

Lesson 3: Community Ins and Outs

Lesson Overview

Purpose: To identify the occurrence of inclusion and exclusion in groups, and to understand how and why exclusion happens.

Timing: 60 min



This lesson is designed to take 60 minutes.

Agenda



Opening	15 min
Welcome	
Review	
Preview	
Excluded Characters (small group work)	
Focus Activities	30 min
Reading “The Sneetches”	
Sneetches Among Us	
Closing	15 min
Reflection	
Assessment	
Closing Circle	

Supplies



- 8 ½ x 11-inch sheet of paper (one per group)
- Pen/pencil (one per group)
- “The Sneetches” by Dr. Seuss
- Handout 4-3A: Sneetches Among Us
- Handout 4-3B: Stars
- 30 or 40 cutout stars based on the Star handout

Key Words

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- **Inclusion:** Inviting a person into your group and helping him or her stay there.
- **Exclusion:** Not inviting a person into your group, or keeping a person out of your group or from participating equally in the group. This can be done by ignoring the person, or sometimes by threats or teasing.
- **Community:** A group of people who work, play, or live together who have things in common and things that are different.

Objectives



By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Recognize inclusion and exclusion.
- Understand and identify reasons why individuals want to be part of a group.
- Understand and identify reasons why individuals are excluded from groups.
- Describe ways that people could be included or excluded in their school community.

Before You Teach



- In this lesson, students may want to talk about specific incidents of exclusion or bullying. Tell students not to name names or air grievances against individuals. Emphasize that everyone has the potential to exclude or show exclusionary behavior, so they should avoid labeling. The important thing is that everyone can act as a peacemaker, and that is the goal for their own classroom community. Reinforce that the focus of Peace First activities is on behaviors, not people.
- Familiarize yourself with Dr. Seuss's story "The Sneetches" in advance so that you are prepared to both make observations and field questions, as you read it aloud.

Lesson Plan

Opening (15 minutes)

1. Welcome

Use your Quiet Signal to get students' attention. Welcome students to Peace First time.

2. Review

Review with students the similarities and differences activity they completed in Lesson 2.

Call on students to summarize what they discovered about similarities and differences in their classroom community.

Say:

You may want to get the discussion going with prompts like the following:

What was the most interesting thing you learned about your classroom community?

What was something you learned you had in common with others in the class?

How can knowing about your community's differences strengthen your community's ability to work together?

Possible answers:

- We can develop tolerance and acceptance of difference
- Different backgrounds and experiences can offer different talents and abilities
- We can find things we have in common with other individuals in the group
- We can feel positive about our own differences



OPENING CONTINUED (15 Minutes)

3. Preview

Direct students' attention to the agenda for today's lesson, **Community Ins and Outs**.

Say:

Today we will learn how similarities and differences can lead to both inclusion and exclusion in a community. We will explore how to identify exclusion in their community and how it happens

4. Excluded Characters (Small Group Work)

Goal: To define inclusion and exclusion and help students identify and describe examples of exclusion they already know from books and other media.

Defining Inclusion and Exclusion

Write the words **inclusion** and **exclusion** on the board.

Ask students to try to define the words without using any part of the word in the definition—that is, without using the words *include* or *exclude*.

Brainstorm definitions and write student responses under the words on the board.

Possible answers:

- **Inclusion:** Making someone feel part of something; welcoming or inviting someone into a group; giving someone a place in a group; allowing someone to feel like a member of a community.
- **Exclusion:** Making someone feel like he or she is alone; keeping someone out of a group or community; making someone feel unwelcome in a group; threatening or teasing someone or making him or her feel uncomfortable.

Divide students into groups of three or four and provide each group with a piece of paper and something to write with.

OPENING CONTINUED (15 Minutes)

Explain to students that they are probably familiar with many characters in movies, books, and television who have been excluded. Ask them to come up with a list of from 3 to 5 characters who have been excluded and briefly describe each situation.

Have students focus on the circumstances of exclusion:

- Who is excluding them?
- How are they being excluded, and why?

Encourage students to use examples from books they are reading or have read in class this year, or from current television shows you know they are watching.



Provide students with time to work.

Call on students to share characters and situations from their lists. If necessary, use the following list for some possibilities to get the sharing started:

- Cinderella is excluded by her stepsisters from going to the ball.
- Zinkoff is made fun of by class members in Jerry Spinelli's novel *Loser*.
- The Ugly Duckling in Hans Christian Andersen's fable is rejected and shunned because he doesn't look like other ducklings.
- Charlie Brown is excluded by his friends from participating in some activities.
- In J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter books, muggles are sometimes excluded because they do not have wizard parentage. House elves are also treated as though they are inferior because they are different.
- Max Kane and Kevin Dillon are excluded in the book *Freak the Mighty* (and the movie of the book, *The Mighty*) because they are different from other kids.
- In the television show *Phineas and Ferb*, the main characters' rival, Dr. Heinz Doofenshmirtz, is shown in many episodes to have been excluded and made fun of as a child. The show suggests that this is what has made him mean as an adult.

TRANSITION



Tell students that now that they have discussed some examples of exclusion and started to understand how and why people exclude others, they will read a story about one group that excludes another and what happens.

Focus Activities (30 minutes)



Goal: Students identify and discuss exclusionary behavior, and then extend that understanding to their own classroom and lives.



Teacher Tip: If you do not read aloud to students on a regular basis, you may want to set some guidelines before you begin. Such guidelines might include: paying attention, keeping eyes focused on the reader, remaining seated and quiet, and commenting or asking questions only when invited to do so.

1. Reading “The Sneetches”

Activity Overview: Reading “The Sneetches” aloud to students offers an opportunity for them to recognize and identify exclusionary behavior in characters outside of their school surroundings. This will help them to understand and evaluate exclusion without loyalties to particular individuals or friendship groups, so they can learn to recognize it closer to home. It also gives students a chance to practice listening skills and cooperative behavior in a group.

You may want to say to students that although many of them are reading books at a higher reading level, Dr. Seuss books like *The Sneetches and Other Stories* are fun for all ages to read. The books also contain wisdom that is valuable for everyone, including adults. Ask them to think about what the book means to them as fourth graders.



Tell students that you are going to read them a story. As students listen, have them look for examples of the ways Sneetches are included or excluded in the story.

Read “The Sneetches” aloud to students. Be sure that all students can view the illustrations.

FOCUS ACTIVITIES CONTINUED (30 Minutes)



Ask:

As you read, you may wish to engage students by stopping at certain points and asking questions such as the following:

What is happening now?

What do you think will happen next?

How do the Sneetches without stars feel?

What do you make of Sylvester McMonkey McBean?

Who is winning here?

Ask:

When you reach the page with the “figure eight” of Sneetches going in and out of the Star-off/Star-on machine, ask:

What's going on in this picture?

What do you think will happen next?

Debrief

Have students think about the behavior of both groups of Sneetches.



Ask:

When the story opened, what was the difference between the two groups of Sneetches?

Answer: One group had stars on their bellies and the other had plain bellies.

Ask:

In what ways did the Star-Belly Sneetches exclude the Plain-Belly Sneetches?

What did the exclusion look like and sound like?

How did the Plain-Belly Sneetches feel?

FOCUS ACTIVITIES CONTINUED (30 Minutes)

Possible answers:

- The Star-Bellies walked right by the Plain-Bellies without talking
- They wouldn't play ball with them
- They left them out of frankfurter roasts, picnics, and parties
- They kept them away
- The Star-Bellies tried to avoid the Plain-Bellies
- The sounds might have been the sighs or cries of the Plain-Bellies or shouts of triumph or taunting by the Star-Bellies
- The Plain-Bellies felt sad and left out



Ask:

What solution did Sylvester McMonkey McBean come up with?

Why did the Plain-Belly Sneetches want to have Stars?

Possible answer:

- They thought they would be included

Ask:

Did it work? Why or why not?

Possible answers:

- It didn't work, because the original Star-Bellies still wanted to exclude the Plain-Bellies, so they had their stars taken off
- The Star-Bellies still hadn't realized what was wrong with their behavior

Ask:

Do you think the Star-Belly Sneetches were excluding the Plain-Belly Sneetches on purpose? Does it matter?

Possible answer:

- In this story, it seems like the exclusion is on purpose. Even if it wasn't, the Star-Bellies should have been more careful not to leave people out.

FOCUS ACTIVITIES CONTINUED (30 Minutes)



Ask:

Why do you think the two groups of Sneetches became friends at the end?

Possible answers:

- They realized they had more similarities (“Sneetches are Sneetches”) than differences
- They realized their differences were superficial (the stars could be added or removed by the machine without really changing the Sneetch)

Ask:

What do you think Dr. Seuss wants us to learn or think about after reading this story?

Possible answers:

- How we treat others
- How people feel when we exclude them
- Whether we are excluding people without realizing it



Teacher Tip: Another story in *The Sneetches and Other Stories*, “What Was I Scared Of?”, presents an excellent example of exclusion based on fear of the unfamiliar. If time permits, you may wish to read aloud and discuss this second story as well.

FOCUS ACTIVITIES CONTINUED (30 Minutes)

2. Sneetches Among Us

Activity Overview: Filling in the handout in a group gives students a chance to share ideas and collaborate in finding answers and offers shy students a chance to participate. Remind students not to use names in their responses, because their focus should be on behaviors, not on people. Reinforce the idea that all members of the community can be peacemakers, and that it is never too late to start using peacemaking skills.



Say:

You will now have an opportunity to connect the action of the story with things that happen or might happen in our classroom or school.



Have students get back into their groups from the opening activity.

Pass out **Handout 4-3A: Sneetches Among Us**, and read over the handout together. Clarify any questions.



Sneetches Among Us

How does the story "The Sneetches" relate to your life? Use examples that might happen or that have happened in your community. If you need more room, use the back of the handout.

1. When have you or someone you know ever felt like a Plain-Belly Sneetch?

2. Why do people want to be part of a group?

3. How do groups of people act like Star-Belly Sneetches to exclude others in real life?

4. The Plain-Belly Sneetches thought if they wore Stars, they would be included. But they weren't. Why do you think people exclude others?

5. What are some ways people in a group or community can work to include others?

GRADE 4 - LESSON 3 4-3A SNEETCHES AMONG US © 2012 Peace First

FOCUS ACTIVITIES CONTINUED (30 Minutes)


Ask groups to work together to write their answers on the handout. Tell groups they should come up with at least one response to each question, but they may write more if they like.

As groups work, **circulate** around the room to monitor group dynamics to make sure that all students are participating equally. Provide about 10 minutes for groups to complete the handout. If groups get restless, cut the time short.

Call on students from each group to share responses to handout questions. One way to ensure that all groups are heard from is to ask each group to respond to one of the questions. When you have heard from each group, ask if there are any new points anyone wants to make.

Ask:

When have you or someone you know ever felt like a Plain-Belly Sneetch? Why do people want to be part of a group?

Possible answers:

- To feel good about themselves
- To feel safe, included, liked
- Want to do the activity others are doing
- Want to belong

Ask:

How do groups of people act like Star-Belly Sneetches to exclude others in real life?

Possible answers:

- Not sit with them at lunch
- Not play with them on the playground
- Ignore them in the hallways or in class
- Not choose them for games or projects

FOCUS ACTIVITIES CONTINUED (30 Minutes)



Ask:

The Plain-Belly Sneetches thought if they wore Stars, they would be included. But they weren't. The Star Bellies still wanted to exclude them. Why do you think people exclude others?

Possible answers:

- Think they are better than others
- Feel superior
- Want to feel powerful or special
- Don't want to take the time to get to know someone new
- Are afraid of someone who's different

Ask:

What are some ways people in a community can work to include others?

Possible answers:

- Invite someone to join in a game
- Sit with them at lunch or play with them on the playground
- Say "hello"
- Introduce yourself to someone new

TRANSITION



Tell students that now that they have read "The Sneetches" and connected the ideas about inclusion and exclusion in the story to their own lives, they will get back together to reflect on their activities.

Closing (15 minutes)

Reflection

Tell students to think about how the story of the Sneetches connects to peacemaking in their community.

Ask:

Was Sylvester McMonkey McBean a peacemaker in the story? Why or why not?

Possible answer:

- No, because he didn't really care about the Sneetches. He just wanted to make money.

Ask:

If Sylvester McMonkey McBean had been a peacemaker, what might he have done?

Possible answers:

- Been nice to the Plain-Belly Sneetches and made them feel better
- Talked to the Star-Belly Sneetches about including the Plain-Bellies

Ask:

Could a Sneetch have played the role of peacemaker? What would he or she have had to do?

Possible answers:

- Made friends with a Sneetch in the other group
- Talked to the other members of the group about including the other Sneetches

CLOSING CONTINUED (15 Minutes)



Ask:

How can groups exclude others?

How can we recognize exclusion? How do we know it when we see it?

Possible answer:

- When people are left out, you can see people sitting on the sidelines of a game or by themselves at lunch or walking by themselves in the hallway or to school

Ask:

What are some reasons people exclude others?

How can we include people who are left out?

Possible answers:

- Invite people to sit with us or play with us
- Introduce ourselves to new people or students
- Say “hello” to someone, or ask someone who is alone a question to start a conversation

Ask:

How can we stop exclusion when we see it happening?

Possible answers:

- Talk to members of our group about including people who are left out
- Speak up when we see people being mean to others or teasing them

CLOSING CONTINUED (15 Minutes)

Assessment

Explain to students that they will use the story of the Sneetches to celebrate acts of inclusion by posting them along the Peacemaking Path.

Hold up a Star cutout. Tell students that they can write these acts on a Star and it will become part of the Peacemaking Path.



Ask:

Can anyone share a time when you included another student?

Have you witnessed an act of inclusion by someone else this week?



Distribute Stars from **Handout 4-2B: Stars** to students who volunteered answers to the questions above and to anyone else who would like one.



Ask students to write their answers to either of the questions in a short sentence on one of the Stars. Ask if any more students would like Stars to write on.

Have the student use tape or a pushpin to post the Star on the Peacemaking Path, or collect the Stars and do it for them.

CLOSING CONTINUED (15 Minutes)**Say:**

Throughout the year, when you see others acting to include someone or you do it yourself, even if it was hard, and you are proud of yourself, you can write about it on a Star and post it on the Peacemaking Path.

Closing Circle

Tell students that next week they will look at how people feel when they are included or excluded by a community, and they will try to imagine what it feels like to be excluded.

Tell students it is now time to transition out of Peace First time and into their next classroom activity.

Have students form a circle for the Pulse of Peace and designate a student to start the squeeze of positive, peacemaking energy. As they send the pulse around the circle, have students think about how the lesson today connected them as peacemakers.

**Say:**

Before we move on, let's have a moment of silence to think about what you have done today in Peace First time.

Use your Quiet Signal. When you feel students are ready, move on to your next activity.

Sneetches Among Us

How does the story “The Sneetches” relate to your life? Use examples that might happen or that have happened in your community. If you need more room, use the back of the handout.

1. When have you or someone you know ever felt like a Plain-Belly Sneetch?

2. **Why** do people want to be part of a group?

3. **How** do groups of people act like Star-Belly Sneetches to exclude others in real life?

4. The Plain-Belly Sneetches thought if they wore Stars, they would be included. But they weren't. **Why** do you think people exclude others?

5. **What are some ways** people in a group or community can work to include others?

Stars

