

Diversity Activities

What is Diversity?

Diversity means that we are all different, and we shouldn't judge whether we like someone or share the same values based on appearance. Differences are good; they promote a healthy and varied society. However, we do not have to like everyone and the differences they bring with them. We must respect differences in people. We must view people from their whole being, and not make quick stereotypical judgments. We all know people who turned out to be different than expected. As Scouters, we need to remember these experiences and help Scouts learn that people are not always as they appear.



What is the goal of these Activities?

The jelly beans included in this Diversity Kit are intended to help all people stop stereotyping based on appearance. They offer a reminder that diversity means we don't judge people based on appearance or background, but rather on attitudes and behavior.



What's different about using these jelly beans to promote diversity?

These jelly beans come in six different colors and six different flavors for a total of 36 different combinations. Red may be cherry as everyone expects it to be, but it may also be lemon, lime, grape, orange or licorice. Even kids who are too young to fully understand all the lessons and discussion will remember they can't always *"judge a bean by its color."*

The Kit

This Diversity Kit provides a multi-sensory approach to explaining diversity issues. Kids will see, taste and talk about diversity.

Included in your kit are:

✚ Simple ***lesson plans*** outlining easy activities you can do in your pack or troop. The lessons may be modified to fit your needs and the ages of your Scouts. The first lesson plan is to be used with the jelly beans. The remaining lesson plans offer other types of methods to teach diversity within the Scouting unit.

✚ ***Discussion questions*** included in the lesson plans.

✚ ***Bags of "diversity beans"*** for each boy in your unit. If there aren't enough bags for each boy, boys may share bags.

✚ A ***CD containing the complete kit*** for reproduction purposes. If you choose to teach diversity at the den or patrol level instead of the pack or troop level, the lesson plans may be reproduced for each leader.

The lessons are fun, they are thought provoking, and the options are limitless. They are multi-sensory, easy to use, flexible, and transcend the pack or troop meeting into the home and community.



LESSON PLAN #1. YOU CAN'T JUDGE A BEAN BY ITS COLOR

Objective:

To learn people cannot judge what people are by the way they appear.

Required Materials:

1 package jelly "diversity" beans per youth.



Activities:

1. Give each Scout a bag of jelly beans.
2. Discuss the possible flavors for each color based on "normal" jelly bean flavors - white/white grape, red/cherry, black/licorice, orange/orange, yellow/lemon, green/lime.
3. Have students place the beans in the order that they like them; line up from the bean they most want to eat to the bean they least want to eat.
4. Ask Scouts why they have ranked the jelly beans in the order they ranked them.
5. Ask if there are any Scouts who don't want to taste a specific color and discuss why. Have Scouts note which color jelly beans everyone else placed first and last and discuss why.
6. Have each Scout select a jelly bean and then taste it. Have all Scouts who tasted "red" tell the flavor they tasted. Discuss the results.
7. Ask Scouts if the flavor they tasted in the first bean changes anyone's expectations for the next bean. Discuss why.
8. Have each Scout taste their second beans. Discuss the results and ask if their expectations are changing.
9. Ask the Scouts if they would still rank the beans in the same order. Discuss why or why not. Allow the Scouts to change the order of their remaining beans if they want to. Note the changes.
10. Have Scouts select and taste the next bean. Discuss with them possible explanations for the results. Discuss how results are changing their expectations.
11. Discuss with the Scouts why they ordered the beans in the way they did to start (based on expectations of how they would taste). Ask if color and taste expectations are valid reasons now that they have tasted the beans. Discuss characterizing beans based on color/appearance.

12. Discuss how people characterize each other when they first meet. Ask the Scouts if they characterize others based on appearance before they even get to know them.

13. Discuss whether appearance is truly an indicator of what a person is like. Relate the appearance of people to the color of beans. Discuss the results of the tasting of beans in terms of what it could mean for people (you can't judge people by their appearance - they may be very different inside).

14. Discuss with the Scouts that people should be evaluated based on attitudes, behaviors and actions.



LESSON PLAN #2. GOOD APPLES.

Objective:

 To understand that differences among people are a positive value for society.

 To realize that although people are different they have many things in common.

Required Materials:

One apple for each Scout (plus 2-3 extra). The apples should be various sizes, shapes and colors.

One sharp knife.



Activities:

1. Tell Scouts they will be spending some time finding out about how people are the same and how they are different.

2. Put the apples on a table in front of the group.

3. Have each boy select an apple as his own. Tell them to get to know their apple very well. Suggest they notice their apples' special characteristics. Give each boy time to look at his apple and make mental notes about what it is that makes that apple different.
4. Direct the Scouts to return their apples to the table in front.
5. Mix the apples up and ask the boys to come back and find their apples.
6. When they return to their seats, ask each how he knew which apple was his. (They will indicate things like color, size, shapes, special features.) Some may have had difficulty finding their apples. Ask why. (They will indicate colors, sizes, similar shapes, no special features.)
7. Ask what this has to do with people. Make a list of how people are different. Make a second list of how people are the same. Discuss why this is important. The lists may be done in small, cooperative groups and then shared with the entire class to form one large list.
8. Summarize the importance of individual differences and similarities in people.
9. Suggest that one way all people are similar is that they all have something inside them that makes each of them unique - they are all stars in one way or another (something special that makes them shine, some talent or skill or behavior they really like about themselves).
10. Cut each apple in half horizontally through the center. Keep halves together. Hand back to boys and tell them not to open the apples.
11. Have each Scout open his apple to reveal the star inside. Scouts should examine each other's stars and note that while each is the same, each is also a little different (different color, different number of points, different numbers of seeds inside, etc.). Correlate the stars to people. While each person has hidden talents, skills, etc, they are all unique.
12. While Scouts eat their apples, have them share something about their stars, their strengths, their talents, their individuality.

13. Have Scouts remember why they selected their apples in the first place (based on color, size, preconceived taste, etc.). Next, remind them that, upon examination, they discovered some things about their apples that were different than the others. Finally, discuss with them that inside, everyone has a star that is sometimes difficult to see, and that, while everyone has a star, each star is different. And, while each star is different, each is part of an apple. Each apple is different, but they are all apples with their own unique stars.



LESSON #3. GETTING TO KNOW YOU.

Objective:

To learn about and learn to accept people's similarities and differences.

Required Materials:

Large sheets of butcher paper or packing paper.



Activities:

1. Divide Scouts into groups of five or six. Provide each group a large sheet of paper and one marker for each boy.
2. Instruct Scouts to draw any object with a corresponding number of points (star, flower, sun, etc.) to the number of boys in the group. They should also draw a center (circle) in the middle of the object.
3. Through discussion with their group members, they are to find their similarities and differences.
4. Each person fills in his "point" with at least five things about himself that is unique - unlike any other member in his group. Scouts should be instructed that they may only use two physical attributes such as hair color, weight, etc. (to encourage more meaningful discussion with their group members).

5. Scouts should then fill in the center of the flower with at three to five things they all have in common.

6. Ask Scouts to share with the large group. The leader should lead discussion about similarities and differences in people.



LESSON #4. EXPLORING CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS.

Objective:

✚ To identify that people from different cultures have the same rights as all other people in America.

✚ To learn it is wrong to pre-judge people on their physical appearance or cultural background.

Required Materials:None required.



Activities:

1. Have all Scouts stand in front of their chairs.

2. Give them these directions:

✚ Anyone who has any Norwegian (or any other ethnicity) in his ancestral background, please sit down.

✚ Anyone who has red hair (or blond/brunette), please sit down.

✚ Continue until about one-third of the group is sitting down.

3. After about one-third of the group is sitting, inform those who are sitting that they are "different" than the rest of the group. And because they are different, they will not be allowed to play the game with the rest of the Scouts at the meeting.

4. Give students time to react to that statement.

5. Then ask, "How do you feel about being judged based on your cultural background or the way you look?" "How do you feel about not being able to play the game?"

6. Discuss: "Do you think it is fair to judge someone based on their cultural background?" "Do you think it is fair to judge someone based on how they look?"

7. Give an assignment to the boys to bring back to the next meeting. Ask them to interview their parents/guardians/grandparents and share their cultural backgrounds with the group. Ask them to tell why and how their families or ancestors came to the U.S.

8. Discuss any similarities in backgrounds and family histories among the group.