



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
1996 Volume V: Genetics in the 21st Century: Destiny, Chance or Choice

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## **My Family and Me: Our Similarities and Differences**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 96.05.09  
by Lucia Rafal`

My Family and Me: Our Similarities and Differences is a science unit on genetics written specially for special education students with severe delays within the intermediate to adult age range. It can also be used with early primary classes. This unit answers the questions, "Where did I come from?" and "How am I the same and different from my family and friends?" This is an integrated unit that spans many areas of the curriculum including but not limited to art, science, math, literature, and language. My Family and Me includes many hands-on ideas for exciting lesson plans to teach students about heredity and their family. This unit reinforces positive self-esteem and provides avenues for parental involvement.

My Family and Me includes a section for teaching specific vocabulary as well as an overview of the thematic unit. The genetics information that I provide is written in a manner that can be taught directly to students. I give simple, concrete explanations and examples that are appropriate for low functioning students. Goals and objectives are included as well as my methodology for teaching students with severe delays. In addition suggestions for changing the level of difficulty for students as well as ideas for assessment are also included. For the teacher's convenience, sample lesson plans and a detailed annotated reference list is provided at the end of the unit.

(Recommended for Special Education, all grades, and Elementary School, grades K-4)

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