

K-5 Character Education Lesson Plan: Perspective and Tolerance



Character Education Objective: Help students navigate the question “is fair always equal?” and give a definition of fair that includes tolerance of diversity and emphasizes the need for seeking the perspective of others.

Core Alignment:

K-2

- **Essential Concept and/or Skill:** Recognize different roles and responsibilities and is open to change.
- **Employability Skills Disclaimer:** The language provided may not be modified in any way. 27 of 62 Essential Concept and/or Skill: Learn leadership skills and demonstrate integrity, ethical behavior, and social responsibility.
- **Essential Concept and/or Skill:** Identify influences that affect personal health and the health of others.

3-5

- **Essential Concept and/or Skill:** Communicate and work productively with others emphasizing collaboration and cultural awareness to produce quality work.
- **Essential Concept and/or Skill:** Adjust to various roles and responsibilities and understand the need to be flexible to change.
- **Essential Concept and/or Skill:** Practice leadership skills, and demonstrate integrity, ethical behavior, and social responsibility in all activities.
- **Essential Concept and/or Skill:** Demonstrate critical literacy/thinking skills related to personal, family, and community wellness.

Lesson:

How many times in a day do you hear “that’s not fair” in your classroom? Many children have a hard time understanding fairness because it is often confused with equal. What is fair, however, is not always equal and the classroom has plenty examples of that. Understanding this requires children to take the perspective of others and have an appreciation and tolerance of diversity.

Here is an activity to do with students that help illustrates the need for perspective and tolerance when determining how to be fair.

1. Prepare enough band-aids (or stickers to act as band-aids) for each student to receive one.
2. Ask the students to think about what fair means and to share out. Most likely they will define fair as equal. Tell them that you will do an activity to see if that definition is true.
3. Tell the students it is never fun to be hurt, but today we are going to pretend we all have injuries. Encourage

each student think of an injury and get ready to act it out.

4. Tell the students you are the doctor. You may want to use other adults in the room or a few student helpers as additional doctors to move the activity along. The doctors will prescribe a “fair” treatment based on the definition by the students.
5. When you say, students will all begin to act out the injuries. Encourage the silliness.
6. Walk around and ask students about the injuries. Once the student shares her injury, give her a single band-aid. Do this to every student, regardless of the injury.
7. Ask a few students to share about the injury and if the band-aid would be the best treatment.
8. Discuss with students that based on the definition they provided at the beginning, you were being fair, but you were actually being equal. Fair would be that each student had the treatment needed based on the injury.
9. Ask what should the doctors have done differently to make sure the injury treatments were fair and not just equal? Talk about how understanding the perspective of others would have helped the doctors. Ask what about in the classroom or school? Have you seen things that are not equal, but are fair based on the needs of other students?

Now that students understand that fair is not equal, how do they operationalize that concept? Watch the video below to see how students make it fair.

How Kids Make Things Fair Video
– <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oRnSdwCnxZo>

Discuss the role each student plays in the classroom, school, family, or community to make things fair. Ask the students to break up into groups and chat about what they can do in those settings to make sure things are fair, but not necessarily

equal. Ask students to journal one way to make the classroom, school, family or community fairer, without worrying about being equal.

Family Connection:

Share with families that you are exploring how fair is not always equal in the classroom. Families hear “it’s not fair” just as much as you! Encourage families to watch the following short video together about the difference between equal and fair.

The Difference Between Equal and Fair
Video-: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=of34IoHBV0c>

Ask that families discuss what fair and equal means when it comes to chores around the home. Encourage families to talk about how to divide up the work in the home fairly and how that may not be equal. Some children may need just a little adjustment, like in the video, but sometimes it means another chore altogether.

Share this website: <https://www.todaysparent.com/family/parenting/printable-age-by-age-chore-chart/with> families to give ideas about age appropriate chores. This will help define fair chores for each child based on age and skill level and give the students another opportunity to practice perspective taking of others. Not only will this help children understand a difficult concept, but it will a great way for families to share the responsibilities of the home in a fair way!

Learn more about character education.