



Many Cultures, One Community

Applying C.A.R.E. *about* U. Plan 3: Exploring History (55 min)

Materials Required:

Ruth and the Green Book by Calvin Alexander Ramsey
“Let’s Say Welcome!” Handout (1/child)
Blank Ceramic Tiles (Available from S & S Worldwide)

Colored Pencils
Colored Sharpies or Painting Markers

Objective:

To explore the historical experiences and struggles of several cultural groups of others with empathy and understanding.

Part One: Let’s Get Compassionately Curious about What Other Cultural Groups have Experienced

1. Ask: How many of you have gone on a long trip in a car?
2. Explain: Today we are going to use our imagination to pretend we are going on an exciting road trip to visit family.
3. Instruct the children to close their eyes and imagine:
 - One of your adult family members just drove up to your home in a brand new roomy car!
 - This family member announces a special surprise! You are going on a long trip to visit family you love!
 - You will take this trip in this new comfortable car!
 - The car has soft upholstery and plenty of brand new fun games to play in the backseat!
 - It will take three days to get there and you are leaving today!
4. Instruct the children to open their eyes.
Ask: What do you think it will be like for your family to take a road trip? What will you pack? Do you think you will have to make stops along the way? If so, what will you need to stop for?
5. Instruct the children to close their eyes again and imagine:
 - The entire family is excited!
 - You all get in the car, get on the road and traffic is light! So far, it is a very comfortable trip and you are all having fun looking at the scenery, playing the new games, singing silly songs and talking about your family that you are going to visit!
 - You are making great time. Everyone in your family is in a great mood, but you need to take a break. After driving over five hours, it is time to make a stop.
 - The driver gets off the exit and starts to look for a place where you can get gasoline, go to the restroom and maybe get something delicious to eat!
 - As you pull in to a parking spot, you all notice a sign that says you are not welcome. It seems as if your family is not going to be allowed to get gasoline here or use the bathroom, and you cannot buy any food! Your whole family is quietly sitting in the car, staring at the sign.
 - A man comes out of the building in a uniform and starts to yell at your family! He looks very mean!
 - You are not sure, but it looks like he has some kind of weapon, like a bat. He is waving at you to leave and tells you that your kind of people cannot stop anywhere around here! He tells you all to get back on the highway!

6. Instruct the children to open their eyes.

Ask: What would you and your family start to feel if you were far from home and found out that you were not welcome at a gas station or a restaurant along the way?

Part Two: Reading and Discussion

1. Explain: Throughout history, there are many groups of people who have been treated badly because of where they were born, what religion they practiced or the color of their skin. People have not been allowed to go places or join clubs, especially when they were new immigrants. People have been called names when they came to the United States because things were bad in their own countries.

For example: In the mid 1800's, some of the poorest people in the world lived in Ireland. Many came to the United States and worked low-paying jobs –mostly building canals—that other Americans would not do.

- Irish people were treated as the carriers of disease.
- They were thought of as sub-human, lazy, clannish, unclean, drunken brawlers.

Another example: During World War II, the US Military forced people of Japanese ancestry into internment camps.

- Internment Camps were like prisons.
- Around 120,000 Japanese-Americans were sent to the camps around the western United States.
- People were put in the camps based only on their race. They had not done anything wrong.

Sadly, no matter what hardships a group of immigrants has endured or what work they come to our country to do, often they are not easily accepted. So much discrimination happens based upon cultural background. Even though individuals are not doing anything wrong or never did anything wrong, like in our imaginary story, an ordinary family on a road trip could have a bad experience because of prejudice against their heritage.

2. Explain: By reading a story and talking about this kind of bullying and discrimination, we can understand what it might feel like. By empathizing and knowing this has happened to many people from all kinds of cultural backgrounds, we can remember how important it is to be respectful to one another and to be accepting of people who are different than us.

3. **Read aloud:** *Ruth and the Green Book* by Calvin Alexander Ramsey

4. Ask:

- Why wouldn't the gas station attendant let Ruth and her mother use the restroom?
- Why did Ruth's mother say the service station owners should be the ones ashamed of themselves?
- The Esso Station attendant said a postman named Victor H. Green started the Green Book. How do you think he knew which businesses would serve African Americans?
- Eddy tells Ruth's father that things might become dangerous as the family drives south. What might have happened, if the family had not learned about Esso stations and the Green Book?
- Why doesn't Miss Melody take any money from Ruth's parents to stay at her home? What does Ruth mean when she says she's "going to do the same one day"?
- What does Ruth mean when she says the trip made her feel like part of one big family?
- Should such an experience cause a group to look out for one another? Do cultural groups look out for those who are from the same cultural background?

- How might all of us looking out for one another, not just those who are like us, change our lives? Our communities? Our state? Our country? Our afterschool program? Should we?
5. Show the video at: <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=8E4GnLGBpJc>
(Note: Not everything in the video is spelled correctly, but it cheers the children up before you move on to the project)

Part Three: Let's Be Welcoming

1. Explain: Throughout history, people have hung up signs that hurt other people.
2. Give each student a copy of the 'Let's Say Welcome' handout and colored pencils.
3. Instruct students to look at pictures of some the signs hung up in the past.
4. Ask: Can you learn from the mistakes of the past?
5. Show the video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-x90tR8-g5o>
6. Explain: Adults can learn from children. They can make a difference by learning from the mistakes of the past, being accepting and welcoming.
7. Instruct students to think about others and sketch an idea for a sign that is welcoming to all in the square on the back of the handout.
8. Travel around the room. When you see a child has sketched a welcoming sign, please provide them with:
 - a. A blank tile
 - b. Colored Sharpie or painting markers
9. Instruct students to create a welcome tile based upon the sketch they created in the diamond on the back of the handout.

Part Four: Wrap-up

1. Ask: There is a saying that we must learn from history or it will just repeat itself. What do you think that saying means?
2. Ask: How can our little signs be our own way of learning from history?

Recommended Additional Reading:

Four Feet, Two Sandals by Karen Lynn Williams & Khadra Mohammed

Learn a bit about refugee camp living with this kind story of two girls. When relief workers bring used clothing to the refugee camp, everyone scrambles to grab whatever they can. Ten-year-old Lina is thrilled when she finds a sandal that fits her foot perfectly, until she sees that another girl has the matching shoe.

The Butterfly by Patricia Polacco

Living as a Jewish child with Nazi's in your village creates an opportunity for friendship. This story tells not only of history, but of the bond between two young girls.

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