

Engaging Primary School students in self- expression, exploration and relationship

Designed by: Tabitha Peltier, Debajehmujig Storytellers Youth Animator, Manitoulin, Island

Theme: *"A PLACE FOR ALL", a sense of belonging for each student*

Grades: Kindergarten to Grade 6

Goal: To have each student create an individual block that illustrates their own story, these blocks to be assembled in a collective student Quilt of Belonging.

**Children can write, record or video their stories as well.*

Subjects: Art, Language, Literacy, Geography, History, Social studies, Dramatic Arts

Project Instructions and template: Click on **Create your own Quilt**

Big Ideas: to help develop a sense of one's self in the world and begin to understand and appreciate other people and their place in the world. To use colour, shapes and patterns to tell a story and express mood. It helps describe who they are, how they feel that they belong, and how they can make other people feel they belong.

Basic Warm-Ups, Ice Breakers and relationship builders

Grade 1 to 3

These simple improv games allow students to practice cooperation, group agreement and experience a sense of play together. It is important to encourage students to work with players beyond their regular peer groups. These start-up games were chosen to activate the students' auditory, visual and kinesthetic systems, prior to settling into the group creation activity.

Improv Warm-ups/Exercises/Games

- *Clap and point*
- *Sound and Movement*
- *Yes Lets!*
- *Grandmothers footsteps (Kindergarten)*
- *Who stole the cookies from the cookie jar?*

Additional Quilt Activity **One World Tree**

Grade 3 & 4

This more advanced set of improv warm-ups requires students identify, accept and advance each other's offers. The games are designed to move students through simple agreement to advancing more sophisticated physical, auditory or visual offers in combination. As each game advances, they respond to each other, work together in rhythm, reaffirm the operational value of agreement and then in the final games, play with the elements.

Warm-ups/Icebreakers

- *Clap and Point*
- *Zen Tag*
- *Sound and Movement*
- *Follow the follower, Follow the leader*
- *Group Number Count*
- *Bippity, bippity, bop*
- *One word at a time*
- *Yes and, Yes but*
- *Dr. Know-It-All*
- *Bus stop >Age>Occupation>Emotion*
- *Emotional Symphony*
- *Emotional Hitchhiker*

Additional Quilt Activity *Where Do We Come From*

Grade 5 & 6

Warm-Ups/Icebreakers

- *Clap and Point*
- *Zen Tag*
- *Sound and Movement*
- *Follow the follower, Follow the leader*
- *Group Number Count*
- *Human Knot*
- *Bus stop >Age>Occupation>Emotion*
- *Emotional Symphony*
- *Emotional Hitchhiker.*

Additional Quilt Activity *Together We Are One*

A class 'wheel' reflects both the individual identity each student and their group identity as a class. Students learn the value of one's self while understanding that they are also part of a community with the responsibility for others that this entails. It helps students learn to respect and care for others, understanding that all are needed in the circle of life. It teaches respect for the wisdom and breadth of understanding found in Aboriginal traditions and teachings.

Testimonial: from Jamie Oshkawbewisens, Debajehmujig Storytellers.

"This has been a fantastic way of showing the diversity of different cultures in our multicultural country of Canada. Just hearing the different stories behind the individual squares was mind blowing. There are so many different cultures in Canada, each of these different groups together, alongside The First Nations peoples, and make up what is Canada today. We are so proud that Manitoulin's very own Shirley Pitawanakwat created the Odawa block and Marlene Shawanda the Ojibwe block, each are featured in Quilt of Belonging"

When I was visiting with the kids, asking them what they had put on their blocks, it was so interesting finding out how they feel they belong in different groups. One child I was talking to said they belong to the gaming community, and I told him that's exactly how one could belong. Another child said "I belong to my culture because I dance and go to ceremonies within my community." I was astonished how each and every one of them had some sort of way they belong...

I had begun to assemble the quilt of belonging for the schools, and as it was coming together, I realized that they had worked so hard, they were really proud of themselves. It brought them together to learn from each other. It was amazing to see the outcome of the whole quilt, a beautiful mosaic of symbols that represent what it means to belong.

The students taught me so much about patience, a lot of them didn't know what or how they belonged but, when they realized it was truly spectacular to see how they did belong. Even through the games, seeing the students open up and explore with imagination and creativity -- was amazing. "