



JOURNEY IN... YEAR TWO ON BEING HUMAN ART

This lesson's Big Ideas:

- Part of being human is having a racial identity. When we say 'race' we mean many things, including skin color, hair and eye color and place of origin.
- While race is biologically an illusion, it has become 'real' as a social construct, and so forms a great part of our individual and shared human identity.
- Prejudice has its base in categorical thinking. Assumptions that we make about individuals based on a category into which we think they fit are often false and sometimes hurtful.
- Racism is a result of systematic combinations of racial prejudice and power.
- Unitarian-Universalism's first principle is that *all people have inherent worth and dignity*. Therefore, we commit ourselves to the struggle against hurtful prejudices in ourselves and racism in our world..

TEACHER REFLECTION AND PREPARATION

🕒 Ahead of time

Prejudices, it is well known, are most difficult to eradicate from the heart whose soil has never been loosened or fertilized by education; they grow there, firm as weeds among rocks.

- Charlotte Brontë

I look forward confidently to the day when all who work for a living will be one with no thought to their separateness as Negroes, Jews, Italians or any other distinctions. This will be the day when we bring into full realization the American dream ~ a dream yet unfulfilled. A dream of equality of opportunity, of privilege and property widely distributed; a dream of a land where men will not take necessities from the many to give luxuries to the few; a dream of a land where men will not argue that the color of a man's skin determines the content of his character; a dream of a nation where all our gifts and resources are held not for ourselves alone, but as instruments of service for the rest of humanity; the dream of a country where every man will respect the dignity and worth of the human personality.

- Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr

This is what we are about: We plant seeds that one day will grow. We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise. We lay foundations that will need further development. We provide yeast that produces effects beyond our capabilities. We cannot do everything and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something, and to do it very well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for God's grace to enter and do the rest. We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker. We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs. We are prophets of a future not our own.

- Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero

Lesson Materials

- Colored pencils
- Painting shirts or smocks
- Tempera paints in the colors listed below (or purchase a multicultural' paint set):
 - Brown
 - Beige
 - White
 - Black
 - Blue
 - Red
 - Yellow
- Blank puzzles
- Paint brushes
- Magic markers
- Cups
- Work trays
- Water
- Plenty of soap and towels for washing up

YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCES: FEEDBACK AND NOTES

GATHERING AND FOCUSING

🕒 6-minutes minutes

Pair kids up for this artistic “check-in”. Give each pair two sheets of paper and some colored pencils. Set an egg timer for 3 minutes. One of the kids tells the other about his or her week or weekend. The listener attempts to record the events and feelings of the week in a quick sketch. When the timer goes off, stop and switch roles. Repeat for the other child in each pair.

PRIMARY ACTIVITY ONE HUMANITY'S PALETTE OF COLORS

🕒 15-20 minutes

- When we talk about race, we often simplify the myriad colors of our skin and hair and eyes into inaccurate labels like ‘black’ and ‘white’. Is the skin of a ‘black’ person really black? Does anyone really have white skin? Why do we use that word?
- Look at the back of your hand. What are some of the colors that you see? Is your skin all one shade? What about your eyes? Your hair? Could you count the number of colors inside and outside your body?
- When artists paint, they start with some basic colors and then mix the exact shade that they’re looking for. If we think of the Source of the Universe as a creative, even artistic force, then we see that the palette even just of humanity is dazzling in its variety.
- Let’s imagine for a moment that we are part of the artistic force behind the Universe. Can we even create just the color of our own skin? Or our eyes? Hair? Lips? Or the color of a friend’s skin, here in the room with us.
- Instruct the children to take a tray or a palette, brushes and a cup of water. Give them several minutes—it might take as much as ten minutes—to try to blend paint to match the color of their skin. What color will they start with? What would they add next? Invite them to roll up their sleeves (smocks are a good idea, here) and test their skin mixes on the back of their hands. We’ll try to make a good tablespoon of our blend, because we’ll be sharing it with others in our next activity.
- Once everyone has achieved blends that satisfies them (don’t offer judgment on their success if they seem genuinely satisfied, but don’t let them give up or be too silly as an excuse for trying), take time to ask some questions.

Wondering Together

- So, what colors did you end up mixing? What did you start with? Add next? How much of each?
- Was it tricky? Why?
- Did any two people mix up the exact same shade of human skin?
- Did anyone use just black or just white?
- If you consider yourself white/black/Asian/Native American, do you think everyone who also considers themselves part of your racial group would have mixed the exact same color as you did?
- What can we learn from this experience?

Make sure everyone saves their cup of paint, especially the color that matches their skin

PRIMARY ACTIVITY TWO

JOIN TOGETHER: A GROUP PUZZLE

🕒 15-20 minutes



- Unitarian Universalists consider themselves people who value everybody's inherent worth and dignity. This means that we join together to speak and act in ways that aren't influenced by our own or other people's negative prejudices. We struggle against racism in our schools, governments, churches and families.
- We also believe that everyone has a right to their own ideas and a responsibility to speak up for themselves in their own voice.
- These two things considered, we'll invite kids in this session to create their a puzzle using the colors that they've mixed together. Everyone will contribute to every child's puzzle. Each child will design their own puzzle using pencil. Once their design is set, they should draw it in black permanent marker. They can include an image that can be filled in plus

words that express their hopes around race and racism. As they plan their puzzle, ask them, "If you could sum up how you feel about prejudice, racism or our dream for a country that united and appreciated all people, what would you say? What pictures or symbols might you use to represent that hope or feeling?"

- Invite the kids to be creative yet serious about their message. We have only one request: find a way to incorporate everyone else's colors – the blends that they made to match their own bodies' SKIN – into the puzzle. Hand each classmate a piece or two of your puzzle and ask them to paint it with the color they mixed to represent themselves. This way, we'll all get to be part of each other's puzzle, reminding us that we have to join together if we want to challenge racism
- Share puzzles briefly in a closing circle. Allow them to dry assembled for best results.
- If kids are unsure of what kinds of words or images to use, you might brainstorm together or write some prompts on the board:

Words We Might Want

Diversity Friendship Honor
Hope Peace Difference
Together Unity Justice
Quotes from poems, people

Images We Might Want

Faces Chalices Hearts
Hands Flowers Circles
Rainbows Flags Peace signs

CLOSING AND LEAVE-TAKING

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🕒 2 minutes

Gather in a circle, take each other's hands and speak these words or something similarly hopeful from your own heart. Invite the kids to echo you every phrase or so:

We promise to see the rainbow of beauty in every human face.

We promise to honor every person's inherent worth and dignity.

We promise to work to weed out the prejudice in our own hearts and minds.

We promise to work to make the world more safe and fair for all.

We promise to see the rainbow of beauty in every human face.

YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCES: FEEDBACK AND NOTES