Social Justice Begins With Me

Social Justice Begins With Me is a new literature-based curriculum resource.
Each lesson uses the read-aloud as a way to enter into safe and respectful discussions with students about equity and social justice. Available in either the CD version or Suitcase version through shopETFO http://www.etfo.ca/shopetfo/pages/default.aspx

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Big Idea / Objective / Character Development Connection

Cultural Awareness; Environment; Respect; Empathy

Suggested Activities and Culminating Tasks

- As you read the book, stop and talk about the various kinds of homes, clothing, means of transportation, tools, and sacred activities and objects on each page. How are each of the items related to the places the people live? What do students think the weather is like there? What do students think their culture is like?
- Have students retell information from the book after you have read it to them. Encourage them to use illustrations as prompts or to create picture prompts. Students will retell the story with their reading buddies.
- Create a shared writing experience in which students incorporate new vocabulary (from the text) and familiar vocabulary in order to complete a class Alphabet Big Book.
- Have students look carefully at the illustrations to find two- and three-dimensional objects. Ask students to create models and replicas, and display them with a sentence to label/describe them.
- Use the illustrations and text to look at and talk about changes in weather, climate, clothing, and times for hunting and gathering.
- The letter X is a stretch in the book. Christmas was introduced by people who came from Europe, not by Aboriginal people.

Extensions

- Invite elders of students in your class to help create ABC books that have cultural connections reflective of their families. If possible, have them make dual language or multilingual books. Invite the elders and students to read the books to the class or other classes.

Community Engagement / Related Resources

Invite reading buddies or family volunteers to go to an Aboriginal museum to look for items that are in the book and extensions to the book. Which items in the book and the museum are spiritual in nature, or practice? If picture taking is allowed, you could use the photos in book-making activities or to create slide shows or other displays.

BOOK TITLE: The Aboriginal Alphabet for Children
AUTHOR: Evelyn Ballantyne
ILLUSTRATORS: J. Marleen Ross and Noah Head

SYNOPSIS
This is a fun and enriching way to learn the alphabet. The full-colour illustrations that accompany each letter are of traditional artifacts and cultural notes.

MINISTRY EXPECTATIONS
English Language
Reading 1e4, 1e15, 1e16, 1e29
Writing 1e48

CURRICULUM CONNECTION EXPECTATIONS
Mathematics 1m43, 1m52
Science and Technology 1s20

MATERIALS
- Picture book listed above
- Attribute and pattern blocks
- Three-dimensional solids
- Paper
- Crayons/markers
Big Idea / Objective / Character Development Connection
Perseverance; Caring; Courage; Optimism; Community

Suggested Activities and Culminating Tasks

Before Reading
- Make a list of challenges that families might experience when moving to a new country. These could be ideas or students’ own experiences.
- Make a list of stereotypes and slang terms related to homelessness (e.g., bum, lazy, hobo, drunk, etc.) Remind students that the exercise is not meant to reinforce these, but rather to show the pervasive, hurtful, powerful impact of words and stereotypes and to discuss why these words are so readily available in their schema.

After Reading
- Have students revisit their list of stereotypes and slang. Do any of these apply to Zettie and her mom? What does this disconnect tell us about the issue of homelessness?
- What kinds of daily challenges did Zettie and her mom face because of their not having a home? How did they feel about these challenges?
- Read aloud the “Homelessness in America” note on the last page. Have students write a reflection on what they have learned about homelessness.
- Ask students if they would want to be friends with Zettie. List characteristics of Zettie that they can infer by reading this story to support a yes and refute a no answer (challenge student perceptions and judgments).

Extensions
- Have students research community organizations that support the homeless. In pairs or small groups, have students create a report and presentation about one organization they find and its work.
- Investigate the roles that racism and gender discrimination play in unemployment and in salary inequity. How much money do women make in comparison to men? What is the situation for racialized women?
Community Engagement / Related Resources

After the student presentations, hold a class vote and select one organization to support. Contact the organization to find out what kind of support it may need. Students may be able to volunteer or hold a fundraiser to support their chosen organization.

This YouTube video, entitled “Homelessness in Canada: Take Action Now”, was created to raise awareness about homelessness in Canada.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B7Jcnjabjwk&feature=related

SYNOPSIS

After Zettie’s father died, she and her mother left Jamaica searching for a better life in the United States. Zettie and her mom are both going to school, and her mom tries her best to find work, but until then, they live an uncertain life in their car, dreaming of a new home. A realistic portrait of homelessness in an American city, this story brings to light the challenges of many new and established Americans in creating a better life for themselves and their families. Despite their challenges, it is their love and determination that shines through.
Big Idea / Objective / Character Development Connection

Respect; Caring; Integrity; Perseverance

Suggested Activities and Culminating Tasks

- Brainstorm African-Americans’ specific contributions to life and society in North America.
- Have students research one of the characters described in the folktales and present their findings to the class.
- Why are folktales important for social justice for all people? Have students write a journal entry.
- What importance does the theme of flying play in the different folktales? What do flying and freedom have in common? Have students create a journal entry about the power of flying in the role of a character in one of the folktales.
- Have small groups of students choose a folktale to learn and perform as a play for younger students.
- Use Check a Book for Bias Bookmark six (see the Teacher Resource Guide).

Extensions

- Have students communicate their thoughts and feelings about one of the illustrations using an art form of their choice (e.g., visual arts, drama, or dance).

Community Engagement / Related Resources

Go to the Black History in Canada Education Guide. Explore seminal events and personalities in Black Canadian history through engaging discussion and interactive activities.
http://www.blackhistorycanada.ca/education.php

MINISTRY EXPECTATIONS
English Language
Reading
7e26, 7e27, 7e37
Writing
7e49, 7e57, 7e58, 7e61

CURRICULUM CONNECTION EXPECTATIONS
The Arts
7a54, 7a56, 7a64

MATERIALS
- Picture book listed above
- Internet access
- Journals
- Check a Book for Bias Bookmark six
- Art supplies