

# International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

LESSON PLANS



The UN's International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is observed annually on March 21. Teachers who want to recognize this day will find ETFO's *We're Erasing Prejudice for Good* resource kit for kindergarten to grade 8 useful. This literature-based series of lessons focuses on a different theme each month. In March, the theme is "Untie the Knots of Prejudice".

*We're Erasing Prejudice for Good* was published in 1999 and revised in 2003. An additional French language resource will be available in 2004.

Here are some ideas from *We're Erasing Prejudice for Good* that educators can use to celebrate March 21 in classrooms, schools, and communities.

## School-Wide Activities

Use March 21 materials available from Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada as the basis of a school-wide assembly.

## Consider

- having one representative from each class say "I'm Canadian" and tell where his or her family is from originally;
- having students dramatize stories from the books they have been studying;
- having classes perform skits illustrating how to deal with racial incidents;
- having a multi-ethnic youth panel present perspectives on some issues related to harassment and

- discrimination and proactive strategies to handle similar situations;
- holding a film festival of media materials specific to anti-racism ideas.

## Community Outreach

Send *A Celebration of Commonalities Survey* to the parent/neighbourhood community. Explain that the responses will be used to illustrate our common humanity. We share many similar qualities and experiences, even though our cultures are different.

Classes graph their results. School-wide results are compiled by class representatives. Results are sent home as part of the newsletter or campaign bulletin board.

### Commonalities Survey

- Country of birth
- Favourite food
- Favourite music
- Language(s) spoken
- Two hobbies I enjoy
- A time I didn't feel part of a group
- How I felt when I was called a name
- My reaction to discrimination in the media
- A time I helped someone out
- The quality I like most about me

## Kindergarten

### Looking at Opposites: Hot Cold Shy Bold

Looking at Opposites *blends full-colour photographs with rhyming text. The playful photos, depicting a wide range of facial expressions, explain the concept of opposites.*

### Expectations

#### English/Language

OC2-OC9, R1, R2, R7, R10

#### Mathematics

DMP1, NSN1

#### Personal and Social Development

SASR2, SASR3, HPA1

#### The Arts

CA1, CA3, CA8, CA11

Read the book. Reread, discussing the opposite words and concepts. Encourage the students to relate ideas to their own experiences.

Reread having pairs of students identify and dramatize the opposing concepts.

Encourage the children to find the word "face" on every page, the rhyming words, and the opposite words. Make a graph to illustrate the number of rhyming words, opposite words, and the word "face" they find. Prepare cards ahead of time with, R for Rhyming, and O for Opposites for students to stick on a graph as they identify them in the book.

Ask the children to select their favourite page and tell why. Discuss how the child in the picture is like them.

Choose pages in the book, i.e. cross, shy. Have students share what makes them feel that way.

Make a cut and paste booklet of opposites and place it at the reading centre for others to enjoy.

Have students create a cut and paste "me" with their face as the point of interest. Have them add facial parts and talk about their functions.

Harris, Pamela. 1995. *Looking at Opposites: Hot Cold Shy Bold*. Kids Can Press Ltd. Toronto. ISBN 1-55074-153-5.

## Grade 3

### Chicken Sunday

*A young Russian-American girl and her African-American "brothers" determine to buy their "gramma" Eula a beautiful Easter hat. But their good intentions are misunderstood, until they discover just the right way to pay for the hat.*

### Expectations

#### English/Language

3e2, 3e3, 3e5, 3e22, 3e61.

### Social Studies/ History and Geography

3z33, 3z38, 3z39.

### The Arts

3a15, 3a44, 3a55

Read *Chicken Sunday*. Identify several acts of kindness and the characters that do them.

- Why does this story fit with the theme "Untie the Knots of Prejudice?"
- Write a journal entry for your response.
- Did you learn any new words? What were they?
- Write the new words in alphabetical order, with their meanings.
- Attach the page to the book for others to use.
- How would you describe the community the children are from?

The children in the story were blamed for something they did not do. Has this ever happened to you or someone you know? How would you or the person blamed feel? Create a list of suggestions of how to react to wrongful blame. Prepare one to two-minute skits to share suggestions with other classes.

Remember how the author describes Miss Eula's voice. Use that description as part of the verse for a poem or as lyrics for a song about respect, trust and love that are demonstrated by the characters in the story. Use rhythm instruments to create an accompaniment for the poem or song. Share.

Polacco, Patricia. 1992. *Chicken Sunday*. The Putnam and Grosset Group. New York, ISBN 0-698-11615-1

## Grade 6

### No Word for Goodbye

*No Word for Goodbye is a story of friendship. Through his friend Paul, Ken learns a little of the Ojibway language and culture and how ignorance and prejudice can hurt.*

#### Expectations

##### English/Language

6e2, 6e7, 6e9, 6e19, 6e33, 6e36, 6e61

##### Social Studies/

##### History and Geography

6z3, 6z9, 6z10, 6z13, 6z15, 6z17, 6z46

##### Health and Physical Education

6p1, 6p5

##### The Arts

6a45, 6a47, 6a63, 6a66

This novel study can be completed over two to three weeks. Student groups can focus their study on one of the following areas:

- Making new friends.
- Learning about other cultures.
- Differences in viewpoints and perspectives.
- Dealing with injustice.

Describe how you make new friends. What do you have in common? What do you learn from your new friends? Talk about how hard or easy it is to make a friend. What does it take to keep friends for a long period of time?

In a brief essay, describe how Ken and Paul become friends. What did they do to get to know each other? How did this help the friendship grow?

Paul was an Ojibway and grew up in a different culture and environment than Ken. In your essay, discuss some

of the things Ken learned about Paul's culture. Ken respected Paul's culture as being not better or worse, just different. Discuss your thoughts about Paul's culture (or another culture) that you learned about.

In a play or short drama presentation (skit), demonstrate how Ken and Paul saw the world differently. Use the novel as a resource as well as other books and documents. Remember to respect both points of view in the presentation to the class. Use other characters from the novel or other individuals you may know to demonstrate your understanding.

The Ojibway character in the novel faced an unjust situation. The government and a large corporation wanted the land the Ojibway people inhabited, and although the evidence in the novel indicated they were wrong, the Ojibway were forced to leave.

This action continues in Canada and around the world. In a group, research the situation in Ipperwash and the Skwel'wek'welt Protection Centre of the Neskonlith First Nation. Define the issues involved. What are the issues from the points of view of the Aboriginal peoples and from the government? Who should adjudicate such an issue? Write to the government or the Assembly of First Nations with your findings.

Craig, John. 1974. *No Word for Goodbye*. Irwin Publishing, Toronto. Reprinted 1982. ISBN 0-7725-9006-0



## Grade 8

### Prejudice

*Prejudice is a collection of 15 short stories that, taken together, show how prejudice and ignorance can be transformed into understanding and hope.*

#### Expectations

##### English/Language

8e5, 8e7, 8e13, 8e49, 8e50, 8e62

##### Social Studies/

##### History and Geography

8h35, 8h56, 8h57.

##### Health and Physical Education

8p3, 8p6.

##### The Arts

8a34, 8a38, 8a39



Read the introduction from *Prejudice* to the class. Discuss students' response to it. Share experiences and recent media coverage relating to issues of prejudice. Review definitions of stereotypes and discrimination. Collect newspaper and magazine articles. Listen to radio talk shows. Critique these for bias in reporting.

Invite a panel of speakers who have experienced some form of prejudice to present to the intermediate division. Prepare a series of questions to ask of your guests.

As a class, co-operatively read one story chosen on a consensus basis from reading the table of contents. In pairs, create a homework assignment with at least five parts, based on the reading. Share and exchange assignments with another pair.

Choose one of the selections as the basis for the script of a one-act play. Include stage directions and staging techniques as part of the script. Revise and edit with the assistance of the group. Watch punctuation.

As a class, share your feelings regarding Daphne Muse's dedication and how young people in your own school can be part of the struggle. As a class project, chart ideas on what could be accomplished by

- an individual;
- a class;
- a school; and
- a community.

Prepare a class research project on how diverse people (different gender, race, abilities, sexual orientation, etc.) have contributed to your community. Relate this to the contributions of diverse peoples to Canada's historical, cultural, and economic development.

Plan a class project on the prejudice in Canada's immigration policy from the country's founding until the present day. Interview new Canadians about their experience with citizenship and immigration.

With a partner, read *A Brief Moment in the Life of Angus Bethune*. Research the impact of over-eating and under-eating on teenagers. Prepare an oral report on eating disorders. Present to the class.

Independently read the story *American Bandstand*. Write a journal entry responding to this story. Tell what affected you, how you were affected, and why you were affected. How has this story changed your outlook?

Design anti-prejudice posters for placement in your community. Use elements and principles of design to underline what you want to communicate and the feelings you want to evoke.

Start a fund raising project to raise money for printing the posters and hosting an anti-bias film festival.

Muse, Daphne (Ed.) *Prejudice*. Hyperion Books for Children. New York. 1995. ISBN 0-7868-1310-5

ETFO's *We're Erasing Prejudice for Good* anti-bias classroom resource for kindergarten to grade 8 is available from **shopETFO**. The ten monthly themes are consistent through each grade. They were chosen because teachers are familiar with this kind of learning, and because concentrating on specific paths reinforces ideas being taught. The books selected give universal messages about what is important in life. Available as a complete resource package (\$120) or as individual grade packages (\$30 each).