

## LESSON PLANNING ARTICLE

# Everybody Is Unique: A Lesson in Respect for Others



## Subjects

- Arts & Humanities
  - Language Arts
  - Visual Arts
- Social Studies
  - Psychology

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## Grade

- K-2
- 3-5
- 6-8

## Brief Description

Teach about respect for others' unique qualities in this lesson that combines art and language arts.

## Objectives

Students will

- talk about the meaning of the word *unique*.
- draw a truly unique person, one part at a time.
- create a totally unique person, with a head drawn by one student, a torso drawn by another student, and lower body drawn by another.
- define the most positive qualities of this person.
- write about why this person is one of your new best friends.

## Keywords

unique, friend, writing, friendship, self-esteem, appreciation, differences

## Materials Needed

- 2-inch square of white drawing paper, one sheet per student
- 3-inch square of white drawing paper, one sheet per student
- 4-inch square of white drawing paper, one sheet per student
- art supplies (might include crayons, markers, or paints)
- writing paper and pen/pencil

## Lesson Plan

In this lesson, students search for the most positive aspects of some very unusual "people." The activity reinforces the idea that one can't always judge the quality of a person by his or her appearance; sometimes people can be appreciated for their differences.

To begin the lesson, write the word *unique* on the chalkboard or on a chart. Younger students, especially, will be intrigued by this “unique” word! Ask students what the word means to them. Ask: *What is it that makes you unique among your classmates?*

Next, draw a simple outline of a person on the board or chart. Draw two horizontal lines across the person’s body. One line should divide the person’s head (including the neck) and torso (shoulders to waist); the other should divide the torso and leg area (from the waist-down). Talk about one section of the body at a time.

- Discuss some of the features that might make up a person’s head/neck. Lead students to understand that people can have blue eyes or brown eyes, small ears or big ears, curly hair or straight hair, dark skin, light skin, or a shade in between, freckles, glasses, or a hat, and so on. Write students’ ideas about a person’s head on the board or chart next to the head area of the person you drew.
- Discuss some of the ways in which people’s bodies might be different. Lead students to understand that people can be skinny or heavy, muscular or frail, square- or round-shouldered, and so on. Talk about the kinds of clothing people might wear -- a T-shirt, a sweater, a feathered boa. Write down some of the possibilities students name.
- Finally, focus on the lower body (from the waist down). Point out that people can have skinny or stubby legs and their feet point in, out, or straight ahead. People wear pants, dresses, high-top sneakers, high-heeled shoes, construction boots, ballerina slippers, and so on. Write down students’ ideas.

When you are satisfied that students have the three parts of the body sorted out, provide each student with a piece of white drawing paper measuring 2 inches square. Have students write their names on one side of the paper and draw on the other side of the paper the head of a person. Tell students that this should not be somebody they know; this *unique* person should come from their imaginations. Remind them to think first about the features the person’s head will have; they can refer to the list they and their classmates created in the first part of the lesson. They should include as much detail as possible in their drawings.

It is very important that students fill up the entire square with the image of the person’s head. Also, remind them their head could use a neck to sit on!

When students finish drawing a unique head, provide them with a sheet of paper that measures 4 inches square. After students write their names on one side of the paper, they should turn the paper over and draw the torso (shoulders to waist) of the person. Before they draw, remind students to imagine the features of the person’s torso. How is the body shaped? What clothing is the person wearing? Once again, students should fill the entire space and draw as much detail as possible. *Think unique!*

When students finish drawing a torso, hand them a third sheet of paper; this time a 3-inch square. Have students write their names on one side of the paper, and draw the bottom part of their person (waist down to the feet). Remind students to fill up the space and include as much detail as possible. Once again, tell them to *think unique!*

As students finish their final square, have them check to be sure their names are on all three parts; then collect them. You might have students put the heads in one box or folder, the torsos in another, and the legs in a third.

### **Putting It Together**

This part of the lesson might be done the same day or the next day. Distribute to each student a head, a torso, and a set of legs. Students

should not get a body part that they drew. Have students tape together the three body parts to create a totally *unique* "friend." The new friends will be pretty unusual-looking people, to say the least! But...

Here is the crux of the lesson...

*Everybody is different, or unique. What a person looks like on the outside has nothing to do with what is inside! Every person has special talents, special qualities...*

After students have had a good laugh about how the three body parts came together to create an unusual-looking person, ask each student to think up a name for his or her new "friend" and to give some thought to some of the characteristics the new friend might have. Ask: What special qualities does this unique person have? What special talents does the person possess? What do you have in common with your new friend? How are you different?

After students have decided what qualities their new friends have, tell them you would like them to write about their new friends. You might ask each student to begin a story with the words: *I would like you to meet my new friend, [name goes here]...* Then give students the freedom to choose what they will write as they go on to describe exactly what it is they like so much about their new buddies.

When students have finished their stories, invite them to share them with their classmates. You might use this read-aloud session as an opportunity to reinforce the lesson you hope they will take from this activity: *What a person looks like on the outside has nothing to do with what that person is like on the inside!*

The essays and illustrations might make a fun bulletin board display too!

## Assessment

Introduce a writing rubric to be used with this lesson.

## Lesson Plan Source

Education World

## Submitted By

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