

Today's Challenges; Today's Leaders:

REAL WORLD CONVERSATIONS FOR THE CLASSROOM

Lesson Number: **TCTL.4.2**

The Diversity Among Us

Quick Reference:

Time Required:

60 minutes

Objectives:

After completing this lesson, students should be able to:

1. Recognize that differences exist among people.
2. Recognize strengths in others.
3. Evaluate the impact of having diverse strengths on a team.

Materials:

- ✓ Index cards (one card per student)
- ✓ Plain paper (one sheet per student)
- ✓ Tape
- ✓ Writing utensils TL.4.1.AS.B (one copy per student)

Purpose:

The purpose of this lesson is to assist students in identifying strengths in others.

Directions:

The bulleted information below is important to know as background information.

- Assets – your personal strengths and talents.
- The ability to identify assets in others is important so we can hire the right person or utilize a skill or trade held by someone else.
- The strongest teams are built on assembling a group of people who bring different assets to the team, developing diversity within the team.

After reviewing the information above, begin with the lesson activities below.

1. Pass out an index card to each student.
2. Encourage students to first think about their personal assets and strengths.
 - a. Ask them to identify traits or skills they possess.
 - b. Next, have students narrow their lists down to one strength that they believe they are known for.
 - c. Have them write that strength in capital letters on an index card.
3. Have students identify the assets of others. Collect all of the index cards and shuffle the deck. Pass out one index card to each student. Students should not receive their own cards.



4. Students will have 30 seconds to identify the owner of the card by asking yes-no questions. They may not ask the question, “Is this your card?” Instead, questions should be more specific, such as, “Do you enjoy drawing?”
5. Once students have found their matches they will wait quietly until the time is up. Allow more time to “mingle” if students are still looking for their matches at the end of the 30 seconds.
 - a. After all students have found their matches, discuss students’ answers to the following questions: Would this activity have been harder or easier with a larger group of people? Among the group, were there many common strengths, or did you notice more diversity? Would this activity have been easier or harder if we were matching physical assets?
6. Begin a discussion with the class about talking behind each other’s back. What do those discussions usually entail? Since students will most likely mention that the comments are negative toward other people, explain that the next activity will be “writing behind each other’s back” and it will focus on identifying each other’s positive traits.
7. Ask students to identify some positive traits and unique qualities they find in others. Distribute one plain sheet of paper to each student and pass around the tape. Have the students tape the blank pages to each other’s backs. Make sure everyone has a writing utensil.
8. Ask students to travel around the room and write one positive trait or quality that the person possesses on the paper. Students must record one trait on the back of every person in the class. Allow five minutes to complete this task.
9. After students have recorded the positive traits on each other’s backs, have students remove the paper from their backs and take one minute to reflect on the comments.
 - a. Have students circle three traits from the paper that they feel best identify how others perceive them. They will use these three traits to summarize their thoughts on how others perceive them on the back of the page.
 - b. Students should write a brief explanation about why they chose these three traits.
10. Once everyone has completed their explanations, Have students place an asterisk next to the qualities that would be beneficial to have on a team.
11. Share with students that strong teams are built around diversity, which means different traits and skills are utilized to achieve a common goal.
 - a. Have students share some of the skills they marked as beneficial for a team.
 - b. Ask students if having more diversity on a team makes it stronger.
12. Inform students that diversity in a team can make it stronger, especially when everyone’s potential can be maximized by using all the different strengths to reach success. Diversity also allows everyone to specialize when completing tasks, making the final product stronger.

Connection Questions:

1. How can the strengths of others be utilized when working in a team?
2. If you were creating a team to lead an organization, what traits would you look for in team members? Why?
3. Think about your close friends. Do you feel you have similar or different strengths than they do? Why?
4. How does diversity strengthen a team?

LifeKnowledge Connections

Precept(s) addressed:

- B. Relationships
 - B4. Eliminate barriers in building relationships
- H. Social Growth
 - H1. Acknowledge that differences exist among people
- J. Mental Growth
 - J1. Think Critically

LK Lesson Suggestion:

- HS.56 – Appreciating differences in people
- HS.100 – Human Potential
- HS.101 – Learning to assess others' strengths

Resource:

National FFA Organization. (2009). *Leadership on the go! A library of activities for inside and outside the classroom*. Indianapolis, IN: National FFA Organization.