

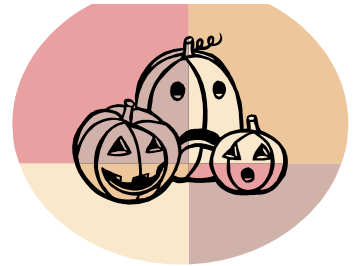
*Tolerance/
Valuing Diversity*

Accepting and
Valuing Our
Differences

“Tolerance and
celebration of
individual
differences is the
fire that fuels
lasting love.”

--Tom Hannah

October Character Connection Theme: Tolerance/Valuing Diversity



Definitions

Tolerance is a fair and objective attitude toward those whose opinions, practices, race, religion, nationality, etc., differ from one's own.¹

Tolerance includes:

*Having a fair and objective attitude toward others.

*Acceptance, fairness, understanding and overlooking the faults of others.

*Open to differences, free of prejudice.

In his book How to Be a Happy Parent...In Spite of Your Children, Fred G. Gosman comments, "Our first line of defense in raising children with values is modeling good behavior ourselves. This is critical. How will our kids learn tolerance for others if our hearts are filled with hate? Learn compassion if we are indifferent?"²

Information

Since the 1960's we have seen the failure of the melting pot ideology. This ideology suggested that different historical, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds could be subordinated to a larger ideology or social amalgam which is "America." This concept obviously did not work, because paradoxically America encourages a politics of contestation. James T. Ellison said, "The real death of America will come when everyone is alike."³

Eloise Salholz said, "Living up to basic ethical standards in the classroom—discipline, tolerance, honesty—is one of the most important ways children learn how to function in society at large."⁴

Quotes

"What is tolerance? –it is the consequence of humanity. We are all formed of frailty and error; let us pardon reciprocally each other's folly—that is the first law of nature." —Voltaire⁵

"Tolerance and celebration of individual differences is the fire that fuels lasting love." --Tom Hannah

"The highest result of education is tolerance." --Helen Keller⁶

"I have learnt silence from the talkative, toleration from the intolerant, and kindness from the unkind; yet strange, I am ungrateful to these teachers." –Kahlil Gibran

"LAWS ALONE CAN NOT SECURE FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION; IN ORDER THAT EVERY MAN PRESENT HIS VIEWS WITHOUT PENALTY THERE MUST BE SPIRIT OF TOLERANCE IN THE ENTIRE POPULATION."—ALBERT EINSTEIN⁷

¹"Tolerance" from Webster's *Encyclopedic Dictionary*.

²<http://www.bartleby.com/66/93/25693.html>, accessed August 18, 2004

³http://www.cyber-nation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes_diversity.htm

⁴"Morals Mine Field" *Newsweek* 13 Oct 86, <http://www.bartleby.com/63/26/2726.html>, accessed August 18, 2004

⁵<http://quotations.sm.to/>

⁶http://www.cyber-nation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes_tolerance.htm

Activities

**Have students cut out a paper chain of people. Discuss what it would be like if everyone were alike. *What are the advantages of differences in people?*

**Invite someone from a different culture to the classroom to share ideas about their culture.

**Play a game called "Add A Word." Divide your class into teams of four. Explain the object of the game is to create the longest sentence that they can. Give them the first few words to the sentence. Each person will then take turns adding one word at a time to the sentence. The sentence must make sense and it must come to a logical ending. Give them 60 seconds to complete their sentence and do not let them talk to each other.

Play it again only this time change the rules to allow them to talk among themselves to make suggestions on what the sentence will say. Repeat this twice.

When finished discuss the following questions: *How well did your team do when you couldn't talk? How did the activity change when the group could talk? How can people with different backgrounds than yours help you solve a problem? Why would it be important for people of different backgrounds to work together on problem solving? How can different viewpoints help solve problems?*⁸

**Have students draw names of class members out of a hat. Then have students sketch their very best portrait of the person whose name they have drawn without telling anyone who they are drawing. Hang the pictures and have students try and identify the artist and the portrait. *Talk about the different traits and skills that make each person wonderful and unique.*⁹

**Discuss the way perception of an individual changes as one becomes more acquainted and familiar with them. As a class memorize a poem such as "To Know All is to Forgive All" by Nixon Waterman:

If I knew you and you knew me--
If both of us could clearly see,
And with an inner sight divine
The meaning of your heart and mine--
I'm sure that we would differ less
And clasp our hands in friendliness;
Our thoughts would pleasantly agree
If I knew you and you knew me.

If I knew you and you knew me,
As each one knows his own self, we
Could look each other in the face
And see therein a truer grace.

Life has so many hidden woes,
So many thorns for every rose;
The "why" of things our hearts would see,
If I knew you and you knew me.¹⁰



Stories

The Camel

According to Aesop, when man first saw the Camel, he was so frightened at his unshapely appearance and unusual size that he ran away with dread. After a time when he began to perceive the meekness and gentleness of the beast's temper, he summoned courage enough to approach him. Soon afterwards, he observed that the Camel was an animal altogether willing to be domesticated and he

⁷ <http://www.quotationspage.com/subjects/tolerance/>, accessed August 18, 2004

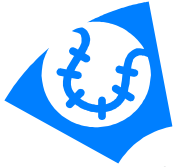
⁸ Jackson, Tom. *Activities That Teach*. Red Rock Publishing, 1995. Pgs. 85-87.

⁹ Adapted from Jackson, Tom, *Still More Activities that Teach*, Red Rock Publishing, 2000, page 155

¹⁰ <http://www.angelfire.com/hi/JeNNA/forgive2.html>, accessed August 18, 2004

assumed such boldness as to put a bridle in his mouth, use him as a beast of burden, and to let a child drive him.¹¹

Familiarity serves to create value for diversity.



Roberto Clemente

Roberto Clemente was a Major League baseball player for 18 years. He won the MVP in 1966 and he was famous for hitting triples. Roberto grew up in Puerto Rico. His father made very little money to support his seven children. While playing ball in the United States, Roberto realized that some people were prejudiced against him because he was a poor boy from a poor country who spoke English poorly. Roberto ignored the prejudice. He was proud of who he was and where he came from. When he became a famous baseball star, he wanted to build a Sports Center near his home town, Carolina. There, all kids could practice sports for free. He said, "It is the biggest ambition of my life. . . It will be open to everybody, no matter who they are."

In 1972 a country near Puerto Rico had a terrible earthquake. Roberto helped collect food and supplies to aid the people. He flew with the supplies to help pass them out. Unfortunately the plane crashed and everyone on board was killed. Roberto lived a life of tolerance to all people despite the fact that tolerance wasn't always shown to him.¹²

Writing or Discussion Topics

**F.J. Kinsman said "To tolerate everything is to teach nothing." *Discuss what this statement means relating to values, discipline, and classroom rules.*

**Have students write about how someone can disagree without being disagreeable. *Does someone have to compromise their beliefs when being tolerant?*

**Discuss ideas of how to have a fair attitude toward others. *If someone believes differently from you, does it make them bad?*

**Read the poem "The Cold Within" (<http://www.ombuds.uci.edu/JOURNALS/1997/poem.html>.) *Discuss the various physical and emotional character traits needed for such jobs as basketball player, race horse jockey and nurse. Have students talk to their parents about the various prejudices they have seen and how society is trying to overcome discrimination. Then have the students write their own poem showing the need for all types of people.*



Role Plays

**Traci's friend has a habit of saying she will do something for her and then doesn't do it. *What could Traci do to show tolerance to her friend without being taken advantage of?*

**Mike has a new classmate from Brazil. *What could Mike do to befriend him and learn about his culture?*

**Sheri's religious beliefs are different from anyone else in her class. *What could she do to respect the other religions and still maintain her beliefs?*

Book List

White Dynamite and Curly Kidd by Bill Martin

Babushka Baba Yaga by Patricia Polacco

So Far From the Sea by Eve Bunting

The Long March by Marie-Louise Fitzpatrick

Tacky the Penguin by Helen Lester

Smoky Night by Eve Bunting



November: Gratitude December: Love January: Dependable February: Truthfulness

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¹¹ Adapted from <http://www.pacificnet.net/~johnr/cgi/aesop1.cgi?1&TheCamel>, accessed August 18, 2004

¹² Kay, Elizabeth. "Roberto Clemente", *Americans of Character*. San Diego: Young People's Press, 1997.

Tolerance and Valuing Diversity

“The great secret, Eliza, is not having bad manners or good manners or any other particular sort of manners, but having the same manner for all human souls: in short, behaving as if you were in Heaven, where there are no third-class carriages, and one soul is as good as another.” --George Bernard Shaw



Use one color on this side of the picture.

Use as many colors as possible on this side.

Give each person in the group a different color of crayon or colored pencil. The person uses only his own color on the left side of this picture. Work with others in the group to color the right half of the picture. Talk about the diverse traits and talents that each person adds to the group.

“A human being is part of a whole, called by us the ‘Universe,’ a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separated from the rest—a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circles of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.”
—Albert Einstein