



TOPIC Acceptance & Belonging

LEVEL First Grade

THEME We are All Different

LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the lesson, the students are expected to:

- Students will discover that differences are what make us special.

MATERIALS

- Box of markers or crayons
- *You Really, Truly Do Belong* by Gina Casazza
- Poster Board or butcher paper
- Fingerpaints & brushes or markers
- Baby wipes or paper towels (if using paint)

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

Why is being different important?

CHECK-IN / WELCOME (5 MINUTES)

Welcome everyone by name and introduce today's topic.

Begin by holding a container of different colored markers or crayons.

Say: Look at these markers. They're all different colors. What colors do you see? (pause for responses) If I only had one color, my picture would be pretty boring, wouldn't it? But when I use all the colors, my picture becomes bright, exciting, and beautiful! People are like these colors. We are all different in special ways, and those differences make our classroom, our school, and our world more beautiful.

Ask: Raise your hand if you've ever noticed a way someone else is different from you, maybe they have a different favorite food, they like a different game, or they speak another language. (Take a few answers.)

Those are great examples! Our differences could be things we can see like hair color, height, or the clothes we wear or things we can't see, like what we believe, what we like to do, or what makes us feel happy or sad.

In Aavidum, we say 'I've got your back!' That means we care about each other, no matter what. When we accept each other's differences, we make everyone feel safe, welcome, and loved.

Today, we're going to talk about what makes each of us special, and how we can celebrate our differences instead of teasing or leaving someone out. Because when we include everyone, we all feel good.

GUIDED DISCUSSION / TOPIC INTRODUCTION (10 MINUTES)

Say: Let's start today by each sharing one of our strengths - something we do very well. For example, you might be very good at math or reading or maybe your strength is running fast.

- As the students name their strengths, write them on chart paper or white board.

Say: "Now let's look at our list of strengths and come up with examples of times where someone's strength would benefit themselves or others. Maybe it could help them to teach something important, to help fix a problem, or to make people smile."

Instructions: Call out the different strengths and ask students to provide an example of a way it could benefit themselves or others.

Ask: "Can anyone share a time that someone in your life like a parent, a teacher, or a friend used their different strength to help you?"

- Take some student responses.

ACTIVITY: BOOK & POSTERS (20 MINUTES)

Read "You Really, Truly Do Belong" by Gina Casazza

Instructions:

- Use poster board or butcher paper to create a poster for the class that says "Our Differences Make Us Special."
- Say: "Now we'll each take turns adding our handprint or tracing our hand on the poster. When it's your turn, you'll put your hand in the paint (or trace it with a marker) then press or trace your hand on the poster, and then tell me your strength, and I'll write it next to your hand."
- Have each student paint or trace their hand on the posterboard. Please note that using paint is a more messy option and may take additional time and require additional support.
- After they complete their handprint, ask, "What is something that makes you special?" and write the strength they express.
- Say: "Look at this poster! Each handprint is different, just like each of you. But when we put them all together, we see something amazing. Our differences make our classroom stronger, kinder, and more colorful."
- Hang the poster in a visible place in the classroom or school.

WRAP-UP (5 MINUTES)

Ask:

- "What do you notice about our poster?"
- "How would our class feel if we all celebrated our differences every day?"

Say: "Remember, in Aavidum we say, 'I've got your back!' This poster will remind us that we always have each other's backs, no matter how we are different! To keep living Aavidum this week, I want to ask each of you to try to compliment someone this week on their individual strength or difference. A compliment is something kind you say to someone to let them know you think they're special."