

Acceptance Activities for the Classroom

Here are several ideas of activities on acceptance for your classroom. Do one or do them all during the course of this special week.

“Acceptance Is...” (All Grades)

Have your students complete the statement “Acceptance is...” Students should be creative. They can draw a picture or write a few sentences (or both) to describe what Acceptance means to them. Have your students share with the class.

Classroom Discussion/Activity: Grades K-1

More Alike Than Different: Classroom Discussions

1. Have the class draw a picture of themselves being a friend with someone that may be different from them. They can raise hands to show the class what they created and why they love being a friend with someone who is “different”. This can be as simple as her hair is brown, and mine is blonde. Follow up questions could be around “how are you alike” and “how are you different?” Share both similarities and differences.
2. Distribute pre-printed coloring pages of some unique friendships/pairs and have the students choose a page to color. They can then write down 5 things they notice are similar and different between the two friends on the coloring page. Follow up discussion could be around how 2 friends can seem so different but still be the best of friends! (Examples: Dora & Boots, A Kitten & A Bird, Sofia & Clover, etc.)
3. Put students in pairs or small groups. Have them discuss and learn some new things about their classmate and remember ways they are alike and ways they are different. Students can then share with the class what they have learned from their classmates- highlighting their favorite similarities and favorite differences.

Classroom Discussion/Activities: Grades 2-6

Activity 1: More Alike Than Different: Poem Discussion

Read aloud or distribute the following poem to the class:

**Although I cannot walk or run,
I still believe in having fun.
While I am sitting in this chair,
My mind goes racing everywhere.**

**So stop and smile and talk with me,
And you will very quickly see
That I enjoy jokes, games and toys,
And meeting other girls and boys.**

Classroom Discussion: Ask aloud or in small groups the following questions. You can also have the class break into pairs.

- What do you notice is different about you than the child in the poem? (eg. The child in the poem is in a wheelchair)
- What do you notice is the same about you and the child in the poem? (eg. likes having fun, jokes, games and toys)
- How does the child in the poem say they want you to treat them? (eg. to be their friend)
- What did you learn from this discussion? (eg. how I can be a better friend to those that may be different from you)

Activity 2: Put-Ups (www.tolerance.org)

Students are used to put-downs, but what about put-ups? This activity helps students see the positive things that their schoolmates are doing and gives them skills to affirm each other across social boundaries.

Ask students if they know what a put-down is and list common put-downs they hear on the board. Next, ask them if they know what a put-up is and give some examples by giving students in your class some put-ups. Examples:

“I notice that Myranda always has a smile on her face and is ready to help anyone with anything at all.”

“I really love how Augustine always reminds all of us to turn out the light when we leave the room.”

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Use the following poem to introduce to young children how people are always watching what they do:

*I am my schoolmate's reader
He reads me when we meet
Today he reads me in my class
Tomorrow on the streets
He may be classmate or friend
Or slight acquaintance be
He may not even know me
But he is reading me!*

Inform students that they are going to begin “reading” each other, finding positive things schoolmates are doing and giving each other put-ups. To make it easy for students to praise each other, they can use sticky notes as Put-Up slips.

Encourage students in your class to “put-up” students in the grades below them so as to model good behavior to younger schoolmates. Likewise, encourage them to cross boundaries and offer put-ups to older students and adults in the school so that others can see that they are modeling good behavior to younger schoolmates. This lets them see that they can cross social boundaries of grades and age and make a positive impact on the entire school.

Continuing this Exercise:

Have a special time during the day when students can offer each other put-ups. Make this a classroom ritual. Make visits to other classes where your students give put-ups to others not in their class.

Make an in-class bulletin board of the “I am my classmate’s reader” poem and hang all of the put-ups there for everyone to see. Even better, make the hallway bulletin board a place where the whole community can see the put-ups!

SuperHero Classroom Activity (All Grades)

Lead Discussion About 10 Ways You Can Be a SuperHero at Camelot

Encourage Students to Dress Like A Superhero on Friday, April 6

This Supports our Message to be a Superhero to One Another-Be a Friend.

Even though we are all different, you can be a friend to anybody and everybody. EVERYONE needs friends.

1. Say “Hi” to a new friend in the hallway at school.

2. Sit next to a new friend in the classroom.

3. When it’s time find a partner, pick a new friend.

4. Play with a new friend at recess.

5. Start a conversation with a new friend or ask them questions.

6. Sit next to a new friend at lunch and talk to them.

7. Do not tease or laugh at your new friend.

8. Invite your new friend on a playdate or to your birthday party.

9. Talk to your new friend at activities outside of class like at school or sports event and club meetings.

10. Introduce your new friend to your friends.

