

Title: Asha's Mums: Respecting Differences

Grade: K-3rd Grade

BACKGROUND

School communities are filled with students from diverse backgrounds. Part of this diversity may include families with different structures, including those with gay or lesbian parents/caregivers. Often students from these families are teased or bullied by their peers. This lesson is an attempt to address name calling, point out the diversity of the class and school, and to discuss different family structures.

By the third grade, many students have heard the terms “gay” or “lesbian,” often in a derogatory way. This lesson provides an opportunity, when discussing the story, to teach students a non-derogatory and appropriate use of the terms gay and lesbian.

Students will be able to:

- Identify things that make students different from and similar to one another
- Explain the importance of accepting and appreciating both differences and similarities
- Discuss different family structures
- Recognize that respecting differences enables them to live together more easily
- Realize that name calling is hurtful

TIME

- 45 to 50 minutes

STANDARDS

- **California Health Education Standard 7: Practicing Health-Enhancing Behaviors** All students will demonstrate the ability to practice behaviors that reduce risk and promote health
- **Reading** 1.0, 2.0, 3.0
- **Written and Oral English Conventions** 1.0, 2.0
 - ❖ See **extensions** at the end of the lesson for additional subject activities.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Chalkboard or butcher paper
- Activity sheet

Story: Asha's Mums (1990) Rosamund Elwin & Michele Paulse. Ontario: Women's Press.

VOCABULARY

- **Diversity:** Many differences
- **Cultures:** Shared values and beliefs that shapes behavior
- **Ethnicity:** Common ancestry
- **Family:** A unit of two or more persons, related either by birth or by choice, who may or may not live together, who try to meet each other's needs and share common goals and interests.
- **Gay:** A term to describe people of the same sex who have feelings for one another in a romantic way. The term is usually used to describe men.
- **Lesbian:** Women who have feelings for one another in a romantic way.
- **Respect:** To be considerate of another.

CLASSROOM PROCEDURE

Ground rules: Introduce or review classroom rules in order to create a safe place for students to discuss their families. Consider ground rules listed below.

Respect other people in the class:

- No put downs
- One person speaks at a time
- Everyone has the "right to pass" if s/he doesn't want to talk
- Everyone will have a chance to speak

Begin by listing on the board the following categories:

eye color hair color place of birth primary language family structure

Verbally elicit student responses regarding the various categories.

Ask students what the class would be like if everyone looked the same, wore the same clothes, and spoke the same.

Point out that differences – based on anything, particularly those things listed on the board – do not make one person better than another. Part of learning to live with each other, is to respect differences, and understand how those differences contribute to the community.

Ask students how they can respect the differences of their class members. For example, do not call one another names, do not make fun of one's personal appearance, do not ridicule one's primary language, accent, place of birth, family, etc.

Read Asha's Mums

- Have students complete worksheet.
 - When students have completed the worksheet, review the questions verbally with the class.
 - After eliciting their responses ask: “What kind of family does Asha live in.” If it has not already been described by students, define the gay/lesbian family.
 - Reiterate that all people should respect the differences of one another, including family differences.
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EVALUATION

- Teacher evaluation of student participation
- Student Worksheet
- Extension activities

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES

- Have students write or draw how they could support someone who was being ridiculed for being different.
- Have students draw pictures of their families; describe the pictures; display the pictures.
- Student worksheet – to be done at home, or in small groups as part of discussion.

Name _____

Asha's Mums

Worksheet

DIRECTIONS: Answer the following questions in the space provided.

1. Why didn't the teacher think Asha's form was filled out correctly? _____

2. How would you feel if you were Asha and the teacher said your form was not filled out correctly? _____

3. What would you do if this happened to you? _____

4. What makes Asha's family different from yours? _____

5. What makes Asha's family the same as yours? _____

6. How would you help a friend if someone were to make fun of his or her family? _____

7. Describe some different kinds of families you know: _____
