

# DIVERSITY



**Time Required:** 30-45 minutes

**Content Standards:** AA.S.7 Students will acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and interpersonal skills to help them understand and respect self and others.

**Indicators (Students will...):** AA.PSD.11.7.01 Students will develop respect for diversity and increase acceptance for differences.

**GOAL: Students will develop an understanding of the importance of diversity and increase acceptance of differences.**

**Activity Statements:** Students and advisor will participate in a “peanut” activity in which they give the peanut a persona and tell a story about its life to learn how they can grow to like anyone, even a peanut, when given a chance.

## **Materials:**

Enough peanuts for each class member and advisor(s)

## **Procedures:**

1. Put chairs in a circle so that everyone can see each other.
2. Advisor will distribute one peanut per student asking them not to eat it, because it will be used for today’s activity.
3. Advisor will ask the students to do the following then lead by example.
  - a. Examine your peanut very carefully.
  - b. Pretend your peanut is a person.
  - c. Think about your peanut’s past history. What type of experiences, advantages, disadvantages, and culture might your peanut have had?
  - d. Give your peanut a name, gender, age, and ethnicity.
  - e. Tell its life story believing that your peers will have compassion and understanding for its diversity.
4. Advisor will go first unless a student volunteers.

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( A sample story) *“I’d like you to meet Eugene. He grew up in the Middle East and moved to WV when he was in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. He could speak some English, but not very well. Some kids made fun of him, but not Sara English. Sara invited him to her birthday party where two bigger boys pretended to befriend him, but instead enticed him to the back yard where no one was watching and beat him up. When Sara and her family found out, they were very angry. They never invited those two boys over again, but they did invite Eugene to go to Disney World with Sara and her brother, Tommy. They helped him with his English pronunciation and he helped Sara and Tommy with Math. Eugene learned not to trust a lot of people, but if he did trust them he would help with their homework for free. Now Eugene is a junior and a National Merit semi-finalist. He wants to be a doctor and live in a culturally diverse community where his children will be treated with respect.”*

5. Ask students to take turns telling their peanut’s story, trying to stay within two minutes each.
6. When everyone has finished telling their story, ask every to toss their peanut into the middle of the floor. (Some will be reluctant because they have gained an attachment for their peanut.) For those student s, let them know they will have an opportunity to get their peanut back.
7. Once all the peanuts are in the floor, ask students to find their particular peanut. This is very powerful. You will find that almost every student can now identify their peanut. If some students cannot find theirs, they can ask others to show theirs to see if they have picked up the wrong peanut by mistake. Inform students they can now eat their peanut or keep it as a momentum of this experience.

## Discussion:

1. What surprised you about this activity?
2. What did you find motivational?
3. What was it about your peanut that helped you create your story?
4. What are some ways that you or other treats people because they are different?
5. What is something you will do to try to show more acceptance of diversity?

**Additional Resources:** None

## Extension Activities:

Invite someone you don’t know to sit at your lunch table. Learn about them, their background, likes, dislikes, and make them feel “safe” around you and your friends.

This activity was used by Barbara Ashcraft [bashcraft@access.k12.wv.us](mailto:bashcraft@access.k12.wv.us) with her Natural Helper group when she was a school counselor. Contact her with question or further details.

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