

Ginger Activity – Step Forward

Aligns to Social Emotional Learning Outcomes

! **Self Awareness:** Identifying emotions, thoughts and values

! **Self Management:** Self-discipline - Impulse control

! **Social Awareness:** Perspective-taking - Empathy - Respect for others - Diversity

! **Relationship Skills:** Communication - Relationship building

! **Responsible Decision-making:** Identifying problems - Analyzing situations - Solving Problems - Ethical responsibility - Reflecting

OBJECTIVE: To create diversity awareness and a consciousness of what it feels like to be in the circle, and how it feels to be out of the circle as well as how it feels to choose to step forward or choose to not step forward when you can answer YES to a question or identify with a statement.

PREPARATION: After meeting Pawfessor Ginger and learning about how she doesn't judge anyone for who they are or what they have done and how she is a good friend and ally to all, the teacher will lead a discussion on diversity as well as allowing/accepting ourselves and our peers exactly as we/they are. Teacher will allow for discussion of feelings and instruct the students to witness all emotions and feelings that arise. Guide students to observe and allow any physical sensations that arise in their gut, head, limbs etc.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Direct all students to stand in a circle. Begin by everyone closing their eyes and taking 3 deep slow breaths. Instruct the group to take a step forward into the middle of the circle if they can answer yes to any of the questions or identify with any of the statements. Explain it is up to them as to whether they feel ready to step forward, but to observe and allow their emotions that arise. Instruct students to refrain from talking, cheering, giggling and any form of judgement (good or bad) during or after the activity. Guide the students to take 2 more deep breaths together and then have the group open their eyes at once. Begin reading questions/statements aloud. Pause after each statement - students will step back before the next statement is read. (teacher stands outside of the circle while reading the statements) (see question/statement list attached but customize for your school community needs)

Concepts: Building Character, understanding similarities and shared experiences, valuing both diversity and unity.

CONCLUSION: Ask students to return to their seats and allow for open ended discussion/debriefing. How comfortable were they during the activity? Did they feel safe being honest with others and with themselves? Would they have stepped forward in front a smaller group? Would they have felt less comfortable in front of the whole school? How do they feel knowing peers have experienced some of the same things as they have? How can they support one another in times of need?

© 2019 Lisa Potiker

Sample “Step forward if” Statements/Questions:
(Customize these for your classroom needs)

You like math more than writing

You walk home from school

You have a dog

You have a cat

You have pet that is not a dog or cat

You’ve experienced losing a pet/ the death of a pet

You buy lunch

You bring lunch

You have regrets about something you’ve done

You’ve been mad at a friend

A friend is/has been mad at you

You’ve broken someone’s trust

Someone has broken your trust

You have cheated

You have stolen

Someone has stolen from you

You have struggled in a subject at school

You have been laughed at

You have laughed at someone

You have been bullied

You’ve bullied someone

You like school

You dislike

You’ve ever felt unsafe at school

