

Day of Awareness

Church School Resources

Scriptural links: Celebrating the oneness of the family of God:

Amos 5:14, 24-seeing good in all

Matthew 7:12-equal treatment

Matthew 25:31-40-our accountability for each other

Romans 15:7-acceptance of others

Luke 4:17-21-Jesus' mission of liberation

Ephesians 2: 19-20-unit of all

James 1:23-24-necessity of acting on our beliefs
people

Galatians 3:27-28-equality of all

Read one or more of the above aloud. Silently reflect on the reading. After a short time read aloud the reflection questions pausing after each for participant's personal prayerful reflection on the questions.

Celebrating Racial Diversity, by Kathleen McGinnis

Activity for Younger Children to explore the meaning of Racism.

Pass out orange circles cut out of construction paper and ask the students to talk about what things they like that are orange. Then tell them that you would like to read to them the story of a little boy named Gilbert. Read the story of Gilbert which follows, or have one of the students read it.

Gilbert and the Color

Orange

Gilbert hated the color **orange**. He learned to hate it when he was a young child. In fact, he couldn't remember a time when he didn't hate it. Now, Gilbert had never actually been around anything that was **orange**. He certainly didn't have anything **orange** in his house. But his parents hated **orange** and so did the rest of his family, so Gilbert knew the color was not to be trusted.

Gilbert went through life avoiding **orange**. He never tasted the juicy sections of the **orange** fruit or smelled an **orange** flower. He never drew with an **orange** crayon or wore an **orange** shirt. He never carved an **orange** pumpkin or watched the sun set in an **orange sky**. For Gilbert, **orange** pop, **orange** flavored sherbet, and **orange** candy were out.

In fourth grade, the rest of Gilbert's friends signed up for the basketball team, but Gilbert stayed home. The idea of dribbling an **orange** basketball down the court made him shudder. "Why don't the others understand how horrible **orange** is?" Gilbert thought.

Possible discussion questions about the story

1. What caused Gilbert to hate **orange**? How was his life affected by his hatred for **orange**?
2. In this story Gilbert is "prejudiced" against the color **orange**. This is an unlikely kind of prejudice for a person to have. What are some more common kinds of prejudice? How do those prejudices affect the lives of the people who have the prejudices?
3. If Gilbert had been able to get the grocery stores to stop selling **oranges**, and **orange** candy and any other food that is **orange**; or to get the school to stop using **orange** crayons or **orange** paint; or to get the school to stop offering basketball, would his hatred for **orange** have become more like racism? What would be the difference?

What is Missing in this Box of Crayons?

Grade K-4



Teachable Moment: If you were coloring a picture consider when you or the children have felt limited by having only one shade of brown in the crayon box....(refer to scriptures above)

Purpose: To encourage children to recognize that there are fewer colors of brown in the box of crayons than of most other colors. How a child of color might feel when doing a self portrait.

Gather the children in a circle. Empty a box of 24 crayons out in the middle of the circle. Discuss the colors and color families represented by the crayons. Ask: "What do you notice if I sort the crayons by color?" Accept all observations. Eventually elicit the observation that there are several tones of most colors, but that there is only one brown.

Talk about times when children might need more than one tone of brown.

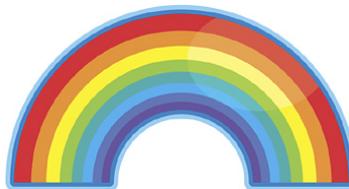
Ask the children whether they think there should be more tones of brown in the box. Encourage them to act on their convictions. If the class is so inclined have them dictate a letter to the crayon company. Write the letter on chart paper and send it to the crayon company. You will find the address on the back of the crayon box.

From WORDS CAN HURT YOU, Barbara J. Tomson, Addison Wesley, 1993

Rainbow People

Grade 3-5

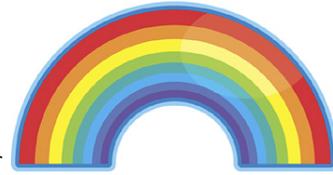
Make a rainbow on newsprint and talk it means to be "Rainbow People"-all working together as one, (refer to



with the children about what different colors, but all scriptures above). Cover the rainbow with strips of paper on which you have written words like "racial jokes", "hurtful names", "unequal chances in school", "unequal laws", "unequal jobs or pay", "closed areas to live", ...etc. Talk about what these realities mean to the idea of the "Rainbow People". The tape, an article for teachers, and directions for signing the song "Rainbow People" are available from the Institute for Peace and Justice, (314) 533-4445.

The Colors Of Friendship

Adrian Iron Thunder



Once upon a time the colors of the world started to quarrel. All claimed that they were the best. The most important. The most useful. The most beautiful. The favorite.

Green said:

"Clearly I am the most important. I am the sign of life and of hope. I was chosen for grass, trees and leaves. Without me, all animals would die. Look over the countryside and you will see that I am in the majority."

Blue interrupted:

"You only think about the earth, but consider the sky and the sea. It is the water that is the basis of life and drawn up by the clouds from the deep sea. The sky gives space and peace and serenity. Without my peace, you would all be nothing."

Yellow chuckled:

"You are all so serious. I bring laughter, gaiety, and warmth into the world. The sun is yellow, the moon is yellow, the stars are yellow. Every time you look at a sunflower, the whole world starts to smile. Without me there would be no fun."

Orange started next to blow her trumpet:

"I am the color of health and strength. I may be scarce, but I am precious for I serve the needs of human life. I carry the most important vitamins. Think of carrots, pumpkins, oranges, mangoes, and papayas. I don't hang around all the time, but when I fill the sky at sunrise or sunset, my beauty is so striking that no one gives another thought to any of you."

Red could stand it no longer he shouted out:

"I am the ruler of all of you. I am blood - life's blood! I am the color of danger and of bravery. I am willing to fight for a cause. I bring fire into the blood. Without me, the earth would be as empty as the moon. I am the color of passion and of love, the red rose, the poinsettia and the poppy."

Purple rose up to his full height:

He was very tall and spoke with great pomp: "I am the color of royalty and power. Kings, chiefs, and bishops have always chosen me for I am the sign of authority and wisdom. People do not question me! They listen and obey."

Finally **Indigo** spoke, much more quietly than all the others, but with just as much determination:

"Think of me. I am the color of silence. You hardly notice me, but without me you all become superficial. I represent thought and reflection, twilight and deep water. You need me for balance and contrast, for prayer and inner peace."

And so the colors went on boasting, each convinced of his or her own superiority. Their quarreling became louder and louder. Suddenly there was a startling flash of bright lightening, thunder rolled and boomed. Rain started to pour down relentlessly. The colors crouched down in fear, drawing close to one another for comfort.

In the midst of the clamor, rain began to speak:

"You foolish colors, fighting amongst yourselves, each trying to dominate the rest. Don't you know that you were each made for a special purpose, unique and different? Join hands with one another and come to me."

Doing as they were told, the colors united and joined hands.

The rain continued:

"From now on, when it rains, each of you will stretch across the sky in a great bow of color as a reminder that you can all live in peace. The Rainbow is a sign of hope for tomorrow." And so, whenever a good rain washes the world, and a Rainbow appears in the sky, to let us remember to appreciate one another.

<http://www.inspirationpeak.com/shortstories/colors.html>

Follow the Drinking Gourd**

Upper Elementary

Background: This song was composed by slaves. It was an expression of a deep desire for freedom. Parts of the song expressed a desire for freedom in a symbolic way or in a “code” and parts of the song also gave directions for escape routes. The “Drinking Gourd” was the name given the Big Dipper by the slaves. The “Drinking Gourd” pointed to the North Star.

1. After reading the song, try to decipher “the code” and write out the directions for escape.
2. Listen to other spirituals (one very good example is “Steal Away”) and then write why you think the slaves chose to express their desire for freedom through spirituals. One source for spirituals is “My Lord What a Morning” by Harry Belafonte. There are many others.

**According to the noted folklorist, J. Mason Brewer, this song is based on the activities of Peg Leg Joe, a sailor who used to travel throughout the South helping young slaves to escape. His activities were concentrated in the area north of Mobile, Alabama. The “big river” refers to the Ohio River.

Follow the drinking gourd,
Follow the drinking gourd
For the old man is waiting
For to carry you to freedom
If you follow the drinking gourd.

When the sun comes back
And the first quail call,
Follow the drinking gourd,
For the old man is waiting
For to carry you to freedom
If you follow the drinking gourd.

The river bank will make a very good road,
The dead trees show you the way,
Left foot, peg foot traveling on,
Follow the drinking gourd.
The river ends between two hills,
Follow the drinking gourd,
There’s another river on the other side,
Follow the drinking gourd.
Where the great big river meets the little river,
Follow the drinking gourd,
The old man is waiting
For to carry you to freedom,
If you follow the drinking gourd.

Book Suggestions



* Suggested activities related to themes from book available.

***The Black Snowman**, by Phil Mendez- Written for grades 4-6. A book about family love, self-pride, connectedness to a rich heritage, and sacrificial love. Jacob and his brother build a black snowman, who turns out to have remarkable qualities. Through his gentle tutoring and dramatic act of love, the brothers learn a lot about their own African heritage and sense of identity and about what it means to really care for each other. Grades 4-6

***I REMEMBER 121**, by Francine Haskins. Children’s Book Press, San Francisco, The author tells the story of her own growing up years at 121 S. Street in Washington, D.C. The reader is immediately placed in the center of a warm lively African American extended family. The author’s own words explain the meaning of the book. “My drawings and writings reflect my spiritual, physical and emotional senses. I try to show the many aspects of my culture and of plain old human nature. They are my past, present and future. It’s my interpretation of what I see and hear about people In my daily life. It’s a way for me to keep my own sanity. We have to preserve traditions histories and the art of the storytellers.” Grades p.s.-3

***Grandpa’s Face** by Eloise Greenfield, Philomel Books, Putnam and Grosset, New York In this gentle story, with stunning illustrations, the author focuses on the stability of the love between Tamika and her grandfather, who is also an actor, and on the importance of sharing feelings. The beautiful practice of a “talk-walk” gives a practical framework to how feelings can be shared by adults and children. Grades p.s.-3

***Nathaniel Talking**, by Eloise Greenfield, Black Butterfly Children’s Books, New York This is a lively book of poetry, letting the reader into the mind of a spirited, thoughtful, fun-loving nine-year-ole boy. The poems cover different aspects of his life-his dreams, his parents, his education, his friends, his view of himself. It is lyrical, uplifting reading. Grades4-6

All Kinds of People (Scriptographic Booklet. South Deerfield, Ma.: Channing L. Bete Co., Inc.) A coloring and activity book that focuses on how people are alike and different, on what is inside a person, on liking or disliking people, and on prejudice. This resource introduces the theme of Hand in Hand in a simple format for children ages 6-9 (1-800-628-7733)

All the Colors We are: The Story of How We Get Our Skin Color (Todos los colores de nuestra piel: La historia de por que tenemos diferentes colores de pie) Katie Kissinger. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press) This book provides a simple, scientifically accurate explanation of how we get our skin color.

Everyone is Special! Scriptographic Booklet. South Dearfield, MA: Channing L. Bete Co., Inc.) A simple introduction to differences in abilities, this coloring and activity book is a helpful resource for children ages 5-9 (1-800-628-7733)

Diocesan Resource Library

Children's curriculum resources

Celebrating Racial Diversity, by Kathleen McGinnis

Hand in Hand, Helping Children Celebrate Diversity, by E. Campbell, N. Miles, O. Patterson, G. Rivera, C. Wiessner, C. Wiessner

If only today you knew...the things that make for peace.", Peacemaking Activities in Response to Violence, Terrorism & War for Christian Education and Elementary Schools, K-8

Starting Small, Teaching Tolerance in Preschool and the Early Grades, produced by The Teaching Tolerance Project of the Southern Poverty Law Center

Websites

Teaching Tolerance is a magazine and website of free resources and ideas for eradicating racism and promoting tolerance and diversity from the Southern Poverty Law Center. www.teachingtolerance.org

Kids Peacenet - www.kidspeacenet.com

Mediation and Conflict Resolution www.mennonitecc.ca/mcc/programs/mediation.htm.

People for Peace-Peace links www.people4peace.com/links.htm

SampleLessonPlan: Conflict Resolution www.seattletmes.com/nie/sample2.html

Institute for Peace & Justice www.ipj-ppj.org/

Children's Defense Fund <http://www.childrensdefense.org/child-advocacy-resources-center>