

Diversity

WriteReader Lesson Plan



I promise to play with everyone. It doesn't feel nice to be left out.



Learning Standards

WriteReader serves a global community of educators. Please use the space on the last page to personalize this lesson plan based on your region's standards.



Modifications & Differentiation

Please use the space on the last page to personalize this lesson plan based on your students' needs. (i.e. IEP's, ELL's)

Lesson Objectives

Students will:

1

Recognize and accept similarities & differences in spaces where they live, learn, and play

2

Commit to being inclusive through their words and actions

3

Use writing to communicate and acknowledge diversity as a strength

Preparation

- Adults should do some background research on this topic. There are many excellent classroom resources and self-guided learning opportunities for professional development available online. Be sure that you are prepared to handle this appropriately.
- This lesson is geared towards children in Grades 1-4. It could take 2-10 hours, depending on how much time you allot for it in your day plans. The pacing will depend on your class/group's age and abilities.
- If you are new to WriteReader, click on these links to find out how to use the app and its functions.



Pre-writing Phase

Choose one or two of the pre-writing activities to deepen students' understanding of the topic so that they can write meaningfully about it.

1. **Watch** videos with an inclusive message, such as:
 - Being Different is Beautiful
 - What Makes You Special?
 - Respect Rap
2. **Read** thought-provoking stories like:
 - The Day You Begin by Jacqueline Woodson
 - This Is Me by Jamie Lee Curtis & Laura Cornell
 - All Are Welcome by Alexandra Penfold
3. **Play** with some LEGO ® blocks. Ask the students to sort the blocks and pick out just the blue ones, for example. Now ask them to build something but they may only use the blue

TEACHING NOTES

DISCUSSION

- ▶ *Please consult other educators, coaches, and parents who are people of color or members of a minority or marginalized community. Their perspectives will help you to grow in your own understanding of this complex and important topic.*

CURRICULUM

- ▶ *Carefully consider the types of materials, images, and books that are available in your teaching environment. Are they representative of all children?*
- ▶ *Mindfully choose the appropriate learning standards and SEL competencies.*

INSTRUCTION

- ▶ *Intentionally create a classroom culture that is safe, trustworthy, and inclusive; only then can you discuss this topic with sensitivity and sincerity.*

blocks. (Note: Choose a color that is obviously not a skin color.) Likely, the children will begin to say that they want to use other colors and that there's not enough blocks. At this point, open the discussion about diversity - how we're all different and that's what makes our communities richer. You could informally discuss this for a few minutes while everyone is playing with (all) the blocks.

4. **Talk** about what they have noticed or learned from these activities (above).
 - Discuss and define the word diversity.
 - Talk about similarities and differences, and how we can and must appreciate both. Be sure to discuss nationality, culture, language, and beliefs, as well as appearance. Acknowledge that it is our differences which make us unique. (Note: Experts caution us about the "myth of color blindness." We are not all the same but we are all of equal worth.)
 - Ask open-ended questions. Guide the children to personalize their answers without using hurtful language, such as derogatory names and stereotypical descriptions. Some questions might be:
 - How does it feel to be treated unfairly?
 - How might you react if you felt judged or left out?
 - What should you do if you see prejudiced behaviour or hear hurtful statements about someone else, or experience it yourself? (You should comment on personal safety here as well. Advise children to seek help from a trusted adult.)

Suggested Writing Topics & Activities

1. **Brainstorm** and write a list of words with positive connotations that promote and welcome diversity. (eg. love, harmony, acceptance, inclusion, peace, community, respect, goodness, kindness, equality). Then **create word clouds** (digitally or with pencil crayons/markers & paper) using words from your list. Students can make screenshots of their digital word cloud or take photos of their word art. These images can be uploaded to WriteReader and students can expand on their thinking by writing about the word meanings. (eg. Peace is ... Love is ...)
2. Children can note **similarities and differences**. Remind them that our differences are what makes us unique and special. Guide children to frame differences as simple statements or observations and always be complimentary. Some sentence frames to get students started might be:
 - My friend has _____, I have _____, and we both _____.
 - My neighbour speaks _____, I speak _____, and we both _____.
 - My teacher is _____, I am _____, and we both _____.
3. Students might wish to **compare and contrast** words from their word cloud. They might also make connections or give opposite meanings. For example:
 - The opposite of love is hate. The opposite of kind is mean. The opposite of including is leaving someone out.
 - We can create more love in our school by _____. We can create more respect on the sports field by _____. We can create peace in the world by _____.

4. Children can write a book about the following statement and subtitles.
- How diversity strengthens your:
 - class
 - sports team & community
 - city & country



Manjot is my best fren we are in the sam class we play on the sam socr tem and liv on the sam shtret



Manjot is my best friend. We are in the same class. We play on the same soccer team and live on the same street.



I like to go to Manjots hows his mom olwas fes us good fod



I like to go to Manjot's house. His Mom always feeds us good food.

Celebrating Young Authors

1. **Whole School Assembly** - Plan an assembly for the entire school with the theme of diversity and inclusion. Ask other classes to participate too. Show one of the videos (above) and plan to have the children read some of their WriteReader books. Perhaps the school choir could sing a few related songs. Invite a guest speaker, as well as parents and community members.
2. **Harmony Day Open House** - Celebrate Harmony Day at your school or club and host an open house. Invite parents, grandparents, and friends from the community (eg. neighbors, local politicians, police officers, athletes, piano teacher, coaches, etc.). Have WriteReader books on display and also host a short reading of a few books. Set up a few activity stations around the gym or foyer like a positive message graffiti wall (paper & crayons) or a storybook center. Culminate with a social (tea & treats from various ethnicities or a multicultural potluck feast) where families and new friends can mingle. The organizers should facilitate introductions to encourage getting to know someone new.

**LEARNING
STANDARDS**

**MODIFICATIONS &
DIFFERENTIATION**

Children as creators
Learning to read through writing

