

Potential Integration:  
ELA

<b>Health</b>
4.MEH.2.1 Identify unique personal characteristics that contribute to positive mental health.

### **Materials Needed:**

- Posters with the numbers 1-5 or a big rope or yarn to make a circle
- List of questions to identify similarities and differences
- A collection of children's books that focus on accepting differences and appreciating your talents (see teacher input for suggested titles)
- Comparison chart

### **Focus:**

Choose one of these ways to get students to identify similarities and differences. Ask a series of questions that students answer by standing at the numbers you have placed around the room or being inside the circle (yes) or outside the circle (no).

Put numbers 1-5 on posters around the room; 1 = Strongly Dislike, 5= Love It! or use a big rope to make a circle.

Sample Questions: Who has... visited the mountains? eaten broccoli?, flown in an airplane?, planted a garden? ridden a horse? eaten kiwi? been swimming in a pool? Who can...play an instrument? run faster than your pet? play tennis? fly a kite?

Give students a chance to share their experiences as you ask the questions.

### **Statement of Objectives:**

By the end of the lesson you will be able to describe ways we are all alike and different and recognize that our differences make us unique and special. I want you to be proud of yourself, and treat every person in our classroom with respect and kindness. We will be reading some great books, comparing the characters and writing some poetry.

### **Teacher Input:**

1. Discuss with students that both self-acceptance and accepting others are important to being successful in life. No two people are exactly alike. Their differences make them unique and special. Those differences include hair color, eye color, hobbies, size, skills and abilities, and preferences. Being happy with and accepting oneself is key to having positive mental health. Accepting that each person is unique and special is vital to having healthy relationships. A person's attitude is a reflection of his or her personality. Some children are positive and others negative. Some children are more outgoing and others are quieter. Some seek the attention of others; many do not. Accepting others and appreciating differences is part of emotional and mental health.
2. Read to students or have students read with partners or in small groups several picture books, which focus on self-esteem and accepting differences. After reading, students should discuss the

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characteristics of the main characters in the stories. How are you and the character alike or different? Students complete a comparison chart as they read. Share with the class.

Books for this activity: Stellaluna by Janell Cannon, If the World Were a Village by David J. Smith, Whoever You Are by Mem Fox, Different Just Like Me by Lori Mitchell, Just the Way You Are by Max Lucado, Three Cheers for Tacky by Helen Lester, What a Wonderful World by George Weiss, Old Turtle by Douglass Wood, The Color of Us by Karen Katz, The Sissy Duckling by Harvey Feirstein, and Children Just Like Me by Anabel and Barnabas Kindersley

**Assessment:**

1. Students write and illustrate an “I Am...” poem. A template is included, but you can find several examples on-line.
2. After students share individual poems, work together as a class to write a “WE ARE...” poem about your classroom. Hopefully, everyone will contribute an idea and help illustrate a poster for display.

**Closure:**

We are a class of individuals with many talents and traits that make us unique. We accept differences and treat everyone with respect. We work together as a team!

## *Writing an "I AM" poem*

### First Stanza

I am (2 special characteristics you have)  
I wonder (something of interest to you)  
I hear (an imaginary sound)  
I see (an imaginary sight)  
I want (something you desire)  
I am (repeat the 1<sup>st</sup> line of poem)

### Second Stanza

I pretend (something you pretend to do or be)  
I feel (a feeling)  
I touch (an Imaginary touch)  
I worry (something that bothers you)  
I cry (something that makes you sad)  
I am (repeat the 1<sup>st</sup> line of the poem)

### Third Stanza

I understand (something true)  
I say (something you believe in)  
I dream (something you dream about)  
I try (something you make an effort to do)  
I hope (something you actually hope for)  
I am (repeat the 1<sup>st</sup> line of the poem)

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OUR SIMILARITIES



OUR DIFFERENCES

