

## Living With Diversity: School & Community

### the goal



Every class in every school in America is made up of people from different cultures and races. America is known as the “Great Melting Pot” because it has embraced the idea that our diversity is the fundamental key to our greatness. The students need to learn that this diversity is not only inevitable, but it is an actual benefit to their education. By respecting diversity the students can learn from other cultures and open their eyes to things about people they never knew before.

### the objective



This exercise will help the students realize the diverse cultures represented within their immediate environment and the personal benefits they have received from these people.

## e x e r c i s e

- 1 Ask the students to create an outline of activities for any given weekday and a Saturday. Ask the students to use this outline to identify the activities such as class, lunch, and sports practice that may occur during the week as well as social outings and family obligations that occur on the weekend.
- 2 After the students have outlined two days ask the students to give brief descriptions of the different activities identified. These descriptions should include whether or not the students liked each activity.
- 3 Now ask the students to give the approximate total number of people they come in contact with during each activity. For example, there may be 20 people in math class, 100 at lunch and 30 at the ballgame on Saturday.
- 4 After the number of people for each activity have been identified, add all of the numbers together and write this number on the paper.

- 5 Now ask the students to identify the different races and ethnicities they think are represented within the different activities listed that are different than the students. Pick several activities and lead the students through a talk on the specific people involved in the activity and talk about their specific ethnicity.
- 6 Ask the students to look at the estimates of the total number of different ethnicities involved in two days of their life versus the total number of all people involved in these activities. Assist the students in determining the percentage of people they come in contact with during these two days that represent ethnicities different from the students.
- 7 Now lead the students in a discussion dealing with the inevitability of diversity within their daily life. Point out to the students that part of every weekday or weekend will involve people of different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Ask the students to affirm the inevitability of diversity.
- 8 Now explain to the students that the inevitability of diversity is actually one of the greatest lessons they will learn in school.
- 9 Explain that the diversity within their world is a reflection of the diversity within the working world. If they learn to appreciate this diversity now, they will be much better prepared to enter life beyond school.
- 10 Ask the students to look back at the list and the number of ethnicities they identified as well as the percentage of people they believe fall within these ethnic groups. Explain to the students that their breakdown is based solely upon visible differences such as skin color. It does not take into account the personal differences such as religion, actual lineage, or personal beliefs.
- 11 Explain to the students that skin color is only one way diversity is recognized. In fact, people of different skin color are likely to have more in common within a given community than people of the same skin color that live in different regions and communities.



12 Again, ask the students to affirm the inevitability of diversity within their world and reassure the students that these diversities will be present throughout their life.

13 Finally spend some time talking with the students about the many benefits this diversity brings to their community and the world around them. For example, talk about the great leaders, entertainers, inventors, and societal contributors that have different ethnic backgrounds. Point out to the students that they have realized many comforts and advances in their life due to the contributions of people from all different types of ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

### **summary**

Every community is made up of people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The students need to understand that this diversity is inevitable and also a valuable part of their education. They need to understand that they have benefited directly from people of different backgrounds and these benefits should be realized and appreciated.



## and hints

outcomes



As the students outline their day, take time to talk about specific events they enjoy and emphasize the involvement of other people within those events.

When the students begin identifying the different people involved in each event, be sure they identify not only the people directly involved, but also the people who are passive participants.

After the students have affirmed the inevitability of diversity, validate their opinion with a personal example of how your life is better as a result of the societal contribution of a person from a different ethnic background.

talking

## points



- As the students outlines their day, continually probe the students to identify the number of people they come in contact with during each event. Ask for reaction from the students as they identify the number of people they come in contact with each day.
- Spend time with the students discussing the inevitability of diversity and how this diversity is one of the key ingredients to making this country as strong as it is.
- Talk with the students about contributions of key public and personal figures of different races. Help the students realize that they have directly benefited from people of different ethnicities.

probing

## questions



- How many different people do you think you come in contact with each day? How many different ethnicities do you think are represented by these people?
- Why is it important to accept the inevitability of cultural and ethnic diversity?
- How has this diversity made our nation stronger?
- In what way has someone of a different ethnic background made your life better?

# Skills Lesson Recap



## the goal

Every class in every school in America is made up of people from different cultures and races. America is known as the “Great Melting Pot” because it has embraced the idea that diversity is the fundamental key to greatness. Today you learned that this diversity is not only inevitable but it is an actual benefit to your education. By respecting diversity you learn from other cultures and open your eyes to things about people you never knew before.

## exercise

### key points

- You created an outline as well as a brief description of all your daily activities and estimated how many people you came in contact with during these activities.
- Next you made a list of all the different races and ethnicities you came in contact with.
- You determined the percentage of people that you came in contact with on a daily bases that represented ethnicities different from your own.
- You discussed the many benefits diversity brings to your community and the world around you

## consequence of not

By overlooking the value that ethnic and cultural diversity have within your community you are cheating yourself out of a truly well rounded education, social life, and familial life.

## using this skill



## benefits

## of using this skill

Recognizing and appreciating the need for cultural diversity will make your education, social, and familial life more rewarding and fulfilling.

## Living With Diversity: School & Community

WEEKDAY ACTIVITIES	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY (including, if you like the activity)	Y N		TOTAL# PEOPLE	ETHNICITIES (NOT LIKE ME) # %		
TOTAL							

SATURDAY ACTIVITIES	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY (including, if you like the activity)	Y N		TOTAL# PEOPLE	ETHNICITIES (NOT LIKE ME) # %		
TOTAL							

What are some of the benefits diversity brings to life?

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Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Facilitator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_