



EMBRACING OUR DIFFERENCES

Handle with Care (135 min.) Grade 3 - 5

Created by Melissa Shaw

Standard(s):

Grade 3:

VA.3.C.1.2 - Reflect on and interpret works of art, using observation skills, prior knowledge, and experience.

VA.3.O.3.1 - Use symbols, visual language, and/or written language to document self or others.

Grade 4:

VA.4.C.1.2 - Describe observations and apply prior knowledge to interpret visual information and reflect on works of art.

VA.4.O.3.1 - Apply meaning and relevance to document self or others visually in artwork.

VA.4.F.3.1 - Create art to promote awareness of school and/or community concerns.

Grade 5:

VA.5.C.1.2 - Use prior knowledge and observation skills to reflect on, analyze, and interpret exemplary works of art.

VA.5.O.3.1 - Create meaningful and unique works of art to effectively communicate and document a personal voice.

VA.5.F.3.1 - Create artwork to promote public awareness of community and/or global concerns.

Essential Question:

How can I **include** others who are different or left out? What can we learn from one another?

Learning Intention(s):

We are learning how to pay more attention to others so that we can make them feel included.

We will:

- Look, think and talk about works of art that show inclusion.
- Brainstorm situations in which one might feel left out and how we can include them.
- Learn how artists use symbols to help represent complex ideas in their art.
- Create artwork that shows inclusion.

Resources / Materials Needed:

- 'Hand'le with Care PowerPoint Presentation
- Notecards
- Poster paper, one for each small group
- Markers
- Paper for sketching



Online Video / Resource Links Used:

- Click [here](#) for a 30-second overview of the 2024 exhibit that you can show your students.
- Click [here](#) for a read-along of *Just Ask!* by Sonia Sotomayor.

Before Instruction:

- Introduce Embracing our Differences to your students. Explain that it is an annual outdoor art exhibit and contest that takes place in Florida and invites artists of all ages from around the world to create art that promotes inclusion, kindness and respect.
- Click [here](#) for a 30-second overview of the 2024 exhibit that you can show your students.

Direct Instruction:

Slide 1 (5 min.):

- Use [Visual Thinking Strategies](#) to explore the image:
 - Give students time to silently look at the image.
 - Then ask, “What’s going on in this picture?”
 - As students answer, gesture to the parts of the image that the student is referring to.
 - The teacher can paraphrase what the student noticed.
 - Then, follow up with, “What do you see that makes you say...?”
 - Ask students, “What more can we find?”

Slide 2 (3 min.): *‘Hand’le with Care (2024) by Samantha Dennis, Woodbridge, Canada*

- Do you think the message of this image would change if all the hands were the same? Why or why not?

Slide 3 (5 min.): Words to Focus On

- **Inclusion:** to be included or made part of a group.
- **Empathy:** being aware of and sharing another person’s feelings, experiences, and emotions.
- *Teacher’s note:* If you feel comfortable, this is a good time to give an example from your own life of a time when you felt excluded. Ask your students how they would have felt if they were in your same situation and what someone could have done to make you feel more included.

Slide 4 (3 min.): Artist Quote

- *“An inclusive society is one where people are not judged by their individual differences but by the differences they make.”*
- Ask students what this quote means to them.

Slide 5 (12 min.): *Just Ask!* By Sonia Sotomayor

- Control + click the image of the book to [play](#) the story *Just Ask!* By Sonia Sotomayor. After the story, ask students the following questions:
 - Like the variety of plants that grow in a garden, people are different, too. Do you think our differences are important? Why or why not?
 - In what ways can we learn from people who are different from us?
 - Sometimes, it is easy to overlook someone who doesn’t fit in with the group. How can we include others who are different or left out?



Slide 6 (5 min.): Turn and Talk

- With a neighbor finish these two statements:
 - One time I felt left out was when _____.
 - Being left out made me feel _____ because _____.
- Listen carefully to your partner's story.
- Can you understand what they were feeling when they were left out?
You are showing **empathy**.
- *Teacher's note:* Give students think time before you ask them to share.

Slide 7 (7 min.): Let's Brainstorm

- Divide the class into small groups. Explain that each group is going to brainstorm a list of different situations in which someone might feel left out because they are different. Tell students that they will use this list later to inspire ideas for their artwork.
- Ask each group to choose a person to record the group's ideas. Have the groups fold their poster paper in half vertically so it has two columns. Tell the students that in **column 1** they will think of situations in which a person might feel left out because they are different.

Slide 8 (7 min for brainstorming, 15 min for presenting): How can we include others?

- **Column 2:** Next to each situation listed in column 1, think of a way that we can help the person feel included.
- The teacher can get group discussions going by giving an example for the class: *A new student in your class doesn't speak English. We all can help by using hand gestures or pictures when we are speaking and by learning to say hello in the other student's language.*
- After brainstorming is finished, the teacher can tape each group's poster to the wall. Then, ask one person from each group to present their group's ideas to the class.

Slide 9 (3 min.): How can we turn our ideas into art?

- Artists can use **symbols** to help represent complex ideas that would be hard to show in a picture.
- A **symbol** is something that stands for something else. What do the symbols below represent?

Slide 10 (5 min.): *Harmony* (2020) by Chiapei Chang, San Diego, California

- What do you think the animals playing music together is a symbol for? (When we work together and include others who are different, we can create something beautiful.)
- What do you think this artwork would look like if it was realistic, or literal, instead of symbolic?

Slide 11 (5 min.): Making thumbnail of sketches

- A **thumbnail sketch** is a small, quick drawing that artists make to help plan out how their artwork will look. It is like a rough draft.
- *Teacher's note:* Demonstrate making a quick thumbnail sketch of *'Hand'le with Care* for students.

Slide 12 (30 min.): Let's start sketching!

- Select one idea from our inclusion brainstorming list that inspires you.
- Fold a blank piece of copy paper in half horizontally and label it Sketch #1 and Sketch #2.
- Sketch #1 should use symbols to represent the message.
- Sketch #2 should be realistic, or literal.



Slide 13 (30 min.): Gallery Walk: I Like, I Wonder, Next Steps

- Use a Gallery Walk format for students to get feedback on their two sketches and decide which sketch to use for their final artwork. Number each student 1 through 5. Tell each student to bring both of their sketches with them to meet the other students with the same number for a Gallery Walk. Give each group a stack of notecards.
- Ask students to view all the sketches in their group and write feedback on a notecard for every artist. Students should divide their notecards into three columns: I Like, I Wonder, and Next Steps. Each student will be required to write one thing they like about the sketches displayed, one thing they wonder about them, and one thing the artist could do next or improve. This process could also be done orally.
- Students may then use their classmates' feedback to improve their sketches and ultimately decide which sketch to turn into their final artwork.

Slide 14 (multiple class periods):

- Students create one individual work of art (or work in groups to create a work of art together) that shows the theme of inclusion.
- Remind students that their artwork must be horizontal.
- When students have completed their final artwork, they must write an artist statement to accompany their artwork (150 words maximum):
 - 1. What is the title of your artwork?**
 - 2. How did you create your artwork?** (What tools, supplies and techniques did you use?)
 - 3. What does this piece of art mean to you?** (You can use “I” statements and talk about what inspired you.)