

Which One of These Doesn't Belong?

In this lesson, students have an opportunity to use compare and contrast skills through an activity that will ultimately reveal that everyone's perception of sameness and difference is, well, different! The aim of this lesson is to help students realize that even with differences, inclusion is possible and even likely strengthened! The goal is to get students to realize they are more alike with others than they are different. Including those who are different from you can create a meaningful relational experience.

Inclusiveness Sub-Concept(s)

Kindness

Lesson Timeframe

30-35 minutes

Required Materials

- ☐ Shapes to compare/contrast
(see lesson for website containing these types of shapes)

Standards Map

This lesson aligns with CASEL Competencies, National Health Education Standards, and Common Core State Standards. Please refer to the [Standards Map](#) for more information.



DESIGNATED BY CASEL
AS A RECOMMENDED PROGRAM
FOR SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING.
See last page for details.

Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Identify similarities and differences among different objects or people.

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

The topic of inclusiveness is often overlooked once we reach adulthood. We seem to falsely assume that loneliness, bullies, and cliques are a thing of the past. However, it is just as difficult, if not more so, once we have developed our own comfort levels on different hot button topics, personality types, and overall approaches to life. They say you can't teach an old dog new tricks, but that's not true! It might be harder, but we CAN and SHOULD strive to grow in kindness daily. This week, examine your surroundings at school carefully. Are there any new teachers that you are unfamiliar with? Maybe YOU are that new teacher and are feeling exceptionally shy. Identify 3 people this week to include in some capacity. Perhaps it's the old "saved you a seat" at lunch adage, an invite to walk the playground during lunchtime, or even a morning coffee to brighten the day! Your efforts to include others will definitely increase the kindness quotient in your school exponentially.

Tips for Diverse Learners

- If there are students who will struggle with the abstract nature of the activity (that there are no correct answers), you could work in a small group with those students to help guide their thinking and calm concerns about "getting it right".
- Encourage creativity here! This is an opportunity for students who do more abstract thinking (and who might normally struggle with concrete concepts) to excel.



Share

3-5 minutes

In this unit, we are going to talk about what it means to be inclusive. Does anyone know what that word means? I know you have heard it before.

Invite student response.

Good! Inclusive means that we include or invite others to join us; we make sure everyone has a part - a role to play - and is contributing. Take 30 seconds right now to think of something you can do right here at school to make someone else feel included.

After the time is up, have students turn to their neighbor and share their idea.



Inspire

12-15 minutes

How many of you watched Sesame Street when you were younger? Does anyone remember the segment called, "One of these things is not like the other"?

You can play this clip to jog memories if time and technology allow (29 second video): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rsRjQDrDnY8>

In this segment, we are supposed to focus on the one object out of four that is different. You might have heard this as compare and contrast; when we compare, we look to see how things are the same. When we contrast, we look to see how they are different.

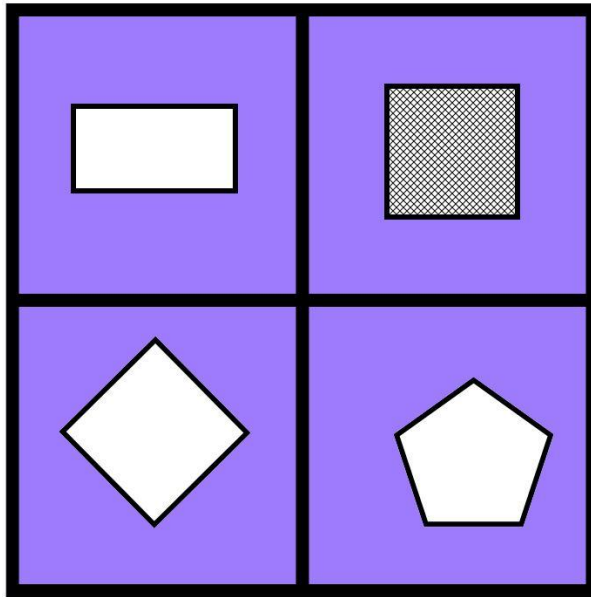
We are going to play a similar game now in small groups of three or four.

Either have students get into small groups or assign small groups now.

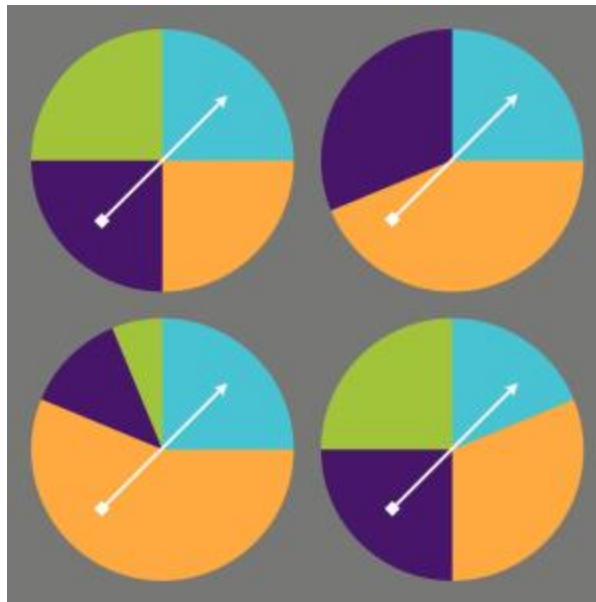
I want you to look at these shapes and identify which one doesn't belong. Everyone should be able to contribute his/her ideas and it's okay if you do not agree.

Pick a shape set from this website. Project it on the screen, hand it out on paper (print ahead of time), or simply draw the shape set on the board.
<http://wodb.ca/shapes.html>

Example:



If you want, when groups are done, give them another from that same site:





Empower

10-15 minutes

Bring the small groups back to the large group and have a discussion about what was decided. You will likely find that each group has different ideas about which shape is different. Note that there isn't a right answer. Each shape is unique and any of them could be different in some way; in many ways, they are also the same. This will be an important point to hit with students; differences are often a matter of perception.

When we find ourselves meeting new people or in new situations, what are some things we might feel or look around for?

Invite student response. Students may talk about looking to see if they know anyone or if there is something familiar they can do or associate with so they feel more comfortable. Students might suggest they are quiet or hang out in the background because they feel shy, nervous, or they don't want to stand out. They don't want to appear different.

The truth is that we are all the same in many ways and we are all different in many ways. If we wait to do something only when it feels comfortable or if we hang out only with people who look or act or think the same way that we do, then we will miss out on a lot that life has to offer! What if we look for what is different around us and investigate that? What if we celebrated that? And, as we learned from our shapes game, what we think of as different may not seem different at all to someone else. We need to set down our perception of difference and be open to the fact that what we think of as a difference could actually be thought of as sameness.

Let's look at our shapes again. Get back into your groups and one of you make a T-chart on a piece of paper. On the left, write "SAME" and on the right, write DIFFERENT. Determine a couple things that are the same about the shapes and then determine a couple of things that are different. I will give you 2-3 minutes to do this.

Have students complete this task then ask groups to share their ideas. Then do a "popcorn" style call-out to collect student ideas.

Interesting observations! Notice how we had some similar perceptions about sameness and difference, but we also had different perceptions. Some groups noticed things that other groups did not notice.

Now, make another T-chart in the same way: SAME on the left, and DIFFERENT on the right. Now, start listing the ways in which your group members are the same and the ways in which your group members are different. This will require some conversation; don't use external factors or physical characteristics alone. And, whenever you identify a difference, see if you can find or turn it into a similarity instead.



Reflect

3-5 minutes

So, what are some things you learned about each other?

Allow students to share.

When you look at how either the shapes are different or how you are different, does that make any of the shapes or any of us less than anything or anyone else? Of course not!

We often are told to look out for what is different as if it is a bad thing. But, in reality, differences make us unique and, really, we are probably more alike than we are different. As you think about inclusiveness in this unit, I want you to remember that our differences don't have to separate us. In fact, our differences can actually make it easier to be inclusive; we all have something unique to share and contribute. When we only include things or people or ideas that are the same as ours, we will be missing out in big ways! We will talk more about this in the next lesson!



Extension Ideas

- If you have time, you can expand the T-chart idea to other culturally-relevant topics that are important for your student demographic or community.
- Send the shapes home with students to do the activity with their parents/guardians or siblings to encourage discussion about diversity and sameness even within families.

Useful resources:

- Computer/smartboard to show the shapes or a printer to print off the shapes (use this website for inspiration: <http://wodb.ca/shapes.html>); you could also draw the shapes on the board for a very quick and easy adaptation
- Read up about the principle of “Which One Doesn’t Belong” by Christopher Danielson here: <https://www.stenhouse.com/content/which-one-doesnt-belong#about-authors> -- you may want to look more at this approaches with regard to teaching geometry
- For support on looking for sameness and embracing diversity, see this Penn State article: <http://sites.psu.edu/aspsy/2015/10/04/httpswww-youtube-comwatchvkzci3eoafk0/>



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PROGRAM FOR SOCIAL
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The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has been reviewing evidence-based SEL programs since 2003. Kindness in the Classroom® meets CASEL's SElect Program and is included in the CASEL Guide to Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs.

Kindness in the Classroom® met or exceeded all of CASEL's criteria for high-quality SEL programming. Kindness in the Classroom® received CASEL's highest designation for high-quality SEL programming.

<https://casel.org/guide/kindness-in-the-classroom/>