



ACTION DIVERSITY

Middle & High School Grades Lesson Plan



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
STUDENTS AGAINST VIOLENCE EVERYWHERE**
322 Chapanoke Rd., Suite 110, Raleigh, North Carolina 27603
(Toll free) 866-343-7283 * Fax 919-661-7777 * www.nationalsave.org

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SPECIAL THANKS!

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Objectives

- Teach the participants the definition of "Diversity"
- Show the positive effect of "Diversity"
- Incorporate "Diversity" into participant's lives
- Emphasize to students that it is important to not just teach that we should have tolerance towards other groups, but that we should respect the richness of differences among people
- Help students realize that discriminating against others affects everyone negatively
- Bring awareness of stereotyping, and how it is the most widely used form of discrimination which can lead to serious repercussions

Materials Needed

- Ice Breaker "Train Wreck" Materials:
 - Masking Tape
- Discussion on Diversity
 - Handout 1 – Definitions & Terms Relating to Diversity
 - Handout 2 – Representation Composition of the Global Village
 - Handout 3 – Facts & Figures Relating to Diversity
 - Dictionaries for Students (optional)
- Activities Relating to Diversity
 - Masking Tape – "Crossing the Line"
 - Paper/Pencils – "Thumbs Up"
- Activities Relating to Stereotypes
 - Handout 4 – "Windows"
 - Paper/Pencils – "Stereotype Jigsaw"



Intended Audience

- Students in Grades 6-12

Ice Breaker/Awareness Activity

Train Wreck

Special Note: The maximum participants for this activity are 20. If you have more than 20 people you can vary the activity to a form of an "up/down" strategy by removing one seat or desk in the room and have participants just stand by their seats with the person in the "middle" having to come to the front of the room.

- Preparation: Count the number of participants for the activity. Place small strips of masking tape for people to stand on – form a circle with the strips. There should be 1 less strip of tape than you have participants.
- Ask participants to stand on a strip of tape, with one person standing in the center of the circle.
- The person in the middle says something that he or she has done out loud. (for example: I have traveled abroad or I have gone scuba diving)
- Everyone who has done what the person in the middle calls out has to move to find a new space, including the person in the middle.
- The person left without a space is the new person in the middle.
- Repeat several times so that at least a few people have had a chance to be in the middle.

Let's Talk About It!

What do you think is the point of this activity?
How did it feel to be the person in the middle?
How did it feel to find a spot in the circle?
Did you learn anything about other people in our group?

Optional Icebreakers: "People Bingo" (from Diverse Universe Elementary Lesson Plan) or "Aliens" (from How to be a Good Listener Lesson Plan.)

Instruction:

• **Discussion About Diversity:**

- Ask students if they know what the word *diversity* means. Tell students that: "*diversity* is a word that we hear repeated a lot. We hear the word *diversity* in many different ways. Each of us has things that come to mind when we hear the word *diversity*. Let's come up with our own definition of the word *diversity*."
- Ask for student's responses. Record words or phrases on the board, overhead or flipchart. Give an example of a documented definition of *diversity* (Webster's dictionary defines the word *diversity* as: 1) The fact or quality of being diverse; difference. 2) A point of respect in which things differ) or ask students to look-up the word *diversity* in the dictionary and report. Compare the 2 definitions (student and documented definition.) Keep the definitions up and visible in the classroom. (Use **Handout 1** for aiding with definitions.)
 - Diverse = Different, varied
 - Culture = beliefs, values, behaviors, customs and symbols (language) that are looked at as a whole and passed down and shared by a human group
 - Stereotype = a general idea or concept about a particular group, race or sex that usually is negative and applied to all people who are related to this group
 - Prejudice or Bias = an opinion or idea that is developed without knowing or by ignoring facts that prove otherwise. Often these opinions and ideas create an intolerance or hatred for others that this prejudice/bias attitude is directed towards and can lead to injury or harm
 - Discrimination = treating a group differently by showing partiality to one group over another, treating a collective group less favorably, and/or using a prejudice or biased judgment to exclude a group
 - Persecution = showing aggression and/or abusing a person or group for reasons based upon prejudiced or biased ideas/concepts
 - Minority = a part of the population that differs from other parts of the larger controlling group in some way
 - Racism = a belief that a person's race is the main factor that determines human characteristics and abilities and that racial differences make one race better or more superior than another
- Use **Handout 2** as an overhead. Introduce the facts you'll go through with the following:
 - If we shrunk the world's population to one village, there would be 100 humans of who:
 - 60 are Asians
 - 12 are Europeans

- 15 are Westerners (9 Latin Americans, 5 North Americans, 1 Oceanian)
- 13 are Africans
(UN Dept. of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division [World Prospects: The 2000 Revision])
- 50 are female
- 50 are male
(US Bureau of the Census International Data Base [Table 094: Midyear Population by age and sex 2001])
- 80 would be non-white
- 20 would be white
(US Bureau of the Census International Data Base [Table 094: Midyear Population 2001])
- 20 people would earn 89% of the entire world's wealth
(The International Herald Tribune – 2/5/99)
- 17 would be unable to read
(UNICEF [The State of the World's Children, 1999])
- 13 would suffer from malnutrition
(UN Food and Agriculture Organization report [cited at OBGYN.net])
- 1 would die within the year
- 2 would give birth within a year
(US Census Bureau [World Vital Events Per Time Unit 2001])
- 25 would have poor housing
(Habitat for Humanity International [Why Habitat is Needed])
- 2 would have a college education
(UNESCO Institute for Statistics, World Education Indicators [Gross Enrollment Ratio by Sex])

(Take from David Brown: Nota Bene: The Global Village at: <http://www.davidpbrown.co.uk/nota-bene/the-global-village.html>; Original by: Balu, Engelken & Grosso/Balu, Engelken & Grosso)

Use **Handout 3** to go through the facts and figures, which include:

- Almost half of all hate crimes are because of racial prejudice. (This means that most people are picked on because of their race.) (*Diversity Central*: http://diversityhotwire.com/business/diversity_statistics.html#hate)
- One out of every five hate crimes is committed against a white person. (So, not only are minorities discriminated against). (*Diversity Central*: http://diversityhotwire.com/business/diversity_statistics.html#hate)
- If all minority Americans lived in an independent country, it would be the 15th largest in the world. (So, if you took all the minorities that live in America and put them by themselves in just one country, that country would have more people than Great Britain, France, Italy or Spain.) (*Population Reference Bureau*: http://www.prb.org/Content/NavigationMenu/PRB/AboutPRB/Population_Bulletin2/Americas_Racial_and_Ethnic_Minorities.htm#diversity)
- One in five United States residents are immigrants. (So, we live, work and go to school with many different races, cultures, and religion which we all have to learn to get along and work together so that our differences will make us better.) (*U.S. Bureau of Census*: <http://usinfo.state.gov/usa/diversity/census02.htm>)
- Youth 5-17 years old are more diverse than the population as a whole. (So, as students, we go to school with and are friends with more diverse people than
- our parents or other adults.) (*U.S. Bureau of Census*: <http://www.census.gov/population/pop-profile/1999/chap02.pdf>)
- What about youth in our area? (Contact your guidance office or area school district office for a racial composition of students in your school or district.)

- Praise the group for their responses and input. Bring the discussion around to the fact that diversity is an important and positive part of life. Ask students why is this so? Why is diversity an important and positive part of life? Why do we need diverse groups of people? What if we were all the same? Ask the students to think of and share an example of their meeting or encountering someone different than they are and how it has had a positive impact or influence in their lives.

Optional: Taking the Diversity Discussion further: Go back to the list of words that were brainstormed for the definition. Tell the students that a lot of different words and phrases came out of talking about the one word *diversity*. Point out the words race, ethnic(ity), and culture(al). Divide your group according to the number of participants/students keeping group sizes to 3-5 participants. Assign each group a specific word or phrase related to diversity to research, have them look up definitions to these words and to gain a good understanding of the word. As the groups work, go around the room to make sure groups are on task and that their information is accurate and factual. Have the groups record their information on flipchart paper and report out their findings to the group. Post these flipcharts around the room.

Activities Relating to Diversity

- **“Crossing the Line” (Grades 6-12)**

- Take students to an empty room or clear the middle of the classroom. Create 2 parallel lines with the masking tape approximately 15 foot apart. Have all students stand behind the same line.
- Ask students for the following questions to walk across the line on the other side of the room if the following questions pertain to them. They are to continue crossing back and forth across the room as the questions pertain to them. Sample questions:
 - "Cross the line if..."
 - You have been teased because of the food you eat
 - You have been picked on because of the music you listen to
 - You have been teased because of the way you talk
 - You have been picked on because of your size, weight or height
 - You have been made fun of because of something you said
 - You have ever been treated differently because of your race or skin color
 - You have ever felt different because of your religion
 - You have ever been teased because of your appearance
 - You have ever felt like you were not as "good" as someone else because of the clothes you wear
 - You have ever been treated differently because of where you live
 - You have ever been singled out in a group because of your ideas, thoughts, or opinions
 - You have ever been treated different because of your sex
 - Then tell everyone:
 - "Please stand on the line if you crossed the line for any conditions we just asked."

- **“Thumbs Up: Everybody’s Different (All Grades)**

- Using a blank piece of paper, have students write their name in large letters (leaders may help younger students or have names on paper ahead of time). Students will then make an Acrostic using the letters of their name to begin words that describe themselves. Assist students by helping them to brainstorm words that they might use. To add to the uniqueness of each student’s creation they will make a thumbprint on their paper. Leaders could then discuss how we all have different thumbprints no matter how much “alike” we are. Compare the ways students with the same or similar names described themselves, or the same letters in their names.
 - NOTE: An Acrostic is a series of lines in which the first letter in each line, form a word or name. An example for **JIM** is:

Jolly
Interesting
Male

WRAP-UP:

- Discuss how this activity pertains to the diversity that everyone faces in their lives. The lines were set far apart to show that each path can be long and sometimes difficult. It also shows that they are not alone in their walk with diversity. The opposite motion of the people walking represents the different types of diversity people face daily.

Discussion About Stereotypes:

Discuss with the group: “Think about our activities up to this point, at some point in time each of us will be the person in “the middle” or the person “standing up” for things different about ourselves. We may be asked to defend who we are, or unfortunately, we may be judged or discriminated against because of something about ourselves that we cannot change such as: physical qualities, gender, intellect, race, or age.”

“Many times people are unable to embrace differences in people. Why? Why do you think it’s difficult for people to accept other people’s differences “

“Most people, by nature, like being in places of comfort. Getting into unfamiliar groups or settings makes us feel uncomfortable. Think of your first day of middle or high school. You had come from a school where you were comfortable. You had been there for a few years and were the eldest of the students. Now you were put in a new environment ... new halls, new teachers, new everything. You were THE NEW KID! For many, you were automatically grouped or “labeled.” What are some things that come to mind or some things you often hear when you think of *FRESHMEN (or 6th Grader)?*” (Record responses on board or flipchart paper.)

“For the most part, are all the responses you gave true about every single person in the freshmen (or 6th grade) class? This is an example of a *stereotype*. An idea or label has been placed on a group of people, so that all people of that group are thought of in having a particular trait or characteristic. It is untrue, it is unfair, and it’s a widely used form of discrimination.”

Activities Relating to Stereotypes

- **“Windows” (Grades 6-9)**
 - Make and distribute copies of **Handout 4** to each participant. Instruct the group that there is a different word or phrase in each “pane” of the “window.” For each word or phrase, participants are to draw what comes to mind for each picture. Note: If time does not permit for students to draw for each area, copy the “window” onto transparency paper and use as an overhead. Solicit responses from students for descriptions for each word or phrase. Caution students to only think about what a typical person in each category generally “looks” like.
- **“Stereotype Jigsaw” (Grades 9-12)**
 - Ask: “What are some diverse categories of people?” Responses can include: Race, Religion, Economic Status, Gender, Age, Handicap or Special Needs, Ethnicity. Explain that these are all characteristics of people that can distinguish us from one another, but can also be the basis for discrimination.
 - Organize students into groups based upon the total number of participants in the lesson plan. (Aim for groups of 5 individuals). Assign a diversity category to each group. (i.e. one group can be “race,” the second “religion,” and so forth.) Then, ask each group to list a specific group or sector of individuals within their category. (i.e. for “age” chose teens or elderly.)
 - Ask each group to brainstorm stereotypes for their chosen group within their category. Then review the list. Decide on the most common stereotype, and come up with a logical explanation of why this is a typical label for this group.
 - Have the students in the groups count off. Then “Jigsaw” the groups. All of the ones should go into a new group, all of the twos, etc.
 - Each group should now contain a person from each category.
 - Ask participants to go around their group and discuss each category.
 - They should:
 - Share their main category and group of people, the chosen stereotype and the possible explanation for that stereotype
 - Ask their group to answer the following questions for the stereotype:
 - How does this information apply to you?
 - How does this information apply to your school?
 - How can we improve it?
 - Have the next participant in each group share their category and group with stereotypes and discuss it using the same questions.
 - Bring the groups back together and discuss the information given. Go around and mention all the categories and groups and ask for volunteers to report out good ideas on ways to dispel or fix stereotypes of the groups.

Debrief/Wrap-up

Wrap-up the lesson by saying: “It is one thing to understand the significance and positive attributes of diversity, but to really discuss the negative sides to it involves discussing discrimination and stereotypes and how we all can recognize how it can harm us all. Hopefully in these activities information was not only gained about other people, but also, about ourselves and how we view people with differences.”

Final debrief questions:

- What did you learn about yourself through this activity?
- What did you learn about our school?
- What are some things we can do to disperse myths of diversity?
- How we can we share this information with others?

Taking It A Step Further – Service Projects

As a class or group, discuss possible service projects that would incorporate ideas presented in the class. Focus on ways to educate the entire school and/or community on the importance of accepting and embracing differences in people as well as changing stereotyping or labeling.

1. Have the participants create a skit or activity/lesson plan to present to elementary or middle school students on the issue of diversity

- Include the following:
 - Discussion on what diversity is
 - The types of diversity
 - What to do when diversity becomes a challenge
 - Be creative and have fun!

Students should also plan a follow-up activity with the elementary or middle school students (i.e. Fund raiser or service project)

- ### **2. Plan a Cultural Awareness Fair** where dress, food, activities, and decorations reflect different cultures around the world. Students can explore the many cultures represented in their school including students and staff. Students can prepare foods for the different cultures and prepare an appreciation meal for the staff and faculty of the school.
- ### **3. Organize a Cultural Awareness Week** in which each day is designated with a certain ethnicity that is represented in the school. Recognize the ethnic background of the day by providing food or an item at lunch or a bag of goodies in homeroom.
- ### **4. Hold a “Mix It Up” Day** where students step out of their comfort zones to sit with someone new, meet someone they don’t know, and socializing with others who are different than they are.

Additional Resources

- Teaching Kids About Prejudice www.pta.org
- Mix It Up www.mixitup.org
- Kids Health <http://www.kidshealth.org/kid/feeling/emotion/diversity.html>
- Teaching Tolerance www.tolerance.org

Extensions

- Language Arts (MS) – Have students write about someone different from them, that has had a positive impact on their life. Assign reading from works of literature, books, and poetry that pertain to diversity
- Language Arts (HS) – Written essays (for example on a topic such as how high school cliques lead to violence)
- Social Studies (MS) – Search newspaper and magazine articles that focus on diversity or multi-cultural issues. Have students bring the articles to class for discussion in small groups.
- Social Studies (HS) – Discussion on diversity today in the world, in current events, and/or political leaders
- Healthful Living – At the end of the year reflect on what activities you were good at, what activities others were good at, what activities you found to be difficult, and discuss stereotypes attached to sports (for example: that all African Americans are good at football or all tall people are good at basketball).
- Guidance (MS) – Visit classrooms to re-emphasize the importance of embracing diversity. Provide pamphlets and other resource materials in office for students.
- Guidance (HS) – the guidance office can go into a core science class that all freshmen have to take and teach the lesson to the class; also let the classes know that the guidance office is open to them if they have any further questions.

Opportunities for Parental Involvement

- Parents can assist by purchasing the items for the Cultural Awareness Fair for the students. They can also help by teaching the students how to cook or bake the diversity dishes for the Cultural Awareness Fair.
- Assist students in organizing diversity awareness events such as a “Mix It Up” day.
- Utilize parent representatives from different nationalities, cultures, races to speak or give presentations to students on information from their backgrounds.
- Send home information to parents informing them that the class will be holding a lesson on diversity.
- Ask students to learn about their heritage by asking parents/grandparents about their ancestry.
- Encourage the class to go home and share what they learned about diversity to their parents.
- Assign students to interview a family member that lived through or experienced a historical period of time that involved diversity or multicultural issues (such as the civil rights movement). Have students prepare a report based on their interview.





Definitions & Terms Relating to Diversity

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- **Racism** = a belief that a person's race is the main factor that determines human characteristics and abilities and that racial differences make one race better or more superior than another

SAVE: Action Diversity Lesson Plan Handout 2

Representation Composition of the Global Village

If we shrunk the world's population to one village, there would be 100 humans of whom:

- 60 are Asians
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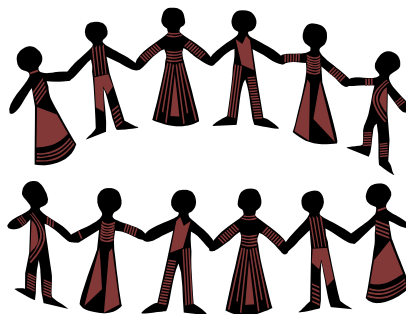


(Taken from David Brown: Nota Bene: The Global Village at: <http://www.davidpbrown.co.uk/nota-bene/the-global-village.html>; Original by: Balu, Engelken & Grosso)

SAVE: Action Diversity Lesson Plan Handout 3

Facts & Figures on Issues of Diversity and Bias Awareness

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- One out of every five hate crimes is committed against a white person. (So, not only are minorities discriminated against). (*Diversity Central*: http://diversityhotwire.com/business/diversity_statistics.html#hate)
- If all minority Americans lived in an independent country, it would be the 15th largest in the world. (So, if you took all the minorities that live in America and put them by themselves in just one country, that country would have more people than Great Britain, France, Italy or Spain.) (*Population Reference Bureau*: http://www.prb.org/Content/NavigationMenu/PRB/AboutPRB/Population_Bulletin2/Americas_Racial_and_Ethnic_Minorities.htm#diversity)
- One in five United States residents are immigrants. (So, we live, work and go to school with many different races, cultures, and religion which we all have to learn to get along and work together so that our differences will make us better.) (*U.S. Bureau of Census*: <http://usinfo.state.gov/usa/diversity/census02.htm>)
- Youth 5-17 years old are more diverse than the population as a whole. (So, as students, we go to school with and are friends with more diverse people than our parents or other adults.) (*U.S. Bureau of Census*: <http://www.census.gov/population/pop-profile/1999/chap02.pdf>)
- What about youth in our area? (Contact your guidance office or area school district office for a racial composition of students in your school or district.)



“Windows” Stereotyping Awareness Activity

ATHLETE ...	BULLY ...
HONOR STUDENT ...	PE TEACHER ...
BAND MEMBER ...	SAVE MEMBER ...