

Informational Books in the Preschool Classroom
Topic of Study: People Are Alike in Many Ways

***Shades of People* by Shelly Rotner and Sheila M. Kelly**
***Whoever You Are* by Mem Fox, illustrated by Leslie Staub**

Introduction

In this guide children are engaged in activities that primarily support two domains in the *Arkansas Child Development and Early Learning Standards: Birth through 60 months: Emergent Literacy* and *Social Studies*. The **Learning Goals** (with **Strands**) that precede each activity relate to specific areas of development and learning that are the focus of the activities.

As children are involved in reading two books and as they participate in related activities, they will come to understand that people who live in their community, in this country and all over the world may look different, but they are alike in many ways. The informational book included is: *Shades of People* by Shelley Rotner and Sheila M. Kelly. The storybook, *Whoever You Are* by Mem Fox, Illustrated by Leslie Staub, reinforces the theme that children are alike all over the world.

Teacher Note: *Whoever You Are* is also available in a bilingual board book.

Connection to Adventures in Learning

This curriculum guide can stand alone or be used as a supplement to the following topics of study in **Adventures in Learning**:

- Focus Area: Begin with Me – Topic of Study: I Am Unique Person

This curriculum guide can also be used with similar topics of study from any curriculum.

Materials to Collect and Make

- Magazines with pictures of people that reflect diversity
- Art materials that reflect different shades of people: crayons, washable markers, paint, dough, and construction paper
- Photos of each child's face for creating a puppet

Story Presentations

Learning Goals:

CD2.4 Holds and manipulates information in memory (*short-term and working memory*)

LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language) (*vocabulary and language comprehension*)

EL1.1 Shows interest in literacy experiences (*engagement in literacy experiences, variety of interests*)

EL1.2 Engages in read-alouds and conversations about books and stories (*story comprehension*)

EL3.1 Responds to features of books and print (*book knowledge*)

SS1.1 Demonstrates positive connection to family and community (*family and cultural identity*)

Book: *Whoever You Are* by Mem Fox, illustrated by Leslie Staub

- Prepare to read the book, *Whoever You Are*.
- Show the cover, give title and author and illustrator. (Explain that the author is the person who writes the words and the illustrator is the person who draws the pictures.)
- Invite children to discuss what they see on the cover.
- Read the story so each child can see the pages in the book.
- Allow children to make comments about the pictures they see and the words they hear.
- Follow up the reading by showing the pages and inviting children to help you read the story. For example, when you read "all over the world", invite them to join you in saying the words and holding out their arms like the man in the illustration on the last page of the book.
- Allow them to complete sentences such as "Their skin may be different from _____ (yours), and their homes may be different from _____(yours)".

Teacher Note: *The process of pausing and allowing children to fill in the missing word or phrase is called the cloze technique.*

Book: *Shades of People* by Shelley Rotner and Sheila M. Kelly

- Prepare to read the book, *Shades of People*.
- Show children the book and say, "We are going to do something different with this book. We are going to look at the last page of the book before we read the story."
- Show children the last page of the book and ask them what they see (hands).
- Invite them to discuss how the hands are alike (five fingers, each finger has fingernails) and how they are different (children may say they are different colors).
- Explain that the hands are different shades rather than colors.
- Call attention to the dark brown hand and the lighter brown hands and explain that all of the hands are brown hands but they are different shades of brown. All of the hands on the page are different shades.
- Put your hand on the floor and invite each child in the group to do the same. Ask that they put their hands close to each other's as on the last page of the book.
- Invite children to look at all of hands on the floor and ask how they are alike and how they are different. (Alike: five fingers, fingernails – Different: different sizes and different shades)
- Invite children to look at the faces of their classmates and ask how they are alike (eyes, eyebrows, nose, mouth) and how they are different. (different shades)
- Explain to children that you will now read with them a book titled *Shades of People*.
- Show the front and back cover, give the title and invite children to look at the photos on the covers and describe what they see.
- Show the title page, read the title and name the authors, Shelley Rotner and Sheila M. Kelly. Explain that this book has photographs of real people and that the photographer who took the photos is Shelley Rotner, who is also one of the authors.
- Show the dedication page and invite children's comments.
- Take your time as you read the story so that children can look at the pictures. Invite comments.
- Follow up the reading by explaining to children that, as you read the book again, they look at the photographs to see if they see a shade that is similar to the shade of their skin.
- Invite children to name the shade that is most like their shade.
- Explain to children that there will be materials representing different shades of people in the art center they might want to use as they create pictures of people.

Second Reading of *Shades of People*

- Prior to the second reading, take photos of each child's face and invite children to make a stick puppet using their photos.
- Ask children to bring the stick puppets to the second reading.
- Read the story and invite children to look at the photographs and help them name the shade that is similar to the shade of their skin.
- Follow up the reading by showing the pages and invite children to hold up their puppet when they see a shade that is similar to the shade of their skin.
- Suggest that all children hold up their puppets when they see groups of children.

Additional Language Activities

Learning Goals:

CD2.4 Holds and manipulates information in memory (*short-term and working memory*)

LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language) (*vocabulary and language comprehension, follows directions*)

EL1.1 Shows interest in literacy experiences (*engagement in literacy experiences, variety of interests*)

EL3.1 Responds to features of books and print (*print knowledge*)

SS1.1 Demonstrates positive connection to family and community (*family and cultural identity*)

Activity: Different and Alike

Directions:

- Prepare a chart with a line down the middle. Label the left column **Different** and the right column **Alike** and take it to the book reading area with the book *Whoever You Are*.
- Read the book *Whoever You Are* to the children and suggest that they listen for all of the ways they and the children in the story may be different and how they are alike.
- Follow up the reading by involving children in recalling how the children in the story may be different from them.
- List the differences in the left column.
- Say to children, "Now, we are going to list all of the ways the children are like you."
- List the ways children are alike in the right column.
- Prompt the children if necessary in recalling differences and likenesses so that all of the differences and likenesses are listed. (Refer to **Teacher Note** below)
- Read both columns with the children.
- Remind the children that just like the children in the story, the children in their group are also different and alike, and that they are more alike than they are different.

<u>Different</u>	<u>Alike</u>

Teacher Notes:

- *Differences noted in the story: skin, homes, schools, land, lives, words*
- *Likenesses noted in the story: hearts, smiles, laughs, hurts, cries, joys, love, pain, blood.*

Learning Environment

Library Center

- Add the books, *Shades of People* and *Whoever You Are* to the Library Center
- Photo puppets

Art Center

- Have available skin tone crayons, pencils, markers, paints, and construction paper.
- Add photos of the face of each child and craft sticks so children can make stick puppets.

Learning Goals:

SE3.1 Shows awareness of self as unique individual (*characteristics of self and others*)

PH2.1 Demonstrates fine motor strength, control and coordination

PH2.2 Adjusts grasp and coordinates movements to use tools (*writing and drawing tools, scissors*)

SS1.1 Demonstrates positive connection to family and community (*family and cultural identity*)

Activity: Body Drawing

- Provide strips of paper that are large enough to trace around each child's body.
- Place paper on floor and have children, one at a time, lie on their backs on the paper.
- Trace around each child's body outline.
- Provide a full length mirror and encourage children to look at themselves. Suggest that they look at the shade of their skin, the color of their hair and eyes, and at the clothing they are wearing.
- Suggest that children fill in their features and clothing using markers, crayons and tempera paint. Be sure to include skin tone colors.
- Provide yarn, large buttons and fabric scraps for children who have had experience with making collages.
- Allow this project to take place over several days.
- Invite children to write their name (or you write it) on an index card and to dictate something about themselves as you write it on the card.
- Display the body drawings with the individual cards in the classroom.
- Invite families to view the displays.

Activity: Faces Collage

- Label a large strip of butcher paper **Beautiful Faces of People**.
- Provide magazines with pictures of people that reflect diversity.
- Encourage children to cut out the faces of people and glue to butcher paper or to draw faces and glue to the paper.

Block Center

- Add small people figures to the center, figures that reflect diversity.

Transition Activities

Learning Goal:

CD2.2 Shows flexibility in adjusting thinking and behavior to different contexts (*adjusting behavior to match context*)

Activity: Photo Puppets

- Have photo puppets available.
- Hold up a puppet and invite that child to transition to the next activity.
- Hold up two or more puppets at a time if you want children to transition in small groups.

Family Connection

- Invite families to view the display of body drawings.
- Send home each child's photo puppet and suggest that they tell their family how the puppet was used in the classroom.

Additional Books

The Color of Us by Karen Katz

The Skin You Live In by Michael Tyler, illustrated by David Lee Csicsko

What a Wonderful World by George David Weiss and Bob Thiele, illustrated by Ashley Bryan

Teacher Note: *Storytelling figures (felt or magnetic) for the story, What a Wonderful World can be located at [Story a Month](#) on the Arkansas Better Beginnings website.*