



Yale-New Haven
Teachers Institute®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1997 Volume IV: Student Diversity and Its Contribution to Their Learning

Strategies for Teaching the Value of Diversity

Guide for Curriculum Unit 97.04.02
by Christine A. Elmore

In this unit, I plan to present some strategies that teachers can use to help children come to value the diversity that exists around them—on a small scale, in their schools, communities, the teams they play on, and the Pupils they interact with, but also in a larger framework, as children inevitably encounter diversity through the media. Television, videos, books, newspapers, and magazines, etc., continuously bring to our living-rooms the concerns, needs and accomplishments of people of all types from different cultures and ethnicities. I feel very strongly that we, both as parents and teachers, have a responsibility to help our children to become more appreciative of the differences that surround us.

My approach will be to present concepts in a particular sequence, one building on the other, beginning with having my students take a closer look at themselves, their names, their families, and their neighborhoods in an effort to foster their knowledge and appreciation of themselves as individuals and as members of a group. From there, we will move on to explore the concept of 'similarities' and 'differences' in people. Finally, we will look more closely at prejudice and discrimination.

I plan to use children's literature—fiction, non-fiction and poetry—as a vehicle to introduce each topic. To bring further clarity and meaning to the concept being explored, I have chosen relevant interdisciplinary activities (particularly writing, art, mathematics and role-playing) to accomplish each lesson.

(Recommended for Social Development, Language Arts, Mathematics, and Reading, grades K-4)

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