

SKIN PRINTS

Marie Huseman Lindsey

Kindergarten students can be introduced to the concept of diversity by first imagining the world void of color and then realizing that it is the diversity of people in the world that makes it a colorful, interesting place to live. Through a teacher-led discovery process, students can examine and compare the range of skin tones that exists among their peers. Students come to accept and appreciate each other's visual differences as they create mixed-media artworks featuring multicultural hand and arm prints.

Considering Skin Color

Distribute gray crayons and sheets of 6 x 12" scrap paper and instruct students to draw pictures of themselves with the crayons. Ask them if they like the color gray. Ask them to describe what they would think and how they would feel if they could use only the color gray. Help students understand that even though gray is a wonderful color, it could get quite boring if it were the only color they could use. Show students an assortment of crayons and ask them if they would rather use many colors.

Tell students that you are glad people come in different colors because differences among people are never boring.

Ask students, "What color is my skin?" Show them a sheet of paper the same color as their answer. (My class answered that I was "white," so I showed them a piece of white paper.) Hold the paper next to your skin and ask students "Am I really this color?" Explain that human beings come in a range of colors. Call several students to the center of the room. Have each

extend an arm and compare their skin color with yours and with each other's.

Ask students to imagine that every-

one in the world is the same color—everyone has gray hair, gray skin, and gray eyes. Solicit responses. Tell students that you are glad people come in different colors because differences among people are never boring. Ask students if they think the world would be a more peaceful place to live in if everyone appreciated each other's skin color.

Skin Prints

Explain to students that they will each make an artwork that celebrates differences in skin color. Distribute sheets of 12 x 18" white paper. Show students your sample cards of multicultural paint. Lay the samples on a



table in front of the container of paint they represent. Extend your arm and move it over each sample, stopping on the sample that is most like your skin color. Squeeze a quarter-sized dollop of this paint onto a paper plate palette.

Roll a thin layer of paint onto a brayer and then roll the brayer along the palm of your hand, wrist, and your arm. Press your painted arm onto the sheet of paper. Explain to students that you have made a print of your arm. Repaint your arm and make prints on several students' papers. Clean your arm with baby wipes or a paper towel when finished.

Help students choose their paint colors and make prints. Encourage them to obtain prints from at least



five other students who have a skin color different from their own. Set the prints aside to dry.

Embellishment

After the prints are dry, tell students that they will make bracelets to add to their prints. Demonstrate how to pass one yarn end through the eye of a needle and then puncture the needle up and through the backside of the skin print near the edge of a printed wrist. Secure the end of the yarn to the backside of the print with masking tape.

Show students how to thread enough beads onto the yarn to cover the width of the printed wrist and to push the needle through the front of the print. Pull the end of the yarn

through to the back of the print, securing it to the back with masking tape. Assist students as needed to embellish their skin prints with beaded bracelets.

To complete the skin prints, have students use markers to draw straight, curvy, wavy, zigzag, dashed, and dotted lines around the printed arm shapes on their papers.

Reflection Time

Display the finished work and lead a discussion in which students describe the processes used and distinguish between the similarities and differences in the prints. Ask them to define the term *peace*, explain the benefits of human beings having dif-

Objectives

- Students will create mixed-media artworks depicting an awareness of cultural diversity. Students will examine differences in skin color.
- Students will recognize that visual differences among people make the world an interesting and more colorful place to live.

Materials

- gray crayons
- 6 x 12" (15 x 30 cm) scrap paper
- tempera paint, multicultural colors
- index cards painted with each color of paint
- paper plates
- printing brayers
- painting smocks
- assorted colors of pony beads
- 3" (7.5 cm) plastic craft needles with large eye openings
- 12" (30 cm) lengths of yarn
- masking tape
- diluted glue
- small bowls for diluted glue
- paintbrushes
- baby wipes or paper towels

ferences, and how their artwork communicates their dreams for a peaceful world in which everyone loves each other regardless of skin color and other differences. 🌀

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NATIONAL STANDARD

Students select and use subject matter, symbols, and ideas to communicate meaning.

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