

Understand the Difference

Summary

This lesson plan explores diversity and cultural difference through the process of family history/genealogy. By exploring and understanding their own cultural heritage students will gain an awareness of the struggles of many members of ethnic minority groups. Students will focus on minority groups in Utah and their experiences by reading oral histories and personal narratives.

Time Frame

5 class periods of 70 minutes each

Life Skills

Communication, Character, Social & Civic Responsibility

Materials

Day One

- Dahlia Cordova story in [Missing Stories](#)
- [Autobiographical Questionnaire handout](#)

Day Two

- Colored note cards or slips of colored paper
- [I Can Reduce Racism, Hatred, Prejudice, and Violence handout](#)
- [Who Am I? A Human Being handout](#)

Day Three

- [Genealogy Ideas](#)
- [Family Griot](#)
- [Family Notes](#)
- [What My Name Means to Me](#)
- [Research Your Roots](#)
- [Family Menu Interview](#)

Day Four

- [It's a Human Thing](#)
- [Helpful Twister](#)

Day Five

- [What We Have in Common](#)
- [A Question of Fair Play](#)

Background for Teachers

Teachers should be aware of the various ethnic minority groups living in Utah and the struggles each has faced historically and today. Teachers should have an understanding of the (overall) root causes of discrimination in U.S. culture, and how these are played out each day, in often unseen ways.

Student Prior Knowledge

none

Intended Learning Outcomes

Unit Objectives

Students will recognize the differences and similarities between themselves and other ethnic groups.

Students will develop a greater understanding of their own family heritage.

Students will evaluate their own behavior toward different cultures and races.

Students will discover ways to reduce racism, hatred, prejudice, and violence.

Students will create avenues for understanding other cultures and ethnic groups

Students will create and discuss methods to cross cultural and ethnic lines in order to include more diverse participation in activities most commonly associated with "white" people.

Students will discover the ways their own experiences and knowledge of the world prevents them from seeing difference--which is a form of exclusion and prejudice.

Psychological (Personal) Objectives

Awareness of self and others in relation to self.

Understanding that we may be racist in our actions even when we think we are not.

New knowledge to aide individuals in examining their own feelings and behaviors--self and other.

Instructional Procedures

Day One

Have the students read (individually) the story of Dahlia Cordova, Assistant Principal, Glendale intermediate School, from Missing Stories.

When the students have completed the reading have them break into small groups (3-4 students) to discuss the story.

Use the following prompts:

What was Cordova's family background/ethnicity/heritage?

What did she learn from her experiences as a child?

What is the overall message of her story?

What does she teach us about diversity and difference?

After 15-20 minutes of small group discussion, bring the class back together and process the story as a class.

Introduce the family story writing assignment. This project will be due in eight classroom periods. The story the students produce will be similar to the stories they read from Missing Stories (pg. 498-405).

The homework assignments over the next seven class periods are designed to help students collect information for their family history/story (see attachments).

Assign the "[Autobiographical Questionnaire](#)" for homework.

Day Two

As the students enter the classroom divide them into groups of four (4) by handing each student a different colored note card (this is now the group they will work with throughout the lesson). This will force students to sit and work with students they might not often talk with.

Give each student a copy of the handout "[I Can Reduce Racism, Hatred, Prejudice, and Violence?](#)"

In their groups, they should brainstorm suggestions of ways to reduce racism, hatred, prejudice, and violence in their own communities (home, school, or neighborhood). They should write their own responses directly on the worksheet and then discuss their individual ideas as a small group.

After the groups have discussed the worksheet gather back as an entire class and discuss the group findings. Have each group share one of their resources at a time. Continue to go around to each group until the groups have no more suggestions. Keep a list of their suggestions on the board.

Discuss each as they are shared by the group.

Give each student a copy of the "[Who Am I? A Human Being](#)" handout. Have them begin the assignment in class (if they do not complete it, assign for homework). This assignment should help students begin the process of writing their own family story.

Day Three

Introduce students to the idea of a family story by giving each student the handouts "[Genealogy Ideas](#)," "[Family Griot](#)," "[Family Notes](#)," "[What My Name Means to Me](#)," "[Research Your Roots](#)" and "[Family Menu Interview](#)."

Give students the opportunity to look at each of the handouts and have them take some time to think about how each of the individual handouts will aid them in the process of writing their personal family story.

Lead the class through a discussion of how each of the worksheets will provide them valuable research/resources in the process of writing their family history. Discuss how each--names, menu, ancestors, etc--contributes to their family's story.

Remind students that their final Family Story is due in six class periods.

Day Four

Write the following words on the board: Gender, Age, Values, Culture, Ethnicity. Make sure the class can define each of the terms. Ask the class how they believe each of these terms their "world view." Have a brief discussion with the class, making sure that each student understands the terms. In order to allow students to think individually about these issues, assign the handouts "[Its a Human Thing](#)" and "[Helpful Twister](#)."

Have the students individually fill out each of the worksheets. When all students have completed the worksheet, have them get together with their "color coded" group from the last class period. Instruct the students to discuss their "family roots" and "family customs" in the group and how, each of these has effected their "world view." One person in the group should record the groups answers.

When the groups have concluded their discussion (15 minutes), discuss the findings as a class. (Keep track of the responses on the board).

If there is time remaining in class, have the students begin to write (outline) their family story based upon the information they have gathered.

Students should have a rough draft of their story for the next class period (for peer editing).

Day Five

Have students sit in their "color coded" groups and work on the "[What We Have in Common](#)" and "[A Question of Fair Play](#)" handout.

After the students have completed the worksheets (as a group), they should take turns reading his/her Family Story rough drafts (to the group). Group members should give constructive feedback to the author. Continue this process until each student has read their essay.

Even though the in-class lesson has ended, students have four more class periods to finish their stories.

Schedule time in class for students to present (read) their stories in class.

Bibliography

Kelen, L.G, & Stone, E.H. (2000). [Missing Stories: An Oral History of Ethnic Minority Groups in Utah](#). Utah State University Press. Logan, UT.

Authors

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