Respect
Discussion Questions, Vocabulary and Activity
Grades 3-5

Segment Summary
Despite their obvious differences, Gema Villacis and Sarah Gaspari have formed a unique friendship based on respect. When Gema Villacis traveled from Ecuador to America three years ago, she had never attended school, she could not speak English and she could not hear. Although Gema worked hard to learn sign language, she had no one with which to speak until she met Sarah Gaspari during a game of tag. Drawing inspiration from a book titled *The Braids Girl*, Sarah decided to learn sign language so she could communicate with her new friend. Gema says her first hearing friend showed her respect and treated her like a regular kid instead of teasing her or feeling sorry for her because she has a disability. As their friendship grows, both girls continue to see how their differences contribute to a mutual exchange of respect, compassion and kindness.

Discussion Questions:

1. What characteristics do Sarah and Gema possess?
2. How did Sarah’s kind actions make Gema feel?
3. Why is it difficult for some children to befriend those who are different?
4. Have you ever experienced a situation similar to Sarah’s or Gema’s? Explain.
5. How can you show respect for others at home, at school or in your community?

Related Vocabulary Words

| achieve | difference | integrity | patience | personal | respect | unique |
Respect
Vocabulary Words and Definitions

Achieve (v.)
Definition: to succeed in doing something good, or getting the result you wanted, after trying hard for a long time
Context: Brad worked hard to achieve his goal of learning all of his multiplication tables so he could advance to the fourth grade.

Consensus (n.)
Definition: an opinion with which everyone in a group will agree or accept
Context: The students must reach a consensus on how they will raise enough money to pay for a field trip to Washington, D.C.

Difference (n.)
Definition: a way in which two or more items or people are not like each other
Context: Alexandra and Burke remain best friends despite their differences, which include gender, race and age.

Integrity (n.)
Definition: being honest; doing the right thing; the quality of always having high moral principles
Context: Sandra acted without integrity when she cheated on her history exam.

Patience (n.)
Definition: calmly working and waiting; not complaining; the ability to wait calmly, accept delays or continue doing something difficult for a long time, without becoming angry or anxious
Context: Learning to play the violin requires years of practice and an enormous amount of patience.

Personal (adj.)
Definition: emphasizing that something is done, known or experienced by oneself
Context: One of Alvin’s personal goals is to climb Mount Everest when he is older.

Respect (n.)
Definition: valuing others; honoring differences; admiration for someone, especially because of his or her personal qualities, knowledge or skill
Context: Ophelia gained the respect and admiration of her classmates when she won the statewide spelling bee competition.

Scenario (n.)
Definition: a situation that could possibly happen
Context: One possible scenario is that our class wins all of the events at Field Day this year.

Unique (adj.)
Definition: unusually good and special; being the only one of its kind
Context: No two people are exactly the same, making each person unique.

Respect Activity
What’s the Difference?

Objectives:
Students will be able to
• Identify the meaning of the term unique
• Generate examples of how an individual may be different physically, socially and culturally
• Work with others to create an individual with unique characteristics
• Discuss the ways in which unique characteristics can benefit oneself and others

Materials:
• Pens, pencils, crayons, markers, paint
• Large sections of butcher or bulletin board paper, chart paper, chalkboard
• What's the Difference? worksheet
• Introducing Our New Friend worksheet
• Similar, Yet Unique worksheet

Procedure:
Note: This lesson may be completed in two parts: Part I (Steps 1-6) and Part II (Steps 7-11).

Part I:

1. In preparation for this activity, draw the outline of a person’s body on several large sections of butcher or bulletin board paper. Draw each outline differently to reflect physical differences.

   Examples: tall vs. short, thin vs. heavy, small feet vs. large feet, etc.

   Note: Keep in mind that you will divide the class into groups of four or five students, so you will need to make enough drawings to distribute one to each group.

2. Begin the activity by writing the word “unique” on the chalkboard or a piece of chart paper. Ask students to offer their own definitions of unique. You may want to ask the following question to point your students in the right direction: “What makes you unique among your classmates?”

3. Distribute one copy of the What’s the Difference? worksheet to each student. Instruct your students to record their ideas on their worksheets as you lead a class discussion about the ways in which people are different. Use the following questions to guide your discussion:

   • How might people differ physically?

     Examples:
     • People can be skinny or heavy, tall or short.
     • No two faces are alike, not even for twins.
     • Some people wear different kinds of clothing (shirts, shoes, dresses, pants, etc.).

   • How might people differ socially?

     Examples: Some people like to play games, ride bikes, read, etc., while others do not.

   • How might people differ culturally?

     Example: Many families participate in special customs and cultural traditions, such as celebrating Hanukkah or Christmas.
4. Divide the class into groups of four or five students, and give each group one of the large sections of paper on which you have drawn the outline of a body. Explain to your students that they will work together to draw a unique individual by adding physical characteristics, clothes, interests and cultural traditions to their body outlines. Remind them to use the ideas they listed on their What’s the Difference? worksheets for inspiration as they complete their drawings. Encourage students to create individuals who are unlike themselves in at least one or more ways.

5. Allow time for groups to decorate their body outlines using crayons, markers or paint. Once each group completes its drawing, instruct members to give their unique individual a name and autograph their drawing with their one-of-a-kind signatures. Consider displaying groups’ drawings around the classroom.

6. In preparation for Part II, distribute one copy of the Introducing Our New Friend worksheet to each group, and instruct members to work together to fill in the blanks.

**Part II:**

7. Ask each group to introduce its new friend to the rest of the class and explain what makes the individual unique. Allow time for students to comment on the differences they observe in each group’s unique individual.

*Note:* Remind each group to point out both external differences (physical appearance, clothes, etc.) and internal differences (likes, dislikes, interests, etc.). If a group only presents external differences, ask other students to predict what the individual might be like on the inside.

8. After groups have introduced their unique friends, explain to your students how an individual’s unique characteristics (both external and internal) help him or her in life’s endeavors.

**Examples:**
- Being tall may help a teen be a better basketball player.
- Being good at solving math problems may help a student become a successful architect.
- Being kind to others may help an individual be a better citizen in his or her community.

9. Distribute one copy of the Similar, Yet Unique worksheet to each student. Review the directions as a class, then allow enough time for your students to complete their worksheets individually.

10. After students complete their worksheets, ask them to recall the group project they completed in Part I of this activity. Use the following questions to guide a class discussion on how differences among people can be beneficial:

    - How did each group member’s unique abilities help the group work together successfully?
    - Was one member better at drawing while another was better at writing a description of the group’s new friend? Explain.

11. Close the activity by explaining to your students that many qualities make an individual unique and that it is important to value and respect the differences among people. Remind students that respect of differences in looks, thoughts and behavior makes the world an interesting place.

**Related Vocabulary Words**

| difference | respect | unique |
What's the Difference?

Name: _________________________

Directions: Use the boxes below to record the ways in which people may be different, or unique, in each of the following areas.

Physical:
"looks"

Social:
"activities, interests, likes and dislikes"

Cultural:
"family customs or traditions"
Introducing Our Unique Friend

Group Members: _________________________  _________________________
____________________  _________________________
_________________________

Directions: As a group, fill in the blanks below to describe your new friend. Remember, your friend must be a unique person, which means that he or she is different from you in several ways.

Introducing Our Unique Friend, _________________________
(name)

Physical characteristics that make our friend unique include …

• _____________________________________________________________
• _____________________________________________________________
• _____________________________________________________________

Our friend’s personality is very unique! Let us tell you about it. (likes, dislikes, how he or she acts around other children, etc.)

______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

Our friend’s family traditions and cultural customs include …

• __________________________________________________________________
• __________________________________________________________________

Our friend’s unique characteristics make him or her a special person because …

______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
**Similar, Yet Unique**

Name: _________________________

**Directions:** Choose one friend and one family member to whom you will compare yourself. Use the table below to record how you are similar to and different from your friend and your family member – both on the outside and the inside. You may either use words or pictures to explain your reasoning.

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<tr>
<th>Friend’s Name</th>
<th>How are you similar?</th>
<th>How are you different?</th>
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<td>Outside</td>
<td>Inside</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Member’s Name</td>
<td>Outside</td>
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Research shows that the most successful character education programs are those that integrate character education throughout the school. Consider the following suggestions for bringing a school-wide emphasis to character education:

- **Student Newsletter:** Encourage your students to create a monthly or biweekly character education newsletter. Students could profile classmates who exhibit the qualities embodied in various character education words. They could also feature teachers and others in their school and community who demonstrate good character and who are committed to developing character in others.

- **Rules of Respect:** Create a school-wide mural or bulletin board highlighting “respect.” Encourage each class in your school to define the word respect and identify at least one rule that helps them demonstrate respect in each of the following areas: respect for self, respect for authority, respect for one’s peers, respect for one’s family and respect for the environment. Each class should submit its definitions and rules to display in a common area of the school. Challenge students to find creative ways in which to organize their ideas, such as making posters, constructing cards, writing poems, etc. Select one rule to be read on the intercom during morning announcements.
National Character Education/Life Skills Standards

The following is an outline of the national Character Education/Life Skills standards and benchmarks for the Respect lesson/activity. National and state standards for language arts, social studies and health appear online.

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