Notable Trade Book Lesson Plan

What a Family!

Written by Rachel Isadora

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What a Family! Every family has its own structure and unique characteristics. The family in this book has diversity and many of the nontraditional family groupings prevalent in society today. Created for kindergartners, this lesson celebrates individual likenesses and differences of families and students. It encourages both student and parent participation.

About the Authors

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Citation for this Article

Book Title

What a Family! (Notable Book, 2007)
Written by Rachel Isadora
Publisher: G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers, New York
Reading Level: Ages 4-8, Grades: K-3
ISBN-10 0399242546
Lesson Length: One week
Caldecott Honor artist and author, Rachel Isadora, attempts to explain family trees in this entertaining book. Ollie’s family is large and puzzling. Ollie and Grandpa Max investigate their family tree and celebrate the many things all these different people have in common as well as their differences.

NCSS Standards
I. Culture
II. People, Places, and Environments
IV. Individual Development and Identity

Materials
1. What a Family!
2. Mirror
3. Markers or crayons
4. Pencils or pens
5. Paper
6. Colored folders (one for each student)
7. Stapler
8. Family pictures (optional)

Objectives
Students will formulate a definition for family.
Students will formulate a definition for extended family.
Students will formulate a definition for traits.
Students will compare and contrast individual traits.

Procedures
Exploration/Introduction continued
Divide the students into small groups of two or three. Using a mirror invite students to look at and compare their images. Ask, “How are you alike?” “How are you different?” Give them several minutes to discuss this. Have students draw a self-portrait.

Development
Read: What a Family!

Discuss Ollie and his family including like and unlike traits. Construct a definition for family, extended family, and traits. Using the self-portraits have students work as a team to enter information into the following chart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Eyes</th>
<th>Hair</th>
<th>Skin</th>
<th>Things I can do:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</table>

Discuss the chart celebrating likenesses and differences.
Expansion

Have students take home the following step book and note:

Dear Parents,

We are learning about traits or characteristics and celebrating likenesses and differences. Please help your child complete his step book by listing names of family members on each step. On the page with the name, help your child write a sentence about something that he/she has in common with this relative, i.e., Eli looks like his mom, Josie runs fast like her brother Mike, or John has muscles like his Uncle Ben. Your child should draw a picture for each page and you may also attach a photograph (optional).

Please return to school by Friday. Thank you for your help!

Sincerely,

L. Kelley

How to make the step book:

1) Have students layer three pieces of paper.
2) Fold the top half of the paper over to make even steps.
3) Staple at the top.
4) Have students write Family on the first step.
5) Students will write family members names with parent’s help.

After step books are returned, each student will be given a colored folder. The student will title and illustrate the cover identifying himself as the author. On the left-hand side of the open cover the student will write, “Name is like his/her …” He/she will glue their initial self-portrait to this side of the folder. On the right-hand side, the student will write, “Name is exactly like name” and draw a second self portrait. The step book will be placed over the right-hand side of the folder and stapled at the top allowing the drawing and writing to be revealed when the pages are lifted. Read.
Assessment

Complete the following rubric for each student:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Maybe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student defines family.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student defines extended family.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student defines traits.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student compares and contrasts traits.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Suggested Extension Activities

- Use the website Animoto to create a commercial about the student by entering pictures, text, and music.
- Use Photo Story to create a movie with pictures and sound about student and family or friends.
- Second graders can compare their self to a famous person.

Weblinks

Books

- *Home* by Jeanne Baker
- *Who’s in a Family?* by Robert Skutch
- *Me and My Family Tree* by Joan Sweeney
- *The Family Book* by Todd Parr

Websites

Rachel Isadora – Author’s page
http://www.harpercollins.com/authors/17066/Rachel_Isadora/index.aspx

Animoto
http://www.animoto.com

Photo Story
http://www.microsoft.com

“Created for kindergartners, this lesson celebrates individual likenesses and differences of families and students.”
Appendix

How are we alike?
How are we different??

Students will construct a definition of family to include the people living in their home.

We are completing our books.

Look inside a finished book.
Note: Please let students write as much as possible.
This book was typed for this photograph.

I am sharing my book with Mom.