

Tolerance

Syllables
tol•er•ance

Pronunciation
tol-er-uhns

Definition

Accepting differing views.

(A **tolerant** person is willing to respect the customs, beliefs, and opinions of other people.)

Simply put: You do your thing; I'll do mine.

Related Terms

Broadmindedness: To be non-judgmental.

Open-mindedness: Unprejudiced.

Fundamental Question:

Is it possible to respect others because of their character, abilities, and conduct, regardless of what they look like or what they believe?

Students will investigate the idea that it is possible to learn tolerance through exposure to cultures, ways of life, and ideas other than their own.

Objectives

Each student will:

1. Introduce a personal family tradition or cultural custom to the class.
2. Recognize the ways culture is transmitted from person to person.
3. Identify one person in class whom (s)he understands, feels differently about, or hopes to get to know better after learning a bit more about their race, religion, gender, language, looks, who they love, how they dress, (or something other than their character, abilities, and conduct).

Before you begin

- Notify each child's family that you would like the child (and an older family member, if possible) to select and present information about one of his or her cultural or family customs. The presentation should include a brief report, a visual display (e.g., Chinese calligraphy, a Chanukah menorah, a piñata, etc.), and a hands-on activity (e.g., learning a traditional folk dance or other art form, making a traditional food, etc.); and
- Print out a copy of *Getting to Know You* for each student.

Suggested Sidebars:

Speaking of Tolerance (Discussion Idea)

Discuss: Why do you think that no two people are exactly alike? What would it be like in a world where everyone was the same? In what ways are most people extremely similar to one another?

Tolerance

Taking It to the Next Level

Develop an instrument to identify at least ten major differences between the people in your class. Consider things like race, religion, first language, place of birth, favorite styles of clothing, and so on. For example, which religions are represented in your class and how many people follow each? Chart the results on a graph.

Procedure

1. Over the course of a week or so, have each student discuss and demonstrate something about one of his or her family's traditions or cultural customs. What is the history of and meaning behind the tradition or custom? How is it done? Have the child and an older relative teach the class how to create something based on that tradition or custom.
2. After the first few presentations, ask what role the adults have been playing in the presentations. Explain that culture is often passed down from one generation to the next in families. Sometimes it is transmitted through religious or social groups. Invite students to give specific examples of traditions or customs they learned that way.
3. Distribute writing paper to the children. Ask each to identify one person in class who (s)he understands, feels differently about, or hopes to get to know better after learning a bit more about them. Have the children explain in writing what changed for them after the identified child shared his or her personal tradition or custom with the class. (Note: These papers may be collected or left with the writers. They should, however, remain confidential.)
4. **Follow Up:** Suggest that, with their parents' permission, the children call the people they identified in number 3 above to set up a play date, study date, or other getting-to-know-you get-together.

Name _____

Reminder: Tolerance is accepting different views.

Getting to Know You

Design a brochure that instructs kids your age how to be more tolerant of others.

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Today's thought: *We will have zero tolerance for anyone who is intolerant.* — **Oscar Goodman, lawyer**