

A Song for Anti-Bullying

WHEN STUDENTS ARE BULLIED, THEY ARE OFTEN RELUCTANT to let teachers and parents know. Children need to learn at an early age that it's okay to let others know that they need help.

This activity involves a simple song that can help younger students deal with the issue of bullying and bullies. Before singing the song, share a simple definition of "What is bullying?"

The melody we use is from a common song that most children know: "If You're Happy and You Know It Clap Your Hands." Lyrics were created by Francie Shafer with teachers Dani Davis and Leslie Johnson.

Directions for actions to accompany the song are in parentheses.

THE ANTI-BULLYING SONG

If you need help with a bully, **CLAP** your hands
(Clap twice, 1, 2)
If you need help with a bully, **CLAP** your hands
If you need help with a bully and can't talk to anybody
If you need help with a bully, **CLAP** your hands

If you're teased and you're sad, **STOMP** your feet
(Stomp twice 1, 2)
If you're teased and you're sad, **STOMP** your feet
If you're teased and you're sad and it really makes you mad
If you're teased and you're sad, **STOMP** your feet

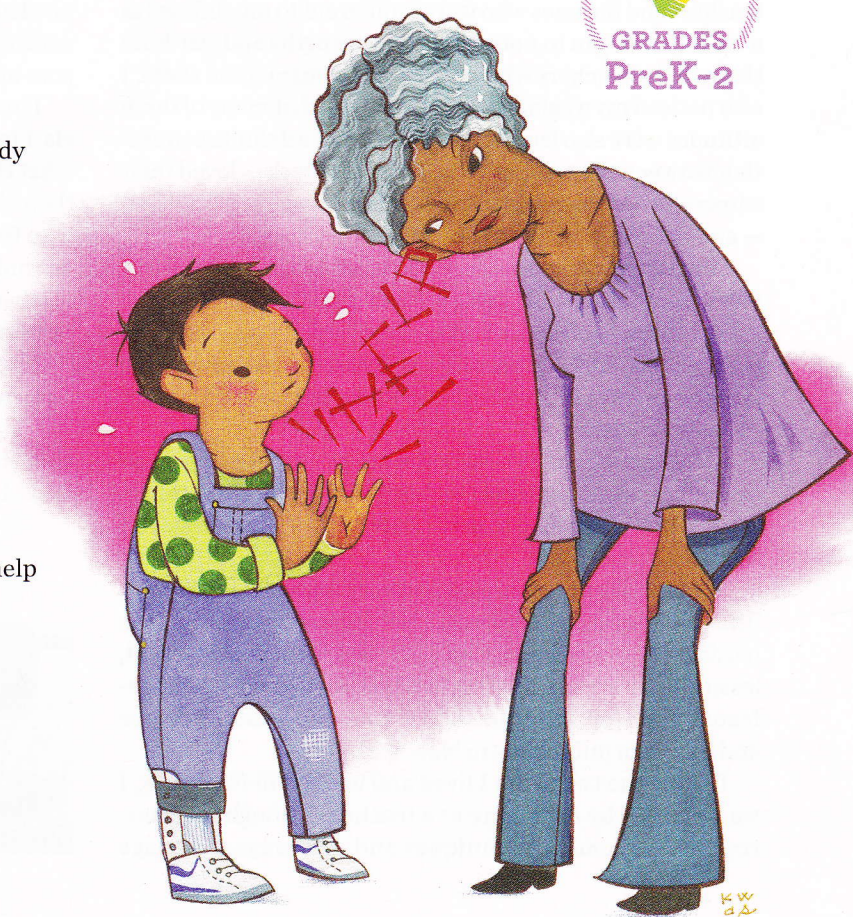
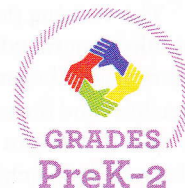
If you're happy with yourself, **GIVE** a smile
(Use fingers and press on cheeks to form a smile)
If you're happy with yourself, **GIVE** a smile
If you're happy with yourself and can **GIVE** others help
If you're happy with yourself, then **LEND** a hand

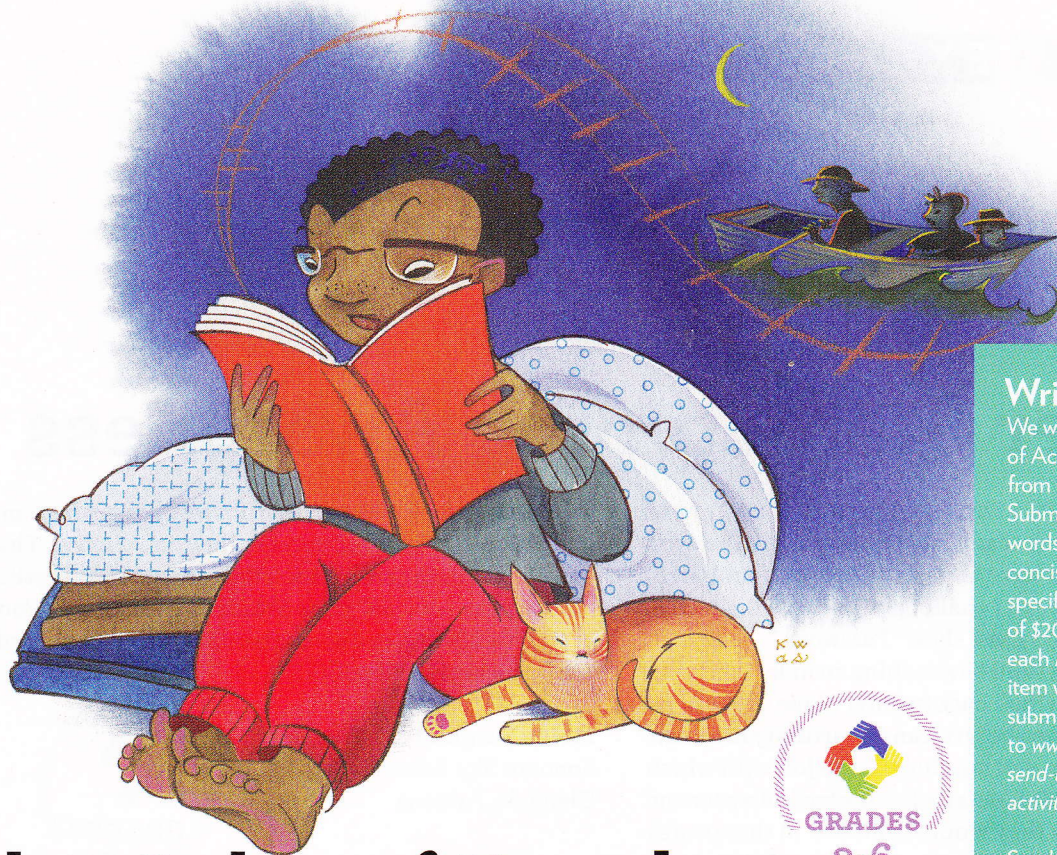
FOR MORE GREAT elementary song ideas, order Teaching Tolerance's free kit *I Will Be Your Friend: Songs and Activities for Young Peacemakers* at www.tolerance.org.

Using a familiar song with a rhythmic beat can inspire students to use alternatives to bullying situations rather than resorting to name-calling or fighting. It could also serve as an introduction to this serious topic. Providing a few clues as signals to defuse a situation may help students lose the "bystander syndrome" that perpetuates bullying.

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Write for Us

We welcome submissions of Activity Exchange items from classroom teachers. Submissions (up to 400 words) should include concise information on specific activities. Payment of \$200-\$300 is made for each Activity Exchange item we publish. For submission guidelines, go to www.tolerance.org/blog/send-us-learning-ideas-activity-exchange

Send submissions to Teaching Tolerance, 400 Washington Ave., Montgomery, AL 36104 or email editor@teachingtolerance.org. Allow 1-3 months for reply.

The Color of Freedom

WE DEVELOPED A UNIT BASED ON COMMON CHILDREN'S books on the Underground Railroad and the Civil Rights Movement. For each book we created a vocabulary list, active learning options and higher order thinking questions. This helped us develop our unit on these topics to make the content more substantive and the history more engaging.

There are plenty of books in your school library that will work with this approach. As an example, we chose Margot Theis Raven's *Night Boat to Freedom* (\$6.99 at www.macmillan.com) to make the Underground Railroad come alive. The book tells the story of 12-year-old Christmas John and his Granny Judith. Granny was enslaved when strangers lured her to their ship with a piece of red flannel. Now on a Kentucky plantation, the two aid other slaves in escaping across the river to the free state of Ohio. John rows the slaves to freedom and, because of his young age, he avoids notice. Each day as Granny makes a quilt, John asks, "What color is freedom tonight?"

Pull out key vocabulary words and concepts, but also pay attention to author's language and use of figures of speech. Here are some examples from *Night Boat to Freedom*: dye pots, hanks of thread, indigo, pine straw, bay leaves, "feeble as a baby" (simile), rawhide, "peaceful as a baby's cradle" (simile).

LEARN MORE ABOUT the Underground Railroad at www.nationalgeographic.com/railroad.

We find it best to personally respond to the text ourselves as a way that develops higher

order thinking questions that will engage students. Here are the ones we developed for *Night Boat to Freedom*:

How did the color red steal Granny Judith away from Africa?

What color do you imagine freedom to be? Why do you choose that color as the freedom color?

What images does the author use to describe how quietly Granny and John talked by the fireplace?

Why did the people escaping need to use passwords and codes?

What character traits does John possess?

What older person do you know who would send you off to freedom?

Strategically using children's literature is a way to bring history alive. And the great news is that your own school library is full of amazing books!

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Gender Stereotyping Awareness

DURING MY CAREER UNIT WITH SEVENTH-GRADERS, I TAKE the opportunity to look at gender stereotyping in the work force. After students have an opportunity to familiarize themselves with careers, I challenge their learning with a game similar to the old game show “Password.”

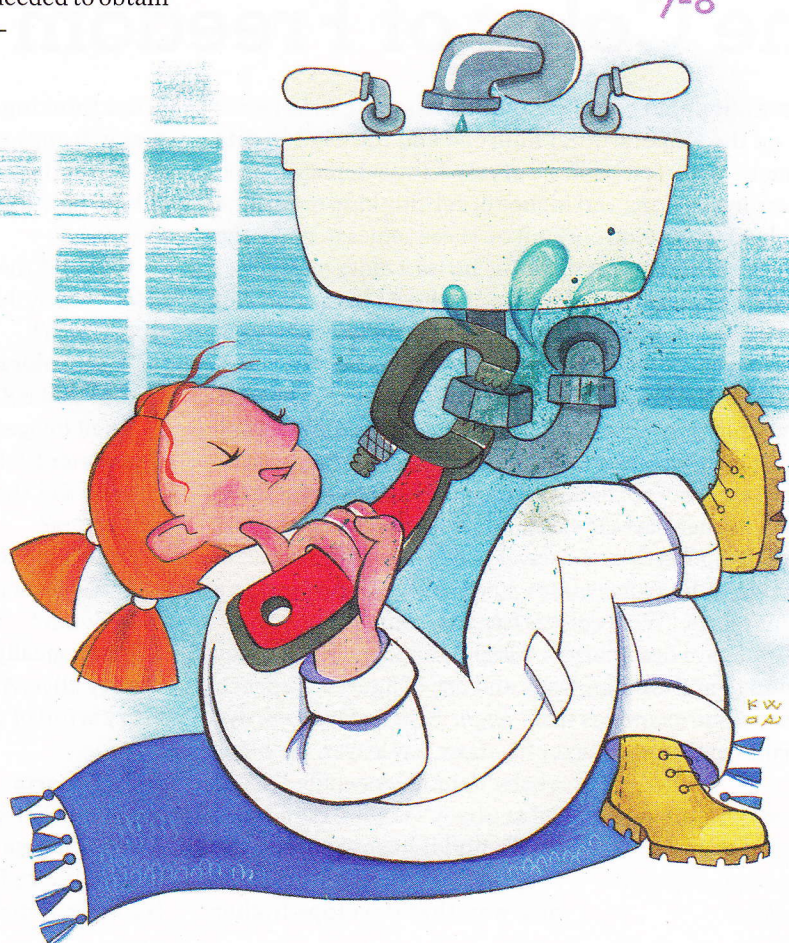
I tell students that I will be attaching an index card with the name of a job onto their back (painter’s tape works fairly well). Students will then be given an opportunity to mingle within the classroom getting clues to the job with which they’ve been labeled. Students look at the back of a peer and talk to them the way they would someone in that profession. They can refer to the schooling that is needed to obtain that particular job or to the special equipment they might use if they did that job. I usually model how to ask questions without giving the job away.

To challenge students’ gender bias, females in class are given stereotypical male jobs like plumber, firefighter and construction manager. Meanwhile, males are assigned jobs like librarian, nurse or flight attendant. Most students accurately guess what the job they’ve been labeled with quite quickly, but usually not without an air of disgust. My female students have responded, for instance, in a horrified tone, “Plumber! Yuck!” Male students scrunch their faces in disbelief at the thought of a male librarian.

I then take the opportunity to review the definition of a stereotype. We discuss how subtle and overt

messages sometimes unintentionally are given to males and females as to what careers they can choose. The lesson ends with the recognition that interests and aptitudes – not gender – should guide people to their careers. You can extend this lesson to discuss the effects of gender on education, paychecks and politics.

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DO YOUR STUDENTS NEED quick comebacks to fight off gender-based putdowns? Read “Not True! Gender Doesn’t Limit You!” at www.tolerance.org/magazine/number-32-fall-2007/not-true-gender-doesnt-limit-you.



The Resurgence of Hate

IN RECENT YEARS THERE HAS BEEN A RESURGENCE IN THIS country of hate groups. Why have these groups been so powerful in American history and why are they gaining in popularity now? It is a good time to revisit the events of the past and help students link these lessons to their lives today. The purpose of this activity is to take a look at one of the most famous hate groups, try to understand why its members believe the way they do and learn what can be done to stop hate groups from returning to their historic levels of power and influence.

Begin by showing a 2-minute video clip from the National Geographic channel on the brief history of the Klan — *KKK: Inside American Terror* (http://channel.nationalgeographic.com/series/inside/3954/Overview?#tab-Videos/05945_00).

After viewing the video, allow students to read the *Newsweek* article “rebranding hate in the age of Obama” (available at www.newsweek.com/id/195085).

Have students look for the answers to the following questions:

Q: According to the video, what groups did the Klan target during its resurgence in the early 20th century? **A:** African Americans and immigrants from predominantly Catholic countries.

Q: Prior to the 2008 election, which group had the Klan and similar hate groups begun targeting and why? **A:** Latino immigrants, to capitalize on fear of losing jobs.

Q: Have there been any other examples of backlashes against immigrant groups over job loss fears in American history? **A:** Chinese American, Japanese American, Italian American and many other groups).

Q: Why did public support of hate groups rapidly decline during the Civil Rights era? **A:** Answers will vary but should refer to the graphic images shown in media during the Civil Rights Movement.

Q: What effects did 9/11 have on hate groups in America? **A:** Answers will vary but will contain thoughts such as increased hate attacks against Arab and Muslim immigrants.

A good assignment for a critical reflection paper would be, “Why do you think that hate groups predominantly target people of color or immigrants and blame them for economic problems that they are not responsible for?”

Mike Hollis

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WANT TO HELP YOUR STUDENTS delve deeper into the causes of intolerance? The author of “The Rhetoric of Hate” (www.tolerance.org/magazine/number-20-fall-2001/rhetoric-hate) let his students research the rhetoric of hate groups — and taught them how to recognize common logical fallacies.

What Does it Mean to be an American?

AMERICAN LITERATURE IS THE FOUNDATION OF OUR 11th-grade English curriculum. Over the course of the year, we visit many pieces of literature and discuss many themes. The focus is to begin considering how the literature we explore reflects our society and our experiences. To this end, I ask students to contemplate one of two questions: What does it mean to be an American?

What do people mean when they say “the American dream?”

Students are placed in heterogeneous groups of three or four and asked to brainstorm notions of what it means to be an American and what possible criteria define

“the American dream.” The group must collectively compose a *What We Know* paper that is two pages in length. This paper summarizes the group’s discussion. Next, the group writes a two-page *What We Want To Find Out* paper that is based on questions that arose during their discussions. These questions become the focus of their research.

Each student focuses on the same research questions that their group generated, but from their differing points of view. Invite students to think about how their racial, ethnic and religious identities affect their vision of “the American dream.” The research must include:

Connections to class readings

Primary and secondary resources

One personal interview from the community

A “**Search**” section, which discusses the research process, rationale for choosing materials and how their resources shaped their ideas

A “**What I Learned**” section, in which students reveal their conclusions

“**Connections and Conclusions**” — a summary of the group’s conclusions

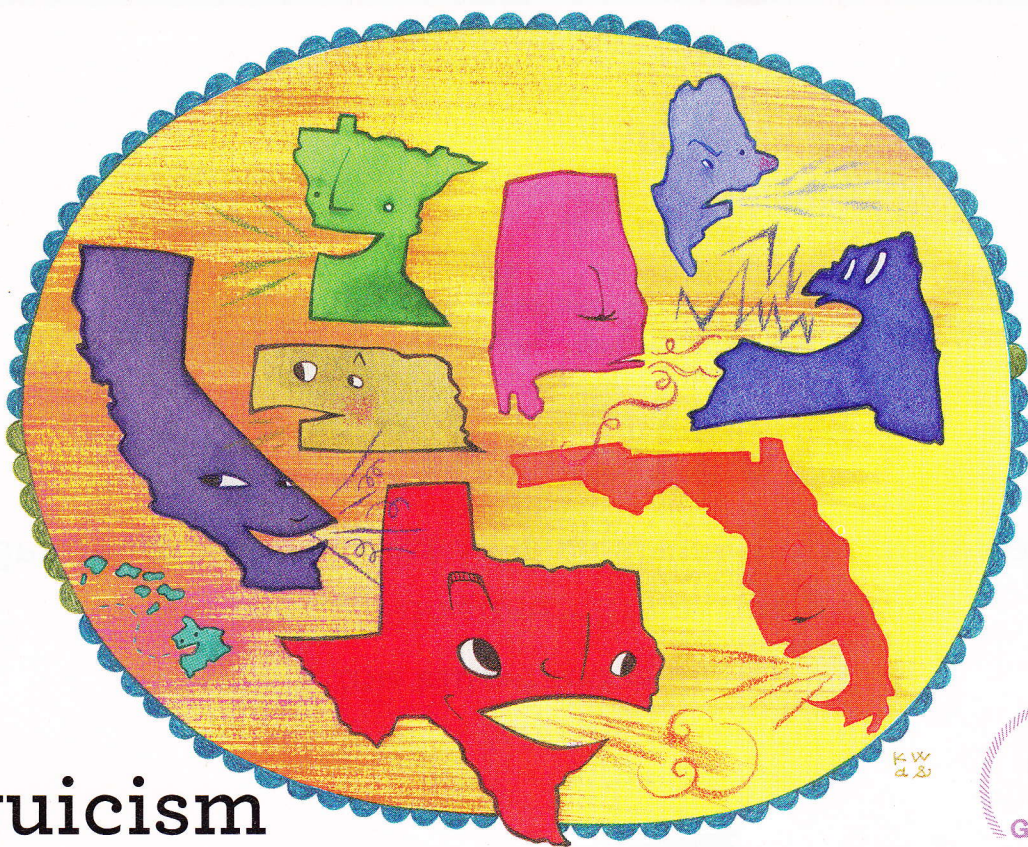
Students can present their collective findings in panel discussions — and discuss their different points of view on these questions.

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USE THE PBS WEBSITE *Teen Immigrants, Five American Stories* (www.pbs.org/inthemix/shows/show_teen_immigrants.html) to help students understand more about becoming American.



Linguicism



WE ALL KNOW EACH OTHER'S NAMES, BUT DO WE KNOW THE stories of our names? To begin this activity I give students a piece of paper and have them write their name on it in big, bold letters. Have each student tell the story of how they received their name. After this, I ask students, "How important is language?" Most of us would agree that language is important in our society. The ways we communicate and speak are ways for others to know a little bit about who we are. But how accurate are our perceptions when language is all we have?

Next, I break students into small groups and tell them that they are to create a skit that reveals their answers to the following questions:

- Q:** What does a smart person sound like?
- Q:** What does an unintelligent person sound like?
- Q:** What does a villain sound like?
- Q:** What does a hero sound like?

After the skits, students reflect and discuss the following questions:

- Q:** What patterns do you notice in the way each group described its person?
- Q:** How important is language in determining someone's intelligence?
- Q:** Where do we get our perceptions about intelligence and language?
- Q:** What if someone doesn't speak a language "correctly?" Does that mean they are not smart?
- Q:** What about accents? What does it mean to have a Southern accent, a New York accent or a foreign accent?

Use relevant video clips from the Internet or TV shows to explore linguicism further, along with a few discussion

questions. Here are a few examples:

LINGUISTIC PROFILING

www.youtube.com/watch?v=3FLdJHYMgyI&NR=1 *Linguistic*

- Q:** What type of discrimination did the person on the video suffer?
- Q:** How do you think the person feels?
- Q:** Why does he have to change his accent?
- Q:** In what ways is linguistic profiling harmful?

LINGUISTIC DISCRIMINATION

www.youtube.com/watch?v=3KCL97s1lJg&feature=related

- Q:** Can you tell a person's race by the sound of their voice?
- Q:** Have you ever experienced discrimination based on the sound of your voice?

TV SHOWS

- Q:** What television shows can you think of that perpetuate linguistic stereotypes?
- Q:** What do these stereotypes do to the people who are being stereotyped?

As a final project, have students come up with a definition about linguicism based on all the information they've learned. Ask them to create a skit that combats linguicism.

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A PERFECT COMPLIMENT to this lesson is Sandra Cisneros' *The House on Mango Street* (\$12.60), especially the vignette titled "My Name." Order it at www.mcgraw-hill.com.