

LESSON PLANNING ARTICLE

How Tolerant Are Kids in Your School?

Subjects

Arts & Humanities

- Language Arts
- Visual Arts

Educational Technology

Mathematics

- Applied Math
- Arithmetic
- Statistics

Health

- Mental Health

Social Studies

- Civics
- Psychology
- Sociology

Grades

- 6-8
- 9-12

Brief Description

Students graph results of a survey about attitudes and tolerance in their school.

Objectives

Students will

- take a survey about the social barriers that exist or do not exist in their school.
- collect data.
- input data into a spreadsheet program (optional).
- create graphs to show how open or closed the student population is in their school.
- suggest ways to open up communications between particular groups of students.

Keywords

clique, bully, tolerance, prejudice, self-esteem

Materials Needed

- printed copy of the [Mix It Up Questionnaire](#)
- Internet access in order to participate in online survey (optional)
- spreadsheet software (optional)
- graphing software or the free [Create a Graph Tool](#) (optional)



Return to [Teaching @ Tolerance](#) Lesson Article

- art supplies (optional)

Lesson Plan

[Mix It Up](#) is a unique program from [Tolerance.org](#), an arm of the [Southern Poverty Law Center](#). The program is intended to break down social barriers that exist in many schools by opening communication among kids who would not normally interact with one another. The Mix It Up Web site offers a survey tool that can help determine whether students in your school are open to getting to know kids with interests different from their own. Students can [answer the questionnaire](#) online, or it can be printed and mailed to the folks at Mix It Up.

Ask students: What is the social climate in this school like? Do students form social groups because of race, neighborhood, income level, or special interests? How difficult do you think it is for other students to break into those cliques? Do you think kids in this school make an effort to "mix it up?"

Print the Mix It Up [questionnaire](#) and provide a copy to each student. Ask students to carefully consider each question and respond honestly. (They need not sign their names.) Then gather all the forms and have students tabulate the raw data.

Then have students choose -- or assign each student -- a bar graph depicting data about one of the following:

1. Whether the school climate is, generally speaking, a) welcoming or b) not welcoming.
2. The number of students who have seen unwelcoming cliques in any of the following situations: after-school clubs, assemblies, buses, the cafeteria, classrooms, recreational activities, and/or at spectator events.
3. The number of students who are aware of school cliques based on any of the following: academic ability, athletic ability, beliefs, ethnicity, family income, gender, hobbies/interests, home neighborhood, primary language spoken, musical interest, personal appearance, race, sexual orientation, and/or style.
4. The group among the following that appears to be the most difficult to break into: a group formed based on academic ability, athletic ability, beliefs, ethnicity, family income, gender, hobbies/interests, home neighborhood, primary language spoken, musical interest, personal appearance, race, sexual orientation, or style.
5. Whether it is a) very easy, b) kind of easy, c) kind of hard, or d) very hard for kids in the school to make friends with kids in different groups.
6. The number of students who have felt unwelcome or rejected by a particular group because of their academic ability, athletic ability, beliefs, ethnicity, family income, gender, hobbies/interests, home neighborhood, primary language spoken, musical interest, personal appearance, race, sexual orientation, or style.
7. The number of students who have ever been part of a group that rejected others, based on academic ability, athletic ability, beliefs, ethnicity, family income, gender, hobbies/interests, home neighborhood, primary language spoken, musical interest, personal appearance, race, sexual orientation, or style.
8. The number of students who would be willing to do any of the following to encourage more intra-group interaction in school: introduce themselves to someone new, sit with someone different at lunch, help the school participate in Mix It Up at Lunch Day, choose someone they do not know for a pick-up team, dance with someone

from another group, invite "outsiders" to a party with their friends, or join a club of others who want to "Mix It Up."

9. The adult in the school who students would be most likely talk to about creating intra-group programs, among the following: a coach, a school counselor, a friend, a parent, a religious leader, a teacher, or somebody else.

Students might use graphing software or the free online [Create a Graph Tool](#) to create colorful, professional-looking graphs to illustrate survey results.

Curriculum Connections

- Math. Instead of creating charts based on raw data, have students convert data into percents and create charts showing those percents.
- Technology. Students enter data into a spreadsheet instead of tallying it by hand.
- Art. Instead of the traditional bar graph, students can create their bar graphs in more creative or symbolic ways. A photograph of the school building might be cut into strips to form the bars. A collage of smiling student faces might be created and reduced to the size of a full-length bar. The possibilities for creative graphs are endless.
- Language Arts: Rather than graph the data, students might choose to write a summary report of the survey results.

Assessment

The Curriculum Connections activities might be used as the lesson assessment. In that way, students can select the activity that appeals most to their learning style.

Alternative Assessment: Have students write a brief paragraph or essay describing what they learned about their school from the survey; they might be required to offer two recommendations for improving communication among student groups in their school.

Lesson Plan Source

Education World

Submitted By

Gary Hopkins



answer the questionnaire



Mail completed questionnaire to •

Surveys
Mix It Up
400 Washington Ave
Montgomery, AL
36014

or fax to •

334.956.8484

Mix It Up is a national campaign to identify, question, and cross group boundaries in our daily lives.

Please take part in our survey, and visit us online at www.mixitup.org to find out how other young people around the country are challenging the lines that divide them – and to share your own stories.

1. Which best describes your school?

- welcoming to all kinds of people
- quick to put people in categories

2. In what settings have you noticed people grouping themselves and others by categories?

- after-school clubs
- assemblies
- bus
- cafeteria
- classroom
- recreational activities
- spectator events
- other _____ (please specify)

3. Which of the following categories create group boundaries at your school?

- academic achievement
- athletic achievement
- beliefs
- ethnicity
- family income
- gender
- hobbies
- home neighborhood
- language
- musical interests
- personal appearance
- race
- sexual orientation
- style
- other _____ (please specify)

4. Which of those group boundaries listed in question 3 are the hardest to cross, and why?
(please specify)

5. At your school, how easy is it to make friends with people in different groups?

- very easy
- kind of easy
- kind of hard
- very hard



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6. Have you ever felt unwelcome or rejected by others on the basis of any of the categories listed in Question 3?

- yes
- no
- If so, which ones, and how? (please specify)

7. Have you ever been part of a group that rejected someone on the basis of any of these categories?

- yes
- no
- If so, which ones, and how? (please specify)

8. What would you be willing to do to encourage more interaction across group boundaries?

- introduce myself to someone new
- sit with someone different at lunch
- help my school participate in Mix It Up at Lunch Day on November 21st
- choose someone I don't know for my pick-up team
- dance with someone from another group
- invite "outsiders" to a party with my friends
- join a club of others who want to "mix it up"
- other _____ (please specify)

9. Of the people you know, who would be most likely to listen to and support your attempt to cross group lines?

- a coach
- a counselor
- a friend
- a parent
- a religious leader
- a teacher
- other _____ (please specify)

Why did you choose this person?



answer the questionnaire



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36014

or fax to •

334.956.8484

Name _____

(optional)

Grade _____

School _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Please Note • We may include some of your comments **anonymousl y** on mixitup.org or in other Mix It Up publications. Thank you for responding.