



Who Are My Sisters and Brothers?



LEARNING OUTCOMES

The students will be able to:

- **appreciate the diversity of people;**
- **recognize cultural differences as gifts of God.**



PREPARATION/ MATERIALS

- Book - “*Frederick*” by Leo Lionni or other book about what it feels like to be in a strange place
- New Testament - preferably children’s version - (1 Cor 12:14-18; Mk 10:13-16) and picture of Jesus welcoming children
- Preparation for counting in another language – for example, “*Moja Means One*” (or another book about counting in a different language)
- Music from different cultures and rhythm instruments
- Poster-making materials (crayons, markers, glue, construction paper, large poster paper or display board), optional: children’s photos brought from home
- Optional: sample of cultural and ethnic foods brought from home
- Review term in [Glossary: culture](#).

TEACHING/LEARNING PROCESS

Essentials/Catholic Christian Perspective

- Read “*Fredrick*” by Leo Lionni or another story about **recognizing and sharing individual gifts**. Have the children name Frederick’s gifts and state why they may not have been recognized by the other mice at the beginning of the story as gifts.
- Then **introduce the word “culture,”** using a simple definition like “the way families and groups of people live, work, and play together” and giving examples like food, language, dress, type of houses, how they raise their children, pray, celebrate, and work together.
- Help the children to **recognize cultural differences as gifts of God**. Read from **1 Cor 12:14-18**, preferably from a children’s version of the New Testament, or rephrase as needed in simpler language.
- Help the children to **identify some of their own gifts**. Two suggested approaches follow:
 - o Ask the children to complete the following sentence: The thing I like best about myself is _____. They can share their answer in pairs or with the whole group.
 - o Play a game with the children. Have them act out the following directions if they apply.
 - If you are good at making people smile, smile.
 - If you are good at drawing, pretend you are drawing.
 - If you can sing, join in singing (begin a favorite song).
 - If you can speak a different language, say something in that language when I point to you.



- o Add other gifts or let the children suggest other gifts that can be acted out.
- Then **emphasize that people's different gifts are all needed in God's plan**; they are all gifts of God. Cultural differences, too, are part of God's plan, and if any part or gift were missing, God's world would not be whole.
- Read **Mk 10:13-16** and if possible show a picture of Christ welcoming children to recall Christ's welcoming actions. Discussion questions after reading bible verse:
 - o Do you think the children felt welcome? How did Jesus show the children they were welcome? Did Jesus welcome only certain children? What do you think he wanted to show us about welcoming others? Who do you think is included in the "family of God"?

Review the key points:

- Jesus has shown us how to welcome others, how to show hospitality. If we want to follow his example, we will welcome immigrants with actions as well as words, treating them as our sisters and brothers, as part of the family of God.
- God made all people the same in some ways and different in others; cultural differences are part of God's plan;
- God made everyone with special gifts and everyone is needed for the world to be whole.

Suggested Activities

1. Divide children into pairs. Have them think of ways they are alike and ways they are different. Encourage them to go beyond the obvious and think of as many ways as they can. Have pairs share their thoughts with the class or with other pairs. Emphasize that differences are neither good nor bad. They are just differences, and that we need to appreciate and respect differences. Imagine life if everyone were the same!
2. Explain that the differences in children and families are often because of their culture. Review the meaning of [culture](#) in words you think they can understand. Together name examples of cultural differences, e.g., language, customs, food, prayer, celebrations, clothing, values. Use examples from your own life experience or those of the children.
3. Count in one or more languages; e.g., in Spanish, *uno, dos, tres, cuatro, cinco, seis, siete, ocho, nueve, diez, once, doce, trece, catorce, quince* Read *Moja Means One*, or another book about counting in a different language.
4. Teach colors in another language by placing those words on circles made from each color, e.g., Spanish:

White - *blanco*
(blan' ko)

Blue - *azul*
(ah sool')

Black - *negro*
(nay' gro)

Yellow - *amarillo*
(ah mah ree' lyo)

Green - *verde*
(vayr' day)

Brown - *morréno*
(mo ray' no)

Grey - *gris*
(grees)

Orange - *naranja*
(na ran ha' do)

Red - *rojo*
(ro' ho)

5. Play music from different cultures, adding rhythm instruments in the spirit of that culture.



6. Learn and sign “*We Are the World*,” “*It’s a Small World*” or similar songs.
7. Do a “Taste and Tell” with children bringing from home a simple food from another country to share with classmates and tell the name of the country.
8. Make a class poster entitled “Jesus Loves Us All,” with children drawing pictures of themselves (or use school photos) placed around a drawing of Jesus.
9. Pray a litany “Thank you, God, for the people of _____.” Children name countries they know.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What do I know now that I did not know before?
- How do I feel about this?
- How will I act differently?