



Diversity

Materials:

- Construction paper
- Markers
- Sample Diversity Quilt Square (optional)

Brainstorm

Ask students: What do you think of when I say the word “diversity”? Accept students’ responses.

Discuss

Oftentimes when we think about the word “diversity” we think of racial and cultural differences. But **diversity** really means being different, and there are many ways that people are different. These differences include race and culture, but also gender, age, family structure, education, religion, sexual orientation, life experiences, and socioeconomic differences. Diversity can also include differences in the ways that we think about things—our opinions, values, and interests. Every person can find ways that they are similar to and different from others. Sometimes we tend to look for people who are similar to us, but recognizing our own uniqueness and appreciating diversity is important for creating inclusive environments to live, go to school, and work in. Inclusion means to bring people into a group, and feeling like part of a group is important for the well-being of all of us. Have you ever felt excluded? How did it feel? Allow students ample time to respond to the question and continue the discussion as long as it’s productive and remains on topic.

Dive in!

Describe: A family is an example of an inclusive group. In times past, some families had prized possession quilts that were hand-made. You may or may not know, but making quilts is a pretty complex task. Quilts were sometimes made for special occasions, such as a marriage or the arrival of a new baby; and made using special pieces of fabric that were intricately sewn together. It could take months to make a quilt. The fabric used in quilts sometimes held special meaning for families. It might be part of a family member’s shirt that could no longer be used, or from material gifted from a friend. These quilts told stories. Today, we are going to make a classroom quilt that tells the story of all of us. Each one of us is diverse, but we are also similar. If you have created a sample quilt square in advance, you can show it to students at this time.



High School

Activity

Working individually, in pairs or small groups, Each student will create and decorate a paper quilt using colors, images, and drawings that are meaningful to them.

As a class, assemble all the paper quilts into a larger quilt.

Reflect

When students are done, ask the Reflect question verbally: What are the qualities that make you unique but which also connect you to others in our class community?

Optional Home Connection → Encourage students to repeat the activity at home and create a family quilt.

Professional Development

Take 5 minutes and reflect on how you embrace and welcome diversity in your classroom community. In this an area in which you'd like to improve? How?

For Further Study:

- Common Sense Media, *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity Resources for the Classroom*
<https://www.commonsense.org/education/top-picks/diversity-equity-and-inclusivity-resources-for-classrooms>
- Learning for Justice, *Lesson Plans for Exploring Identity and Diversity*
<https://www.learningforjustice.org/topics>
- 52 Essential Questions to Inspire Children for Life, *Podcast topics include talking to students about inclusion, race, gender, and more.*
<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/52-essential-conversations-to-inspire-children/id1418151997>