

K-5 character education Lesson: respecting differences



Overview:

Respect means being tolerant and accepting of differences. To practice that skill, you need opportunities to learn about others and how they may be different than you. A great way to practice it and to learn about others is to play ice breaker games throughout the year. You'd be surprised how much you learn about even lifelong friends by doing some get-to-know-you activities.

Character Education Objectives:

1. Students will learn about the similarities and differences of their classmates.
2. Students will practice tolerance and acceptance of

differences.

3. Students will reflect on how differences positively impact relationships.

Materials:

- A balloon for each student
- A slip of paper for each student

Lesson:

Large Group

1. Give each student a balloon and slip of paper.
2. Ask students to think about one question they would like to know about their classmates. You may need to give them some suggestions to help them start to think. They can ask things like “Do you have any pets?” “What holidays do you celebrate in your house?” or “What’s your favorite game?”.
3. Students will put the piece of paper inside of the balloon.
4. Depending on the age of your students, you may instruct them to blow up the balloons themselves or you may need to plan time for you to blow them all up.
5. Put all the blown-up balloons in the center of your circle of students.
6. Have students grab one balloon, avoiding their own balloon.
7. One at a time, students will pop their balloon. Please note, you may also choose to have a teacher pinch the tie and cut a slit for the balloon to deflate if concerned about students and the loud pop. Have the students retrieve the question. The student will answer the question inside of their balloon.
8. Go around the circle until every student has had the opportunity to answer a question.

Journal

- What are two new things you learned about your classmates?
- Did some of your classmates answer as you would? How about different than you?
- Why is having differences from your friends a good thing?