



**Mirrors & Lessons: Racial Identity Formation in the Classroom  
Educators' Workshop Poster Activity**

Preschool

Objectives:

- Help children acknowledge that there are differences
- What their feelings about those differences are
- Strength comes from differences together

Take photographs of each child's hands, use them:

- Matching games
- recognizing own, others' hands
- create wreath
- conversation throughout: stronger when we use all of our hands together

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How are alike? How are we different?

Different doesn't mean better

Crayons

Overlapping circles: What's true for some of us? What's true for all of us?

What would it be like if we were all the same?

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Provide multicultural materials

- for dramatic play: play food, baby dolls, dress up dolls, clothing, music
- literacy: books, music, language labels on items in room
- family photo/collages
- multicultural posters
- globes, maps

EX: In a book, "This girl swinging has black hair. What color hair do you have?"

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Similarities/Differences

What does everybody need? (play, food, shelter, family, school)

Bring in concrete things - clothes, food, games

Class discussion, posters

Skin tones - trace hands/body, find paint/crayons to match the skin

"Are you 'black'?" "Are you 'white'?" "Is anybody?"

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### K-3

Books to foster the lesson - *The Colors of Us; People* by Peter Spiers

Lesson:

#### 1. Celebration of Me!

Skin (matching with paint colors they make)

hair

likes & dislikes

families

#### 2. Why do we have skin?

KWL

Describe your skin

### Grade 3-5

We envision using **books** as a springboard - taking advantage of opportunities for discussions & for self-reflection, in writing, too. Conversation will emerge through relating to character experiences:

Have you ever felt like \_\_\_\_\_?

Have you ever felt different from someone?

Have you ever felt separate from others?

We want it to be an ongoing conversation.

### Middle School and older

- Come from a place of kindness
- Establish community; use journaling
- Use humor/comedy/film [Dave Chapelle; Edge of America; Axis of Evil tour] to look at things from a new perspective
- Use the past
- Scientific approach - race as "socially constructed"
- Exploring link between poverty and race
- Use ACCENTS to get at bias: Teacher plays a recording of accents
  - Southern
  - British
  - Aroostook County
  - Somali? Iraqi? New York? etc.

Have students write their associations.

Discuss where these associations come from.

Make the connection to RACIAL IDENTITY formation and being singled out.

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"Talk about Race is Tricky"

- When did you first recognize you were a different race? What is the story?
- What's it like to have all white teachers?
- Why is it important to be aware of race?
- What is white privilege?
- How is privilege passed on?

**An independent Quaker day school for preschool-8<sup>th</sup> grade**

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