



The Society for Safe & Caring Schools & Communities
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Supporting a Safe and Caring School— *Assembly Script 6 for Elementary Schools*

Preventing Prejudice



Note to Principals:

These scripts are designed to be used in assemblies as introduction to the topics in the Safe and Caring Schools Program. The Principal takes a key role in delivering the message in the assembly.

Please read over each script before implementing. You are welcome to adapt the script to suit your school audience.

Assembly Script 6—Topic 3B

Preventing Prejudice

Objectives

This assembly script has the following outcomes:

- to introduce students to the topic of prejudice and discrimination
- to encourage students to become aware of the effects of discrimination on both the individual and the group
- to encourage students to become more sensitive to their own language and behaviours that display prejudice

Materials Required

- a sound system for a CD of music (optional)
- a VCR and the video tape—*Respecting Diversity and Preventing Prejudice*
- an overhead projector and screen

Optional Materials

Copies of:

- *Safe and Caring Schools for Students of All Races*
- *Safe and Caring Schools for Lesbian and Gay Youth*
- *Safe and Caring Schools for Students of All Faiths*
- *Safe and Caring Schools for Newcomer Students*
- *Safe and Caring Schools for Arab and Muslim Students*

Introduction

As students gather for the assembly, the song on the accompanying CD may be played to introduce today's topic. The Principal should welcome and greet the students as usual for assemblies.

Briefly review any activities that the school had last month to recognize the last topic:
Respecting Diversity

Say: Last month we tried, as a school community, to become more aware of how we look at things—at our point of view. We talked about becoming more accepting of the differences in our community, and recognizing that it is our differences that make our community a unique and valuable place. Like the flowers we made in our classrooms, we can see that we have many characteristics that make us similar and also many different gifts and talents that make our school community special.

This month, we will take the next step to developing a safer and more caring community, by talking about what happens when people fail to respect and accept diversity and differences.

Have you ever heard someone say something like this? (Invite staff members to come forward and read out the following statements. This will give a different voice to each statement.)

- **We don't make friends with "those kind of people."**
- **Everyone knows that boys are better at math than girls.**
- **Hey, would you like to hear a new "blond" joke?**
- **I hate that movie. It's so gay!**

Ask students what they think is wrong with these statements.

Say: All of these statements are examples of what we will be focusing on this month—prejudice and discrimination.

Prejudice occurs when we pre-judge another person. When we assume that they behave a certain way or think a certain way based on outside appearances. When we treat a person differently or unfairly based on these pre-judgements, we are guilty of discrimination. Discrimination means taking away a person's right to be treated the same as everyone else.

Put up OH 1—Sources of Discrimination

Say: Unfortunately, people are often not accepting of differences in others. These are some of the reasons people have for treating others with prejudice or discrimination.

Canada is a multi-cultural society, where the rights of all are protected. However, it is easy to fall into habits of discrimination and prejudice, sometimes without even noticing them. These are actions that hurt our community.

Today, we are going to show you some examples of prejudice and discrimination. As you watch these scenes, think about how the person who was left out felt.

Show Segment 3 of the Video—Who's with Whom?

After the segment, invite students from the audience to comment on the video. If the assembly is too large to allow for audience participation, have students or staff members come forward and briefly comment on their reactions to the video. Keep these comments brief but personal. Some questions that could be asked of students include:

Why was a person left out of the groups? How did this make the person feel?

What happened when a person tried to join a group with a different colour of shirt?

Say: This video gives us an idea of how easy it is to exclude others, to not let people be a part of our group just because they are different in some way. This is a pretty clear example of prejudice. However, sometimes we discriminate against others without even realizing it. Listen to the words in these next scenes and think about your own words and actions.

Have staff members or students participate in this next section. It is based on Segment 7 of the video but the script has been modified to suit a school audience.

The actors should come forward and use a microphone as they deliver their lines in each segment:

Segment 1:

Person A. (Showing a photograph) I have her picture right here. She's coming to visit this weekend.

Person B: Wow! Who's the four-eyes in the back row!

Person A: That's my daughter.

Person B: Uhh, sorry.

Segment 2:

Person A: I sure hope Randy isn't on our team in intramurals this week.

Person B: Yeah, he doesn't know anything about soccer, and he runs like a girl.

Segment 3:

Person A: Did you see the new kid in the lunch room today? She just moved here from India.

Person B: Why is she wearing those weird clothes?

Person A: Yeah, and did you see what she had for lunch. It was gross!

Say: These are just a few examples of how the language we use and the things we say can show that we are not being respectful of different cultures or beliefs.

This month, we are going to focus on our own behaviours and attitudes toward others. In particular, I ask you to think about the language you use, the jokes you tell and the comments you make that could be disrespectful and hurtful toward another culture or race.

Use OH 2 as closure.

Thank the students and close the assembly as usual.

Follow-Up Activities for the Classroom

1. The Safe and Caring Schools website—www.sacsc.ca/lessons/introduction/—has some excellent lesson plans on this topic. From this page, click on *Unit and Lesson Plans*, then go to *Topics and Concepts* and then to the “Respecting Diversity and Preventing Prejudice” topic.
2. The media awareness site (www.media-awareness.ca) has a section on Stereotyping that offers lessons dealing with respect for diversity.
3. The accompanying activity—*Facts and Opinions About Wolves* could be used in classrooms to begin discussions about misconceptions students may have about other groups in society. This lesson would need to be modified for Division 1.

Wolves: Facts or Opinions?

Identify which of the following statements are facts, and which are opinions.

Statement	Fact or Opinion	Why?
Wolves are sly, cunning and mean.		
Wolves live in packs or families.		
Some North American native people think that the wolf is brave, loyal and intelligent.		
Wolves are carnivores.		
A wolf will only eat meat from a freshly killed animal.		
Wolves have supernatural powers.		
Wolves are very clever.		
Wolves are always hungry.		
Wolves will accept humans into their pack.		
Some Inuit people use wolves as work animals.		
Wolves can dig with their paws.		
Wolves will gang up on a member of their own pack.		

Answers

Statement	Fact or Opinion	Why?
Wolves are sly, cunning and mean.	Opinion	This is a generalization about ALL wolves. Not all wolves may have these characteristics.
Wolves live in packs or families.	Fact	This is an observable characteristics.
Some North American native people think that the wolf is brave, loyal and intelligent.	Fact	The statements says “some” (not all) and refers to a fact that is documented.
Wolves are carnivores.	Fact	Another researched and proven idea.
A wolf will only eat meat from a freshly killed animal.	Opinion	This has been proven wrong in some research.
Wolves have supernatural powers.	Opinion	This may be a religious belief but is not necessarily accepted by all.
Wolves are very clever.	Opinion	Again, it is not necessarily true that ALL wolves are clever. Differences exist.
Wolves are always hungry.	Opinion	This is an assumption based on seeing wolves frequently hunting.
Wolves will accept humans into their pack.	Opinion	This belief is based on legends and stories but has not really been proven.
Some Inuit people use wolves as work animals.	Fact	This has been observed by anthropologists.
Wolves can dig with their paws.	Fact	Researchers have observed this.
Wolves will gang up on a member of their own pack.	Opinion	This may be “sometimes: true.

Ideas about prejudice from the “Wolves”

Generalizations are usually wrong. Sometimes, we interpret or judge another’s actions based on our own beliefs.

A fact is something that can be proven through observation and testing and occurs over and over again. Some scientific “facts” are later proven to be wrong after more testing and observation.

Words such as “always” and “only” are generalizations. We can’t assume that because “some” people are a certain type that all people of that group are like that.

Stereotyping is the belief that everyone in a particular group behaves the same way.

We often judge others based on beliefs, which may be wrong, or experiences, which may be unusual or a one-time thing.

Beliefs may also be based on legends or “old stories” and may not be accurate.

Sources of Discrimination

Race

Ethnic Origin

Religion

Gender

Disability

Age

Size/Appearance

Many signs of prejudice are small and common, but they are the roots of more serious prejudices.

We need to challenge ourselves to recognize our own prejudices.

We need to ask ourselves whether our judgments are based on facts or opinions that may be false.