

A MOSAIC OF DIFFERENCES

Lesson plan on:

Peaceful coexistence, respect and acceptance.

Adaptation tips to suit different contexts and realities:



- Make sure you amend the story in the **Extension** activity to fit your context.

Learning objectives:



By the end of this lesson, the children should be able to:

- Recognize themselves and others as unique individuals.
- Celebrate the diversity among their classmates.
- Understand and appreciate the value of diversity and differences.

How to use this lesson plan:



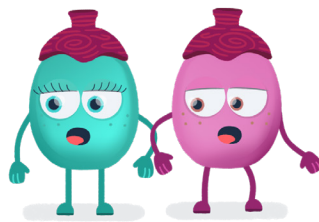
The lesson plan is divided in three parts: **Start**, **Learn** and **Reflect**. There are also **Guidance** boxes to help you deepen your knowledge of the specified topics. In addition, there are **Family** activity and **Extension** activity boxes that suggest optional activities and ways of further exploring the topics of the lesson.

Lesson overview:



Through the following activities, children will explore their own uniqueness and differences. By using different types of artwork, they will reflect on the value of diversity and how it enriches society.

At the end, they will explore the value that is in each one of us and the importance of treating everyone respectfully and fairly, as well as standing up against any form of discrimination.



* In addition, check out the [colouring book](#) and [children's book](#), both available on the E4J website.

Key questions:

What makes us unique?

Why our differences should be valued and celebrated?

Age: 9 - 12 **Time:** 90 minutes

Values:



Skills:



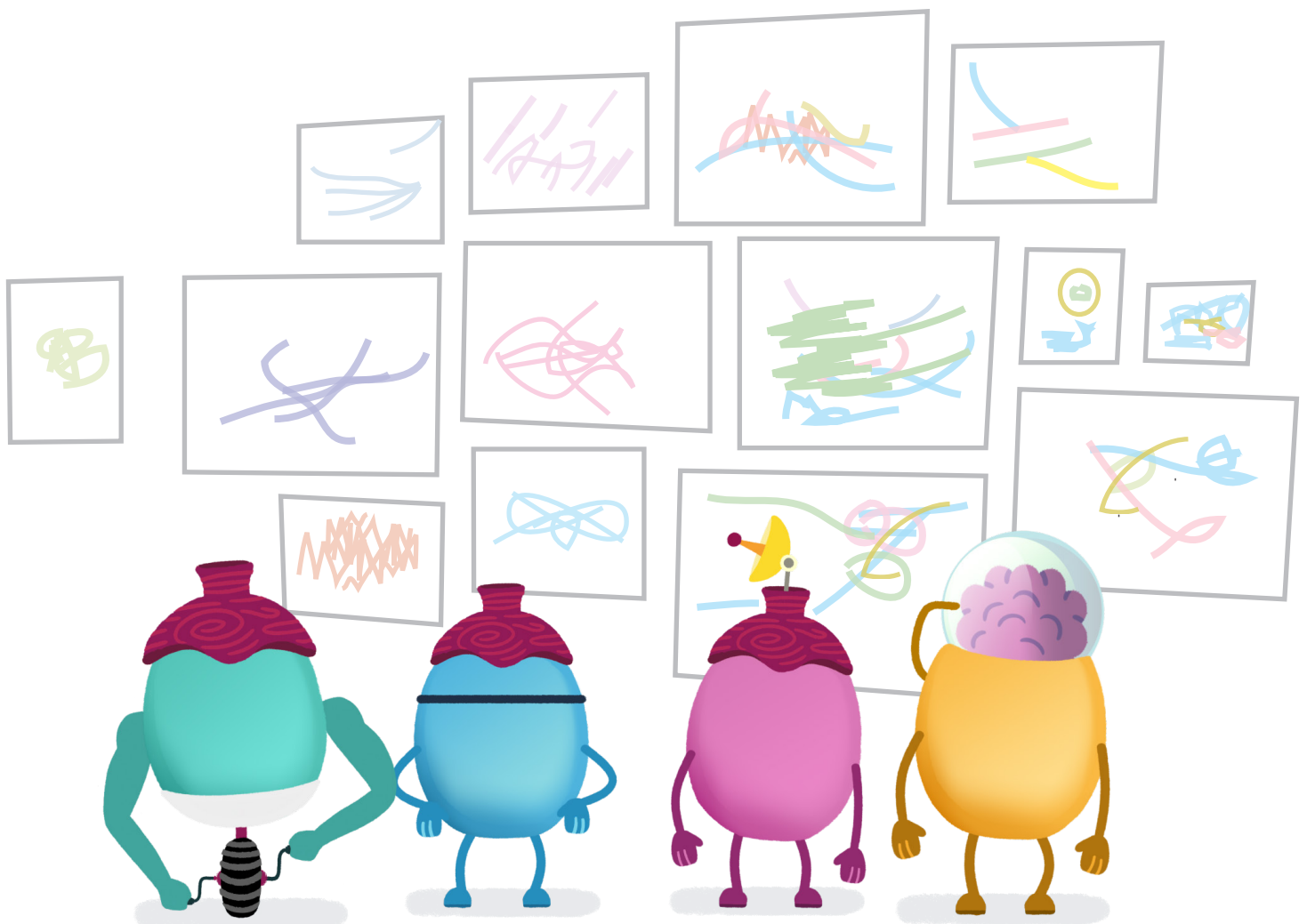
Preparation and materials:

- Place all painting materials in one corner of the room and the craft supplies in another.
- Colourful crayons or paint.
- A4 sheets - two per child.
- Materials for the mosaics:
 - 6 tubes of glue (one per group).
 - 6 sheets of sturdy paper (around 20x20 cm / 8x8 inch each)
- To create tiles: roughly cut out pieces of coloured paper to use as mosaic pieces (uneven shapes are best, roughly 1x1 cm/0,5x0,5 inch each). A range of colours should be provided. Cut-outs from old magazines work perfectly. A mosaic piece is called a tessera.
- If possible, a large sheet of paper (ideally A1 or A2): put this together by combining various A4 papers. At the end, you will glue all the tiles on one large paper.
- If possible, The Zorbs [video](#) *Fairness in the Spotlight* or copies of the corresponding [comic book](#), both available on the GRACE website.

Start



1. Show the children the painting materials and explain that today you will start with a painting activity. Explain that each child should take one piece of A4 paper and feel free to draw what they want. The only rule they should follow is that they are only allowed to use one colour.
2. Let them draw for five minutes and then ask them to stop. Allow the children to walk around the room to look at each other's drawings.
3. Next, explain that they can take a second piece of A4 paper and start a new drawing, but this time they can use any colours available.
4. After five minutes, invite the children to stop again and walk around the room to look at each other's drawings.
5. After a few minutes, ask the entire class to discuss:
 - "How did you feel about using only one colour? How did it feel when you were allowed to use as many colours as you wanted?"
 - "Which of the two drawings looks better? The one you did with only one colour or the one with various colours?"
6. Shortly introduce the topic of the day: explain that today you will talk about differences and discuss the beauty and the value of diversity.



Learn



1. Explain that just like the colours they have used during the painting activity we are all different from each other in many ways.
2. Invite the children to form five groups. Provide each group with glue, one cardboard square and plenty of pieces of coloured paper. Explain that today they will create a mosaic. The smaller coloured papers are the mosaic pieces or tesserae, the square cardboards are the tiles on which each group will glue the mosaic pieces to make their own mosaic tiles.
3. Explain that each group will work together on a single mosaic tile, but they must follow your instructions very carefully. Your instructions will indicate which colour of tesserae to place on the mosaic tile, but they should feel free to be creative on where to glue their piece on the cardboard.
4. Next, read the following instructions one step at a time, giving enough time for the children to follow them. To make it clearer, you could also transcribe the instructions on the blackboard, so the children can refer to them as they are working on their mosaic.
 - All the girls take one blue tessera and all the boys take a red one and place them on the cardboard where they wish.
 - All children who have no siblings place on the cardboard a yellow tessera, those with one sibling a red one, those with two an orange one, those with three a pink one and those with more than three siblings a green one.
 - Place an orange tessera on the cardboard if you like football, a brown one if you like watching movies, use green if you like reading and yellow if you like something else.
 - Place a red one on the cardboard if you like potatoes, use yellow if you like rice, orange if you like pasta, and take a black one if you like something else.
 - Place a yellow tessera on the cardboard if you are good at math, use blue if you are good at literature, green if you are good at sports, and take an orange one if you are good at something else.
 - Fill any empty space with your favourite colour.
5. Once finished, ask everyone to take a few minutes to walk around the various groups and look at each other's mosaic tile. Next, invite them to discuss each other's uniqueness and differences. Ask the children:
 - "What do you think we can learn from this activity?"
 - "How have all our differences contributed to creating this mosaic?"
 - "What kind of differences do you think we have explored through this activity? Encourage the children to reflect on their differences in terms of personal tastes, biography, family structure, skills etc. Take notes of their answers on a flipchart as you will need it later."



Learn



6. If needed, explain how each one of us is different and just like our drawings, we are all unique. Ask:
 - "What would have happened to the mosaic tiles if there would not have been any differences among us? How would the mosaics look like in such a case?"
 - "What would happen if we were all the same in this classroom? What if there were no differences among each of us?"
 - "How about the world? What would happen if all over the world there would be no differences and every human being would have the same characteristics, likes, dislikes, tastes, abilities etc.?"
7. Reinforce the idea that even though we are alike in many ways, no one is the same as someone else. Through our differences each of us contributes to enriching the classroom and the world in a unique way.
8. Invite all the children to come together in the middle, glue the mosaic tiles on a bigger piece of paper and hang it on the wall.

Guidance box: learning about discrimination

Discrimination means to treat a person or a group of people differently than others. Discrimination is frequently based on a specific characteristic of that group, such as race, gender, religion, ethnicity or sexual orientation. Discrimination frequently happens because one group or person is perceived to be "different" from most people.

How can we avoid prejudices and discrimination?

Be open and keep an open mind: explore and ask questions when something is new or different. Do not be afraid of differences. If someone else is different from you or thinks differently, this does not mean she/he is wrong!

Acknowledge and challenge assumptions: do not stop at the surface, ask yourself whether you are judging someone else based on some pre-established ideas or concepts. If this is the case, challenge your assumptions and think about how your actions affect others.

As a teacher, try not to leave questions about differences unanswered, and make sure you do not create taboos around certain groups of people.



Reflect



Note: If you have the possibility to watch The Zorbs [video](#) *Fairness in the Spotlight* with the children or read the corresponding [comic book](#), you should follow all steps hereunder (from 1 to 3). Otherwise, simply skip step 1 and start directly with step 2.

1. If possible, invite the children to watch The Zorbs [video](#) *Fairness in the Spotlight* or distribute the corresponding [comic book](#). Use the following questions to facilitate a discussion after watching the video or reading the comic book.

“Why were people treating Intella disrespectfully after the chemical leak?”

“How was Intella feeling?”

“Why was Ken and Lily’s band disqualified?”

“Do you think it is fair that the band was disqualified? Why?”

“What do you think we can learn from this story?”

2. Next, ask the children to look back at the list of differences you noted from point 6 of the **Start** activity. Ask the children to look at the notes again and reflect on the following:

“In what other ways are we different from each other?”

“Do you think it ever happens that certain people are treated disrespectfully because of some traits, abilities or characteristics they have?”

“Can you give an example of people who are frequently being discriminated against or treated unfairly?”

“Why do you think this happens? How do you think people suffering from this discrimination might feel?”

“What would you do if you would experience someone treating someone else disrespectfully?”

3. Conclude by reiterating the value of our differences, and that it is important to accept and appreciate everyone’s differences and treat everyone with respect. Explain that treating everyone respectfully, valuing differences, and standing up against discrimination contribute to create more inclusive, just and peaceful societies. Make sure to include the following points:

- Every human being is valuable; therefore we must respect and treat everyone fairly and think about how our actions affect others.
- We should accept and value all types of differences in people.
- We should never make assumptions about people’s characteristics and skills: never judge a book by its cover!
- We should be open to differences: this is the best way to avoid prejudices.
- All human beings have value and worth, each of us brings something unique to the table that enriches our society.



Reflect

**Extension activity: Stand up against discrimination**

You can continue the **Reflect** activity by focusing on instances in which people are being treated disrespectfully and are discriminated against.

Read the following story to the class. Adapt and amend it to better fit your context.

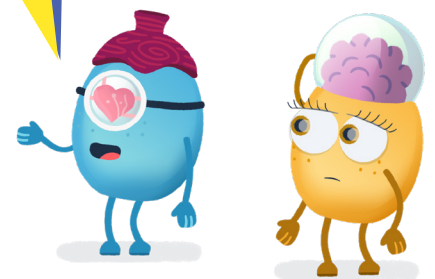
"Ana is a new student. She just moved to your city and country: she and her family come from a foreign country. She speaks a different language and she doesn't speak your language very well yet. The food she eats for lunch is different from yours and she also dresses differently. She is often called names by the other children, they tease her because of her clothes, her food and her accent. She is never invited to join in any of the activities, games or events, and she ends up spending most of the breaks on her own".

Invite the children to think and reflect together on the following questions:

- Why do you think the other children tease Ana? Why do they not invite her to join their activities?
- Why do they see Ana as "different"? How do you think they feel towards Ana?
- How do you think Ana feels?
- What would you do if you were in the same school or class as Ana?
- How could you make her feel better?
- What would you do if you saw other children teasing her or treating her disrespectfully?

Finally, reflect on the last point of the **Reflect** activity and on how each difference contributes to creating a more colourful and beautiful world. Ask the children: how do Ana's differences vis-a-vis the other children enrich her school?

If needed, reiterate the last points of the **Reflect** activity.



Reflect

**Family activity**

Invite the children to explore the differences among their families and how each family and culture contribute to the diversity of the community.

Ask each child to conduct a short interview with their parents and ask about the following:

- In which country/region/city/ethnic group were the parents born?
- What about the grandparents?
- What is a typical dish of the city or area where they come from?
- What are the traditional clothes?
- What kind of traditions or celebrations are typical of the place where they were born?

Afterwards, ask each child to volunteer to share the answers they have collected and, if possible, locate the different places on a world/country map. Talk about the differences among each family and how each one has unique features, but also highlight similarities and things the families have in common. Using the example of food, have children think about how different kinds of food contribute to a diversified national or international cuisine. Explain how each family's origins, traditions, and cultures contribute to making our world more colourful.

