two” moms. Encourage them to think deeply and diversely about this. They may provide an example for a series of numbers, or for just one chosen number. If students complete a series of numbers, consider assembling a small book. If students choose one number, consider having them create a compelling illustration to match, and display in the classroom. Also, assembling all of the students’ work into a comprehensive collection may make a nice “Families of Class/Grade ___ Book.” The overarching idea is that no matter who we are, or what family we come from, we all count.
- To expose students to various kinds of families, have them read through copies of the suggested books (listed below) in groups or centers. They should pick out titles that resonate with them, whether it’s because they are being exposed to something new, or they see themselves in the story. Tell students that at the end of the reading period (which the teacher may decide is in a few days, after students have had a chance to read through some and/or all of the books), they will share with the class what they liked about a particular book. The following picture books incorporate a diverse array of families:
 - *Over the Moon: An Adoption Tale* by Karen Katz. This is an optimistic, affirming story about international adoption, based on the author’s own experience.
 - *Mommy, Mama, and Me* by Leslea Newman. This book illustrates daily activities a toddler partakes in with its two mothers. It represents families with same-sex parents, without focusing on the fact they are both women.
 - *Stella Brings the Family* by Miriam B. Schiffer. This is the story of a girl who doesn’t have a mother to bring to a Mother’s Day Celebration, but she does have two fathers and an abundance of love. This book represents families with same-sex parents, and does so by focusing on the fact that they are both men. At the end of the book, the other parents in the class are also highlighted.
 - *Maybe Days: A Book for Children in Foster Care* by Jennifer Wilgocki. This book explores the world of foster care, introducing the various roles of those involved, such as parents, social workers, lawyers and judges. It features a realistic, yet gentle, kid-affirming message.
 - *Dreamers* by Yuyi Morales. Based on Morales’ own experience emigrating from Mexico with her son, this beautifully illustrated story is about a presumably single mother and her child who immigrate to the United States. The way they overcome some of the obstacles they face is through literacy, and making their voices “heard.”
- At the end of reading centers, students may create a list of what makes a family. The list should be diverse and affirming. Also, as already mentioned, they should find ways they connect to the story by thinking about and/or answering questions, such as the following: What did you like about the story? In what ways are you different from and similar to the characters in the story? As each student speaks, ask guiding questions that encourage deeper thinking and connection (i.e. “why” and “how” questions). While a student is speaking, ideally in front of a seated class, have the other students applaud and/or “thank them” when that student finishes sharing.

LESSON 7

CHILDREN AROUND THE WORLD

Grade: 1 | Suggested Time: 45+ minutes; 2–3 class periods.

Unit: We Are Part of a Larger Community – Encouraging Kindness, Social Awareness, and Empathy

Related Subject(s): Reading/Literacy; Social Studies

Background

OBJECTIVES

- To introduce concepts of geography (i.e. continents, countries, etc.)
- To enhance cultural and global awareness.
- To recognize similarities and celebrate differences.
- To embrace cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity.
- To encourage empathy.
- To find and build connections to others.
- To build a positive sense of self and identity.
- To celebrate the class community.

MATERIALS

- *Children Around the World* by Donata Montanari. Multiple copies of the text is ideal.
- Writing and art materials for students.

ESSENTIAL IDEA

- As people, we have both similarities and differences. By reading about the lives of twelve children from around the world, students will not only get a chance to enhance their global, cultural competency, they will also have the opportunity to find commonalities with the lives of diverse, fictionalized children.

VOCABULARY

- Consider introducing words to increase familiarity with geography and the reading material: continent, country (the list of countries mentioned in the text is included below), etc. Information about children’s lives are introduced, such as skin colors, hair styles, clothing, activities, school, religious beliefs, food, etc. Because of this, consider introducing the idea of nationality, as well as culture and ethnicity/race.
- The following countries are included: Canada, the United States, Bolivia, Mexico, Morocco, Greece, India, Tanzania, Australia, China, Japan, and the Philippines.

Lesson Procedure

OPENING

Consider launching the lesson by reviewing a map of the world. Since first grade students may have a burgeoning awareness of geography, it may be helpful to briefly introduce basic ideas of geography, such as the seven continents, major oceans, and the idea of countries. Tell students that they are going to read about the lives of twelve children who live in different countries in the world, as *Children Around the World* introduces us to twelve (fictionalized) children: Adam from Canada, Tim from the United States, Rosa from Bolivia, Miguel from Mexico, Fatima from Morocco, Stavros from Greece, Deepa from India, Malaika from Tanzania, Cathy from Australia, Ming Chan from China, Sadako from Japan, and Emilio from the Philippines. To enhance geography awareness and map skills, consider placing name tags and/or cut-outs of each character near the country of their origin. (If it’s desired, a class can spend time learning more about each country. Please keep in mind that the Racial Literacy Grade 2 curriculum primarily focuses on geography.)

READ ALOUD AND DISCUSSION

Before reading, ask students if they think they have more differences or more similarities with children around the world. Ask them to think about where they live, the language(s) they speak, the clothing they wear, what they learn in school, what they eat, their family dynamics, religious beliefs, activities, etc. Tell them that today we are going to learn about the lives of twelve children. Read *Children Around the World*. Highlight some of the children from the text. Ask students to think about one child who seems similar to them. Who is that? Ask students to think about one child who seems different from them. Who is that? If we approach it through a new angle, is there a way to find a similarity with someone whom they initially thought was different? Ask them to think about one way all of the children in the book are similar, or something they all have in common. Do the students also have this in common with the children from the book?

ACTIVITY AND CLOSING

After having a discussion, consider having students create pages in the style of the book, such as crafting a sentence to describe each of the following identifying questions: What is your name? Where do you live? What do you like to eat? What do you like to wear? What is your family like? What language(s) do you speak? What are your favorite activities or hobbies? Do you have religious beliefs and/or traditions? What do you learn in school? Give students ample time to think about and craft their sentences, as well as accompanying illustrations (the text uses beautiful collage, if that is of interest to mimic). Another class period or two may be needed for students to create “publishable” pages. Consider having students share their work with the class, and assemble their pages to form a class book, similar to *Children Around the World*. Rename it to reflect the classroom community, such as *Children of Classroom ___*, or however the particular class is referenced.



Extension Activities

SUGGESTIONS

As mentioned in the lesson notes, reading this book may present a great opportunity to expand students’ awareness of geography. Consider using software, such as Google Earth, to learn more about each country, such as how close they are to major bodies of water, what type of terrain each student lives in, etc. From there, conversations and activities may emerge, discussing the types of seasons the children experience, the native trees and animals, etc. Grade 2 lessons primarily focus on geography, so while an in-depth study may not be necessary, it may be helpful to expose students to geographical concepts and establish threads they may connect later.

LESSON 8

CELEBRATING OUR UNIQUE CLASS COMMUNITY

Grade: 1 | Suggested Time: 45 minutes

Unit: We Are Part of a Larger Community – Encouraging Kindness, Social Awareness, and Empathy

Related Subject(s): Reading/Literacy; Social Studies/Family

Background

OBJECTIVES

- To recognize similarities and celebrate differences.
- To encourage empathy.
- To find and build connections to others.
- To build a positive sense of self and identity.
- To celebrate the unique characteristics of the classroom community.

MATERIALS

- Writing and art materials for students.
- If making a video for final project, access to recording equipment and video software is necessary, such as using iPads and iMovie.

ESSENTIAL IDEA

- This lesson is the culmination of the Racial Literacy Unit for Grade 1. The overarching idea is for students to reflect on previous lessons and to place themselves into their growing understanding of the world and formation of identity. As a final class celebration is planned, consider inviting parents and guardians to a communal event, ahead of time.

VOCABULARY

- At this point, students may be familiar with most of the terms used in this lesson.

Lesson Procedure

OPENING

Remind students about the various ideas they've learned recently: how differences can be strengths, that acts of kindness can fill other people's buckets (and their own buckets), the importance of being inclusive, that there is a beauty to helping others, that our names can be unique or special and are always beautiful, that our families are both similar and different, and that children around the world are actually quite similar to us!

ACTIVITY

Tell students that for our final activity, we are going to recognize and celebrate the unique characteristics of our own classroom community! In order to do this, we are going to think about what makes us unique, and what fills our buckets, how we fill others' buckets. We're going to first write our ideas down, and then we are going to record them. (The teacher may decide what is best, such as making a picture book, a video, an iMovie of students drawings with voiceover, a class mural, etc.)

As a guideline, consider having students answer the following questions: 1) What makes you unique? What makes your family unique? 2) How do you work with, or help, others? 3) What fills your bucket? 4) How do you fill others people's buckets? 5) What is something beautiful you have noticed about your surroundings? 5) What makes this classroom unique? 6) As members of this community, what is something we all have in common?

CLOSING

In whatever format is chosen, students should share their ideas with the larger class. It is suggested that students make illustrations and use software to record their voices. The teacher, with assistance if needed, may turn the students' artwork and voice narration into an iMovie that can be viewed during a class celebration, and later posted to a password-protected blog. Of course, consider inviting parents and guardians ahead of time, turning the students' ideas about collaboration and identity-affirming work into a larger celebration.



Extension Activities

SUGGESTIONS

To continue bridging people around the world, and establishing commonalities, consider partaking in a pen pal exchange. If a teacher is looking for a platform to begin connecting with other students around the world, consider joining Empatico, an initiative from the Kind Foundation, which aims to "broaden kids' world views through meaningful interactions with peers across the globe." To get started, visit: empatico.org