

2005 EDITION

Mixitup Activity Booklet

middle & upper grades



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Mix It Up Survey

A Math and Social Science Activity

Grade level: 7-12

Objectives

Students will explore their perceptions of social boundaries at school.
Students will compare their perceptions with the perception of others.
Students will calculate the results of a survey.

Materials

Copies of the handout, page 5

Instructions

Working with students in your class, use the survey on the opposite page to get a snapshot of how people view the walls in your school.

1. Fill out the survey. Be honest!
2. Gather all the surveys.
3. Now, get into a small group with other students you don't know well.
4. Shuffle up the surveys, and then pass them out evenly to the small groups, along with a blank survey.
5. As a group, tally the results.
6. Report your findings to the whole class. Make sure each group does the same thing — and make sure someone's writing down all the findings.
7. Now look at all the responses as a whole, and ask:
 - Do other students see social boundaries the same way you do?
 - Why might we see things differently?
 - What are some things we could do to make our school or classroom a more welcoming place?

Follow-up Activities

1. Survey students in other classrooms, too. Do perceptions vary from one classroom to the next? Are the overall results different? Why might this be?
2. Create a classroom display of results. Include steps students identified as ways to make the school or classroom more welcoming.

HANDOUT

Mix It Up Survey

1. Which best describes our school?

- welcoming to all kinds of people
- quick to put people in categories

2. In what settings have you noticed people grouping themselves and others by categories?

- after-school clubs
- assemblies
- bus
- cafeteria
- classroom
- recreational activities
- spectator events
- other _____

3. Which of the following categories create group boundaries at our school?

- appearance/style
- academic achievement
- athletic achievement
- ethnicity
- family income
- gender
- hobbies
- home neighborhood
- language
- musical interests
- political beliefs
- race
- religion
- sexual orientation
- other _____

4. Which of those group boundaries are the hardest to cross, and why?

5. At our school, how easy is it to make friends with people in different groups?

- very easy
- kind of easy
- kind of hard
- very hard

6. Have you ever felt unwelcome or rejected by others on the basis of any of the categories listed in Question 3? If so, which ones? How did it make you feel? _____

- Have you ever been part of a group that rejected someone on the basis of any of these categories? If so, which ones? How do you feel about it now? _____

- What one thing will you do to help break down the walls in our school? _____

Map It Out

A Creative Arts Project

Grade level 7-12

Objective

Students will create a mural of their school cafeteria.

Materials

Art supplies
Poster paper

Instructions

1. Ask students to observe cafeteria seating at lunch.
2. Once in class, break students into small groups.
3. Working in small groups, students should sketch a “seating chart” of the cafeteria, identifying where the social cliques are seated.
4. Next, groups should create a mural or map of the school cafeteria.
5. As a whole class, discuss: Did different people map the cafeteria differently? How were groups named? Did the names of groups vary? Why do you think that is? What did others notice that you didn't? What did you notice that others didn't?
6. Post the students' creations in hallways, classrooms and the cafeteria in advance of Mix It Up at Lunch Day on November 15, 2005.
7. Have students repeat the activity on Mix It Up at Lunch Day and create murals reflecting any changes.

Acceptance and Rejection

A Group Dynamic Activity

Grade level 7-12

Objectives

To help students become more aware of the effects of acceptance and rejection.

Materials

Instruction card for each group (five groups)

Reflections activity sheet for each student

Instructions

1. Divide students into five groups. (If you have students who seem especially withdrawn or isolated, do not put them in Group 1.)
2. Instruct groups to decide upon a secret password and secret handshake. (2-3 minutes)
3. Give each group an instruction card.
4. Ask each group to discuss the instructions among themselves. (2-3 minutes)
5. Each group should carry out its written instructions without revealing those instructions to anyone from another group. (5-15 minutes)
6. Afterward, everyone should share their hidden rules.

Instruction Cards for Groups

Group 1: Due to lack of space, we can only have four groups. The members of your group must split up and join other groups. You must learn the handshake and password to get in.

Group 2: Do not let anyone join your group. Do not tell anyone your secret password or show them your secret handshake no matter what!

Group 3: Allow anyone to join your group who wants to join. However, do not let them join right away. Ask them questions about why they want to join and why they should be allowed in. After a few minutes, accept them into your group and share your secret password and handshake.

Group 4: Vote on everyone who wants to join your group. If your last name starts with A-M, you should always vote “yes” on every person who is trying to join. If your last name starts with N-Z, you should always vote “no” on every person who is trying to join.

Group 5: Warmly welcome anyone who wants to be in your group. Make everyone feel accepted and appreciated. Share your handshake and password with them immediately. Make sure they know how glad you are that they chose to join your group!

Discussion

After the hidden rules are revealed, have students complete the Reflections Activity Sheet and record their responses as journal entries.

Discuss in small groups or as large groups some of the responses, using the following prompts:

- If you attempted to join more than one group, compare the two or three experiences.
- Each group had different criteria for inclusion/exclusion. Did you react differently to each group's set of criteria?
- Consider the standards your group enforces for including or excluding new members.
- How would you describe the standards and method?
- Can you justify your group's practice for accepting or rejecting members? Explain.
- Can you think of social groups that behave according to these models in real life?
- Have you experienced a social situation that resembles the dynamics of any one of these groups? What did you do?

This activity was submitted by Gaye Sharp, Language Arts Teacher/API Coordinator at Lee's Summit High School

HANDOUT

Acceptance and Rejection Exercise

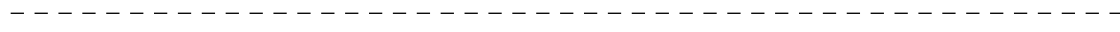
Instructions

Cut out the groups below and distribute to each group.



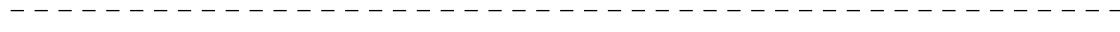
Group One

Due to a lack of space, we can only have four groups. The members of your group must split up and join other groups. You must learn the handshake and password to get in.



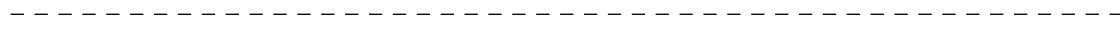
Group Two

Do not let anyone join your group. Do not tell anyone your secret password or show them your secret handshake no matter what!



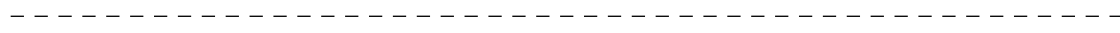
Group Three

Allow anyone to join your group who wants to join. However, do not let them join right away. Ask them questions about why they want to join and why they should be allowed in. After a few minutes, accept them into your group and share your secret password and handshake.



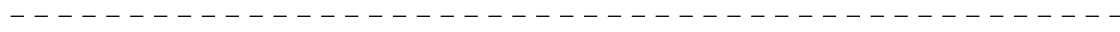
Group Four

Vote on everyone who wants to join your group. If your last name starts with A-M, you should always vote YES on every person who is trying to join. If your last name starts with N-Z, you should always vote NO on every person who is trying to join.



Group Five

Warmly welcome anyone who wants to be in your group. Make everyone feel accepted and appreciated. Share your handshake and password with them immediately. Make sure they know how glad you are they chose to join your group!



TAKE THE CHALLENGE • BRING DOWN THE WALLS
MIX IT UP AT LUNCH DAY 2005

Four Corners

A Discussion Activity

Grade level 7-12

Objectives

Students will learn and engage in dialogue about the viewpoints of others that may differ from their own.

Students will discuss issues related to social boundaries, to build skills in listening, self-reflection and critical thinking.

Students will gain new insight of each other and deepen their understanding of each other.

Students will create an environment that respects the different ideas and perspectives of others.

Materials

Pencils/Pens

Signs labeling four areas

Handout, page 12

Special Note

Students will find themselves in various corners agreeing or disagreeing to questions that reflect contrary viewpoints. Explain to students this exercise is not intended to make one perspective right. The teacher should serve as the facilitator. As the facilitator you should prepare to be an objective, non-biased participant.

Instructions

1. Review the objectives of the activity.

2. Set ground rules. (5 minutes)

Make sure students understand the expectations for participant's comments and actions. This can be established by setting ground rules. Here's a list to get you started. Ask the class if there's anything they'd like to add or take away from the list. Remember, what the class decides is acceptable.

- Listen and treat each other with respect.
- It's OK to disagree.
- Use "I" statements and speak for yourself and not for any group
- Everyone is encouraged to speak at least once. However, it's OK to pass.
- Keep an open mind; there are no right or wrong answers.
- Don't use names if you talk about someone who is not in the group.
- Keep things said within the class confidential.
- If you disagree with a comment say so and say why.

3. Provide each student with a copy of the handout.

- Ask students to choose one selection in private and mark it down.
- Explain to students they must choose one of the four responses on the handout.
 - A-Strongly Agree
 - B-Agree
 - C-Disagree
 - D-Strongly disagree

- Read over the statements for people and clarify any questions about language. Do not engage in any discussions about the statements; remind students they will have the opportunity to explain why they chose a particular answer. Do not interpret the statements. Only

clarify language questions.

- When everyone is finished ask them to sign the paper and put their pencils away.

4. Have the students move into the corner that corresponds with their response. Remind students to move to the corners without talking. (10-15 minutes)

Have each group designate a spokesperson for the group

- Students will take turns reading the questions that guided them to their corner.
- Students will identify points of contention as well as agreement.
- Each student will temporarily suspend his or her beliefs to engage in dialogue with another person when disagreement occurs. For example, “strongly agreeing” that socioeconomic status trumps race might preclude “strongly agreeing” that the school openly accepts everyone. Students with conflicting views might interview one another and list strengths of each person’s viewpoint.
- Students will agree on an issue that they would all like to see change in the school and brainstorm some ideas for change.

5. Groups will report back. (10-15 minutes)

- The spokesperson will identify an issue that caused friction in the group and the two people who disagreed most will explain the other’s viewpoint.
- The spokesperson will identify an issue for change and each group member will name something they could do about it.

6. Allow for Group Questions and Comments, using the following prompts.

- Did listening to the viewpoint of people who agreed with a different statement change the level of your own responses to your statement?
- If so, what kind of “testimony” from another group member most influenced your change in opinion?
- What did you have to compromise to engage in dialogue with your group?
- What new information did you acquire by temporarily suspending your beliefs?
- Did the discussion motivate you to get involved in an issue that affects students here?

What might you do?

SIGNS

Four Corners

Cut out the signs below and post them in four corners around the room.

STRONGLY AGREE



AGREE

DISAGREE

STRONGLY DISAGREE

HANDOUT

Four Corners

At our school, I think the socio-economic status of students is more divisive than race.

MY RESPONSE Circle only one

- A=Strongly Agree
- B=Agree
- C=Disagree
- D=Strongly Agree

In our school, I think there is more *talk* about getting along with everyone than there is *action*.

MY RESPONSE Circle only one

- A=Strongly Agree
- B=Agree
- C=Disagree
- D=Strongly Agree

I think our school creates a welcoming environment for everyone, and no one is excluded.

MY RESPONSE Circle only one

- A=Strongly Agree
- B=Agree
- C=Disagree
- D=Strongly Agree

I believe that students in our school take an active role in implementing change.

MY RESPONSE Circle only one

- A=Strongly Agree
- B=Agree
- C=Disagree
- D=Strongly Agree

We Want You to Know

A Discussion Activity

Grades 9-12

Objectives

Students will share the experiences of social groups in schools.

Materials

Flipchart

Markers

Paper

Instructions

1. Ask students to write down on a sheet of paper a social clique that exists in their school.
2. Once students have brainstormed the cliques, have them place the slips of paper in a hat. Shake the hat and ask each student to draw from the hat.
3. Ask students to represent the group they pick from the hat fairly and honestly, even if they don't identify with the group personally.
4. Give each group about 10 minutes to write down answers to the following statements:
 - What we want you to know about our group is ...
 - What we never want to see or hear again about our group is ...
5. Ask students to discuss their list and allow time for others in the class to comment or ask questions. Remind students they are not to challenge the list because it represents the realities for the group.

Follow-Up Activity

Encourage students to engage in an open dialogue about the activity. Have students answer the following questions:

- What was your initial reaction to this activity?
- Which group did you learn the most about?
- Did any of the statements surprise you?
- Did you notice any similarities between the groups?
- What perceptions did you have that were refuted by a particular group? How do you explain the discrepancies in your views?

Social Action Exercise

A Social Justice Exercise

Grade level 9-12

Objectives

To help students explore ways in which they can be agents for change in their school and share that experience with others.

To help students explore safe and realistic ways in which they can act as an ally.

Materials

Flipchart paper

Instructions

1. Have students choose an issue in their school and/or community they would like to see change.
2. Ask students to think about the things they could do as a group to create the change. Write their responses on the flip chart.
3. Ask students to think about the things they could do as individuals. Write their responses on the flip chart and post them in the room.
4. At this time introduce the term "ally," ask students to provide you with the definition of an ally. (Some responses may include someone who helps, supports, or speaks out on behalf of someone else.)
5. Next on the Flip chart paper, make two columns and label them "Risk" and "Benefits."
6. Have students brainstorm the "Risk" and "Benefits" associated with being an ally. Post their comments on the wall.
7. Have students apply the term "ally" to activist groups they know about and identify the risks undertaken by those "allies". For instance people who sheltered Jews during the holocaust, freedom riders, Underground Railroad conductors and people with disabled friends or relatives.
8. Have students answer the following questions:
 - Why did you choose the project?
 - Why do you believe your action will make a difference in your school?
 - What did you learn from this activity?
 - What did you learn from others insight about social action?
9. If time permits, explore the following questions with students:
 - What are threats to equality?
 - What stops you from working toward equality?

About Mix It Up

Mix It Up supports young people who want to improve the climate of their schools and communities by challenging social boundaries, cliques and other group divisions.

This activity booklet includes lessons created in preparation for Mix It Up at Lunch Day. Millions of students across the country have participated in this national event since its inception in 2002, and we encourage you to take part this year on November 15, 2005.

We welcome your activity ideas. Please email them to mixitup@tolerance.org. Authors of published selections will receive cash payments.

The Southern Poverty Law Center and the Study Circles Resource Center joined forces to create Mix It Up.



The Southern Poverty Law Center combats hatred and intolerance in the United States through education, investigation and litigation. Its Tolerance.org project supports anti-bias activism through online advocacy and outreach. The Teaching Tolerance program provides educators with free materials that promote tolerance in the classroom and beyond. www.tolerance.org



The Study Circles Resource Center is dedicated to finding ways for all kinds of people to engage in problem solving on critical social and political issues. It provides tools to help people organize productive dialogue, recruit participants from all walks of life, find solutions and work for action and change. www.studycircles.org

For additional activities ideas, log onto www.mixitup.org/teachers



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