

## Único Como Yo/One of a Kind Like Me by Lauren Mayeno

**Grade:** K-2<sup>nd</sup> grade

### OVERVIEW

In Único Como Yo Lauren Mayeno tells the true story of her son Danny who decides to be a purple princess for Halloween. His family is very supportive and helps him make a dress. At first, students at school seem shocked, but realize in the end that, “we’re all one of a kind.” This realistic portrayal of youth gender expansion exemplifies how we all uniquely express ourselves in exciting ways.

### OBJECTIVES

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

- Explore an example of gender expression and diversity
- Build classroom community by understanding the importance of compassion, accepting differences, and promoting uniqueness
- Surface their own uniqueness and a feeling of being proud

### STANDARDS

- **California Health Education Content Standard**
  - ❖ K. 1.4.M Describe characteristics that make each individual unique.
  - ❖ K 2.1.M Identify ways family and friends help promote well-being.
  - ❖ K 7.2.M Describe positive ways to show care, consideration, and concern for others.
  - ❖ 2 1.7.M Discuss how to show respect for similarities and differences between and among individuals and groups.
  - ❖ 2 1.11.M Identify the positive ways that peers and family members show support, care, and appreciation for one another.
  - ❖ 2 7.2.M Show respect for individual differences.
- **English Language Arts Common Core State Standards, Speaking and Listening**
  - ❖ Comprehension and Collaboration 1.1
  - ❖ Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas #4-6

### TIME

**One 30-minute lesson**

- This lesson would be best following one or more lessons about understanding gender and respecting differences, for instance [Finding Strength in Our Differences](#) or [That’s a \(Gender\) Stereotype](#)
- Please visit <http://www.healthiersf.org/LGBTQ/InTheClassroom/curriculum.html> for more resources

### RESOURCES / MATERIALS NEEDED

- Único Como Yo /One of a Kind Like Me by Lauren Mayeno
- Whiteboard or chart paper, markers
- *I Am Unique* worksheet
- Art materials- markers, glue, scissors, fabric scraps, glitter, etc..

## VOCABULARY

Define key words for discussion:

- **Acceptance:** Being supportive, kind or friendly to others. Accepting other people and their differences.
- **Compassion:** Being a good friend to someone when that person needs it. Awareness and kindness for other's feelings/emotions/experience.
- **Unique:** Something or someone very special.
- **Gender Expression:** How a person expresses their gender to the world, typically through appearance, dress and behavior.

## CLASSROOM PROCEDURE

**Ground rules:** Introduce or review classroom rules in order to create a safe place for students to discuss the book. Consider using the ground rules listed below:

- Respect other people in the class
- One person speaks at a time
- Everyone has the "right to pass" if someone doesn't want to talk
- Everyone will have a chance to speak

**TEACHER TIP:** Students may ask if Danny is gay or transgender. It is appropriate to define these terms for their curiosity (see [SFUSD LGBTQ vocabulary definitions](#)) but refrain from labelling Danny's sexuality or gender identity. The story is about a boy who is expressing himself, and does not declare a particular identity. Be clear that everyone expresses their gender through appearance (hair, dress, interests), in ways that conform or do not conform to our identities. Gender expression and identity are not the same. This is a teaching opportunity to show the danger of assuming something about somebody based on the way they look or act.

## Introduction: Unique

Post and discuss the vocabulary words for this lesson.

Begin the lesson with a discussion on self-expression. *Imagine that everyone looked alike, dressed alike, acted the same, and even sounded the same. That's a pretty boring world, millions of people with the same shirt, same voice, and same ideas. Now imagine that in a sea of all these look-a-likes, someone walks in with a yellow shirt, purple hair, and a voice as beautiful as a singing bird. Wow, what would you think?*

*Have you ever wanted to do something or dress/be a certain way that was out of the ordinary?*

**Self-expression** is when people show that they are different from everyone else. They may choose to express themselves by how they look, what they say, or by using different types of artistic expression. Self-expression is the idea of using your own thoughts and the things you like, in order to express how you feel. Self-expression allows us to be viewed as individuals instead of identical robots.

**What are the different ways people express themselves?** Brainstorm with students and chart answers on board.

- The way they act
- The clothes they wear
- Their hair color
- The activities they choose to do
- The music they listen to
- Through art

All of these things make us who we are, they make us unique. *Unique means one of a kind, unlike anything else.*

### Read Aloud

1. Introduce the book, Único Como Yo /One of a Kind Like Me.
  - *Today we're going to read a story about a boy who chooses a unique costume for Halloween. Let's see what happens and notice how his family and friends react.*
2. Read One of a Kind Like Me, pausing for discussion questions along the way
  - (p.2-3) Danny is drawing with a purple colored marker and tells the family he knows what he wants to be for Halloween. *What do you think Danny is going to be?*
  - (p.6) Danny tells his family he wants to be a princess and they are supportive. *How did Danny's mom react when he told her his costume? His grandpa? What if his family reacted differently, how would Danny feel?*
  - (p.16) Danny and his mom search the thrift store for a purple princess costume. Stop at, "I'm sorry, mijo, there's nowhere else to look." *How does Danny feel? What do you think they are going to do?*
  - (p.28-29) Danny wears his princess costume to school and at first other students make fun of him. *How do you think Danny feels? How would you react if you were in his class?*
  - (p.30-31) Danny and his classmates celebrate their uniqueness together. *Why do you think his friends changed their minds? How does that make Danny feel? Why is it important to care about other people's feelings? (compassion)*

**TEACHER TIP:** Some students may express disapproval with the character's gender expression because it does not align with their gender expectations. For example, they may say, "No he can't, boys don't wear dresses." Clarify for students that although people have different beliefs learned at home or in their communities, our school expectation is that we respect everyone with our words and actions. Everyone has the right to feel safe and allowed to be who *they* are at school. The next activity will give students the tools they need to be more inclusive by outlining things to say and ways to react to things that are different from them.

3. Emphasize positive ways to react to uniqueness by creating a T-chart, Include non-verbal communication

Positive ways to react	Negative ways to react
<i>Wow, that's cool!</i>	<i>What is that?</i>
<i>Show me how you did that.</i>	<i>Weird</i>
<i>Including unique people in your activities</i>	<i>Excluding from your games</i>

4. Unique Like Me Activity Worksheet

- Students will use art materials to decorate a body in unique clothing on the Unique Like Me worksheet
- Provide students with available art materials and discuss/demonstrate how to safely use glue, scissors, glitter, etc..

**Closure and Wrap Up**

Allow time for students to show their creations to one another, reading aloud from the sentence frame:

*If I wore this to school I hope... (possible student responses) students would play with me, nobody would make fun of me, my friends would appreciate my uniqueness, etc.*

**ASSESSMENT AND FOLLOW UP LESSONS**

The objective will have been met if the student is able to:

- Define what it means to be unique and give 2-4 examples.
- Explain the difference between a positive and negative reaction to something unique.

**FOLLOW UP LESSONS**

Continue to reinforce self-expression in the classroom. Establish creative spaces and expose students to a variety of activities daily. Remember that there are different types of self-expression and when possible to celebrate student individuality.

There are many other read alouds on self-expression, here is one, [Unique Monique](#), with an accompanying art activity to build student confidence and self-awareness.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

**Support Services for LGBTQ Youth, SFUSD**

[www.healthiersf.org/lgbtq](http://www.healthiersf.org/lgbtq)

Keywords: LGBTQ family, gender, diversity, curriculum, approved vocabulary

**Transgender Youth Rap**

Link: <https://youtu.be/bWPEvmwG9Vw>.

Keywords: transgender, trans, youth, rap,

**Teaching Tolerance: Gender Diversity Lessons**

<http://www.tolerance.org/>

Keywords: gender, equity, bullying, lessons, diversity

**Trans Kids Purple Rainbow Foundation**

<http://www.transkidspurplerainbow.org/>

Keywords: I am Jazz, book, videos, stories, trans kids, Jazz Jennings

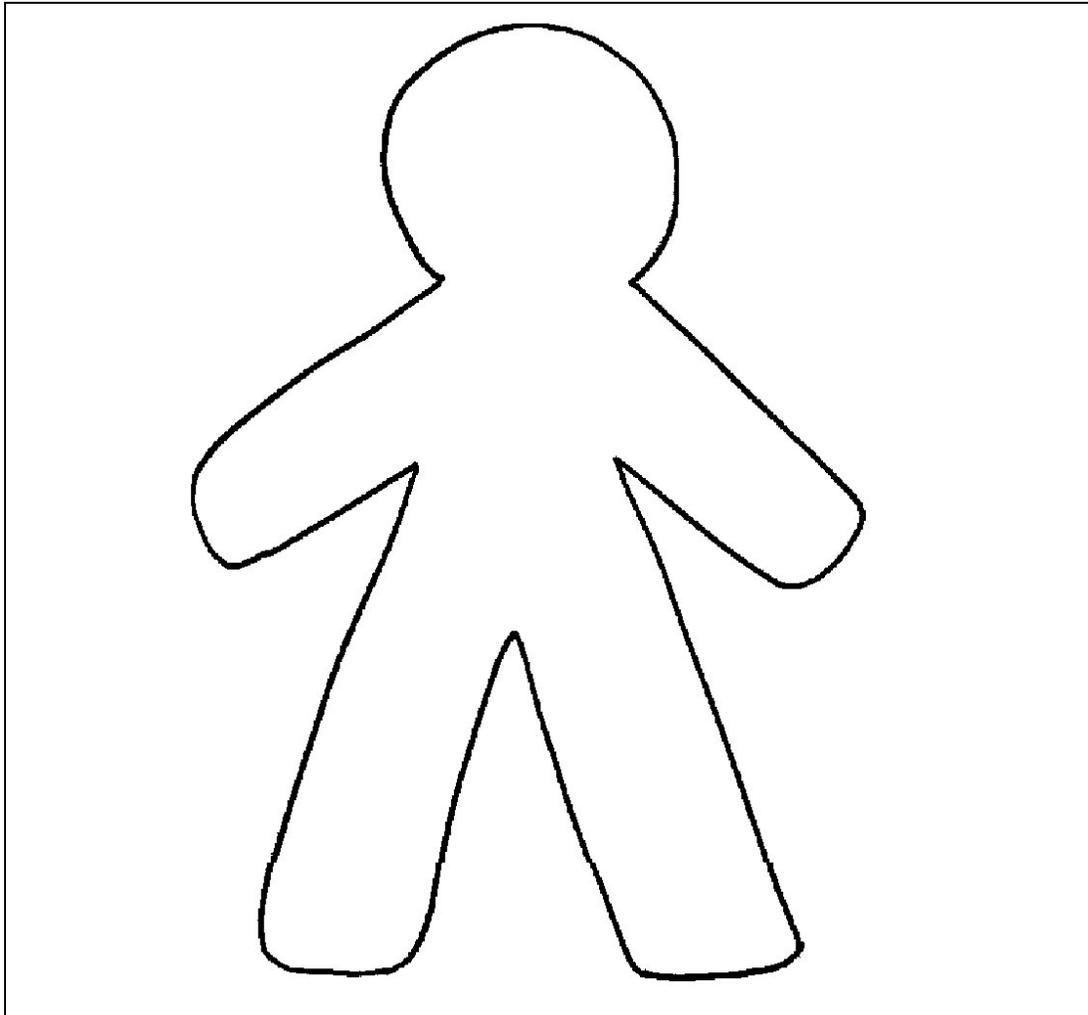
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# UNIQUE LIKE ME

**Directions: Take a risk and show us your style!**

**Use art materials to create a “one of a kind” unique YOU below.**



**Think: How will people react?**

**If I wore this to school, I hope** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

