

## Title of Lesson: “My Two Uncles” by Judith Vigna

**Grade:** K – 1 activities  
2 – 3 activities

### OBJECTIVES

**By the end of the lesson, students will:**

- Use appropriate vocabulary when discussing people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender.
- Realize that some families include gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people.
- Understand that when a family member discriminates or hurts another family member based on their sexual orientation that other family members are affected, not just the person being discriminated.

### SFUSD STANDARDS

- **Reading Content Standard 6**  
The student uses a variety of reading strategies to construct, examine and extend the meaning of diverse materials.
- **Writing Content Standard 2**  
The student writes using appropriate conventions of written language.
- **Health Education Standards**  
The student will understand and demonstrate how to promote positive health practices within the school and community, including how to cultivate positive relationships with others.  
  
Students will understand and demonstrate how to promote positive health practices within the family.

### TIME

**1 fifty-minute lesson**

**Optional Extension Lessons:** 20 to 30 minute Math Activity (grades 2-3)  
2 class period Art Activity

### RESOURCES / MATERIALS NEEDED

- “My Two Uncles” by Judith Vigna
- The Following Activity Sheets:  
(K-1) How do the characters feel?  
(K-3) Family Portrait Sheet  
(2-3) Math Word Problem sheet  
(2-3) Letter Head Sheet

## VOCABULARY

- **Gay (K-2):** A term used to describe a person who has romantic feelings for another person of the same sex, usually used to describe a man.
- **Gay (3-12):** A term that can apply to either men or women who are physically and emotionally attracted to persons of the same sex. However, it is usually used to describe a man (e.g., “gay men”).
- **Heterosexual (K-2):** A person who has romantic feelings for someone of the opposite sex.
- **Heterosexual (3-12):** A person who is physically and emotionally attracted to a person of the opposite sex.
- **Homophobia:** Irrational fear of feelings of affection for members of one’s own sex, and / or hatred of those feelings in others.
- **Homosexual:** A person who is physically and emotionally attracted to a person of the same sex.
- **Lesbian (K-2):** A woman who has romantic feelings for another woman.
- **Lesbian (3-12):** A term used to describe women who are emotionally and physically attracted to other women.
- **Prejudice:** A belief, usually negative about people within a given group (e.g., “people from California are all weird”).

## CLASSROOM PROCEDURE

**Ground Rules:** Inform students that the class will be discussing families and family conflicts. It is suggested that rules be established with the class to encourage respect when students discuss their families.

**Pre-reading brainstorm exercise:** Who is in a Family? Write down student’s responses on the board or chart paper to be referred to later in the lesson. Some students might include pets and favorite toys. Students should be encouraged to think about their own families.

**Introduce the book:** “Today we are going to be reading about Elly and her family. When we read I want you to think about who is in Elly’s family. As we read the book look for the conflict the family deals with. We are going to discuss if the conflict is resolved by the end of the story.”

### Read

“My Two Uncles” by Vigna to the class.

## Discuss

Suggested discussion questions during and after reading “My Two Uncles”:  
*Teachers should ask questions based on the ability of the class.*

1. Elly says that Uncle Ned is her “real” uncle and Phil is his “friend.” However, Elly calls Phil, “Uncle Phil.” Why do you think Elly calls Phil “Uncle Phil?”
2. Why did Grampy not want Uncle Phil to come to the party but wanted Uncle Ned to come to the party?
3. What is Daddy’s explanation for why Grampy does not want Uncle Phil to come to the party? *Re-read Dad’s answer with the class.*
4. Why did Uncle Ned decide not to go to the anniversary party? Would you have gone to the party if you were Uncle Ned? Why or why not?
5. Why did Elly’s Daddy cry when Grampy made his toast at the anniversary party?
6. Do you think Grampy’s opinion of Phil changed from the beginning of the story to the end? Why or why not? *Students should cite evidence in the story to support their answer. Notice that Grampy waits outside when Gran thanks Uncle Ned and Uncle Phil for the diorama.*
7. What is the conflict the family faces in the story? Did the family resolve the conflict?
8. Uncle Phil and Uncle Ned are gay and Grampy is not. Uncle Phil and Uncle Ned were hurt and angry because Grampy did not approve of them being gay. Have you ever been treated poorly because you were different? How did that make you feel?

## Pre-reading Brainstorm Follow-up

Review the class brainstorm list “Who is in a Family?” Ask the class if they would make any changes after reading the story. Discuss who might be on Elly’s list compared to Grampy’s list.

## ACTIVITIES

### (K-1)

- A. Students complete the “How do the characters feel?” sheet. If students are not yet writing they may draw a picture of how each relative feels.
- B. Students draw a portrait of Elly’s family on the Elly’s Family Portrait sheet. Students decide who should and should not be included in the portrait. Students who are writing should include the name of the family members included in Elly’s Family Portrait.

**(2-3)**

- A. Uncle Ned writes a letter to Elly to explain why he is not coming to the Anniversary party. The letter makes Elly feel a little bit better even though she still misses her Uncles. Students pick a character in the story to write a letter to help resolve the conflict. They should include how they feel about Uncle Ned and Uncle Phil not coming to the party and suggestions on how they might resolve the family conflict.
- B. Students independently write answers to the questions on the question sheet and then discuss their answers as a whole class.

**ASSESSMENT**

The objective will have been met based on individual participation in class discussions and completion of grade/ level appropriate activities.

**OPTIONAL EXTENSION ACTIVITIES**

**Art:** Complete a diorama for Uncle Phil and Uncle Ned's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Elly, Uncle Phil and Uncle Ned worked hard to make something for someone they love. Students could make something (collage, diorama, painting) for a loved one.

**Math:** (2-3) Word problem sheet

Family Portrait Home-Work Sheet

- (K-1) Students should draw a picture of their family. Students should be encouraged to work with family members to write the name of each person pictured on the family portrait.
- (2-3) Students will complete the same activity as above but write a couple of sentences describing their family.

The following day, the class compares their families to Elly's Family.