

Map of my Heart: My Identity



Class Descriptions: Both Montessori classes consist of grade 1,2,3 students, but mostly grade 2 and 3 students. One class has 24 students with 11 girls and 13 boys. One student in this class has a designated IEP and will need extra support during the activities. The other class has 23 students with 11 girls and 12 boys. One student has trouble socializing with the teacher and classmates and will need to have collaborative activities adapted to suit their learning. As these are both Montessori classes, the students are used to engaging in self-directed work and hands-on learning experiences. Although students are young, they may benefit from activities that mix independent work with social interaction. Furthermore, both classes are culturally diverse, with many different ethnicities. Thus, students may benefit from a project which provides them with the opportunity to express their cultural identity with their peers.

Rationale: Both classes are currently learning about mapping, specifically mapping British Columbia and Canada. We were introduced to the picture book, *My Map Book*, by Sara Fanelli, which teaches about autobiography and mapping in an artistic and creative way. We chose this project to provide students with the opportunity to explore their own identity and learn about their classmates' identities. By making connections with each other, students can create a positive classroom community. In addition, this lesson integrates the First Peoples Principle of Learning: *Learning requires an exploration of identity*. This principle reflects the importance of identity in relation to learning as "Identity is what connects people to each other, to community and to land." (Chrona, 2014)

Big Ideas:

Arts

Gr. 1: People connect to others and share ideas through the arts.

Gr. 2: People connect to the hearts and minds of others in a variety of ways through the arts.

Gr. 3: The arts connect our experiences to the experiences of others.

Social Studies

Gr.3: People from diverse cultures share some common experiences and aspects of life.

Curricular Competencies:

Arts

Gr. 1: Interpret symbols and how they can be used to express meaning through the arts.

Gr. 2: Explore personal experience, community, and culture through arts activities.

Gr. 3: Explore identity, place, culture, and belonging through arts.

Social Studies

Gr. 1: Explore different perspectives on people, places, or events in their lives.

Gr.2: Explain why people, events, or places are significant to various individuals

Gr.3: Recognize that symbols are used to represent concrete and abstract ideas.

Content:

Arts

Gr. 1 & 2: Symbolism as a means of expressing specific meaning.

Gr. 3: Symbolism as ways of creating and representing meaning.

Social Studies

Gr.1 & 2: Know diverse cultures, backgrounds, and perspectives within the community.

Gr.3: Aspects of life (like family) is shared by people and cultures.

Lesson 1

Learning Objective: Students will understand the term “identity” and how we can represent our identity through different objects that are meaningful to us.

Materials:

- Whiteboard markers
- Felt markers
- 5 pieces of chart paper (1 for each group)
- Bag with 4 objects that represent the teacher’s identity
- Letter for students to bring home to their parents/guardians

Introduction: The teacher will show students one object from their bag and ask students to guess what the object might be and why they think it is important to them. The teacher will then explain the personal significance of the item before showing students the other items they brought. This will continue for all 4 objects. After, the teacher will conclude by telling students these objects represent the teacher’s identity. The teacher will write the word “identity” and the definition “who I am” in a bubble on the whiteboard. Together, the class will brainstorm what objects they think represent their identity. After gathering a few ideas, the teacher will arrange students into groups and provide each group with a piece of chart paper and markers for students to brainstorm things that symbolize their identity.

Activity: Using their group’s chart paper, students will write or draw objects they can bring into class to express their identity. The teacher will walk around and observe groups, providing assistance if needed.

Closure: One student from each group will stand up and tell the class the items their group came up with to show their identities. After, the teacher will give each student a letter to bring home. Before putting the letter in their agenda, students will fill out the blank spaces on the bottom of the letter with possible objects they could bring for next class.

Adaptations/Modifications: If students cannot write words, they may draw a picture of their idea for the group activity or ask other students to add their idea to the group's brainstorm web.

Assessment/Evidence of Learning: In small groups, students will demonstrate their understanding of the word "identity" through their words and images on their group's chart paper. Students will also demonstrate their understanding of "identity" by filling in the blank spaces at the bottom of the take-home letter. The assessment will be specific to each student as each student will have different objects that symbolize their identity.

Enactivism/How is Learning Enacted: This lesson is very social and active as it encourages students to interact with each other to brainstorm objects that represent their identity. This activity is relevant to students because it allows them to focus on their individual identity and think of unique objects they can bring to represent themselves. Students are also involved in adding to the list of objects to bring, by filling in the blanks (in the take-home letter) with objects that are important to them.

References:

Chrona, J. (2014). *First Peoples Principles of Learning*. Retrieved from

<https://firstpeoplesprinciplesoflearning.wordpress.com/learning-requires-exploration-of-ones-identity/>

LETTER TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS:

February 21st, 2017

Dear parents/guardians:

We are writing to let you know that the students are starting a mini unit on Identity and Mapping of the Heart. The purpose of this unit is to have students explore identity, place, culture, and belonging through the arts. We have asked the students to bring four objects that demonstrate their identity for next class on Tuesday, February 28th. On this date, students will share their objects with their classmates and explain how these objects are part of their identity.

Sample List:

- a photo of your family members/friends or an item that reminds you of them
- a photo of your pet or your pet's favourite toy, etc.
- an object from your favourite hobby or sport
- an object that is part of your culture
- a travel souvenir or memento from a memorable trip

Sincerely,

Lesson 2

Learning Objectives: Students will be able to use their chosen objects as symbols to express their identity to others and discuss similarities and differences between their identities and their peers' identities.

Materials:

- *My Map Book* by Sara Fanelli
- 6 talking sticks (1 for each group)
- exemplar of art project
- 1 object that represents the teacher's identity
- Whiteboard markers

Introduction: The teacher will write the speaking prompt and instructions on the whiteboard for students.

1. This is _____. It is important to me because _____.
(object)
2. Pass talking stick to the next person.

The teacher will model how to present objects in small groups. Next, the teacher will discuss the significance of the talking stick. First Nations use a talking stick, a talking feather, a peace pipe or a sacred shell to make sure every person gets a chance to speak. The person holding the stick has the right to speak and everyone else in the circle is expected to listen with respect. (BC Ministry of Education, 2015)

Activity: Students will then be put into groups and given one talking stick. They will then gather their four objects from their backpacks and bring them to their small group circle. The teacher will walk around and observe groups, ensuring group members are listening to each other and passing the talking stick around the circle. After, students will gather into one large class circle. The teacher will ask students what similarities and differences they noticed between their objects and their classmates' objects. Class discussion.

Closure: Read *My Map Book* by Sara Fanelli. Then show students the page, "Map of my Heart" and explain they will be creating a map of their heart next class. Remind students to bring in a photocopy of their family photo if they wish to use it in their art project.

Adaptations/Modifications: Students who are not comfortable participating in the group circles can share their objects privately with the teacher.

Assessment/Evidence of Learning: The teacher will see evidence of student learning by observing the small group discussions and large class discussion.

The teacher will evaluate students based on the following:

- Student brought 4 objects from home that represent their identity
- Student respects and listens to peers and uses the talking stick
- Student describes what their objects are

- Student shares why their object is significant to their identity
- Student is able to recognize similarities and differences between their identities and their peers' identities

Enactivism/How is Learning Enacted: This lesson is very relevant and engaging to students as the majority of the lesson is focused on students expressing their own identity to their peers through the objects they have brought. Students will be interacting in small groups with each other and learning about other students' identities, making this lesson very social and inclusive as all students are allowed a chance to speak and share through the use of the talking stick. Overall, this lesson will provide students with an authentic learning experience and the chance to explore their own identities and see commonalities among their peers. The use of a talking stick will also encourage dialogue and respect and help to create a community environment.

References:

BC Ministry of Education. (2015). *Aboriginal worldviews and perspectives: Moving forward*. Retrieved from http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/aboriginal-education/awp_moving_forward.pdf

Resources:

Fanelli, S. (1995). *My map book*. New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers

This picture book teaches children about mapping and autobiography by encouraging them to examine the world around them and map things they usually wouldn't consider. This book is available from the Kitsilano Branch of the Vancouver Public Library. This book is age appropriate for grade 1-3 classrooms (ages 5-8) and includes many bold eye-catching illustrations that are sure to gain students' attention. Our art project is inspired from the page "Map of my Heart." However, it should be noted that this page should not be used as the main exemplar for the art project as it does not include very many images on this page (instead it uses words to map the heart).

Lesson 3

Learning Objective: Students will be able to draw and label images that represent their identity and map these identities on a heart template.

Materials:

- Exemplar of art project
- Map of Canada
- Whiteboard markers
- Heart template (1 for each student)
- Black construction paper (1 for each student)
- Scissors and glue sticks
- Pencils and erasers
- Pencil crayons and markers

Introduction: Hold up the exemplar of the art project and a map of Canada. The teacher will ask students what similarities they notice between the art project and the map of Canada. (Both have border lines, different coloured sections, labels for each area, etc.)

Activity: The teacher will then provide students with a checklist of steps needed to complete the project.

Checklist

- ★ Draw and colour 4 images
- ★ Draw border lines
- ★ Label each area (name it)
- ★ Cut out your heart template
- ★ Glue it onto the black paper
- ★ Use a white pencil crayon to write your name on the front

After going over the checklist with the class, students will gather materials and begin working on their art projects.

Closure: The teacher will give students a 5 min clean up warning. Then students will sit in one large circle with their art project. The teacher will model the next activity for students. Going around the circle, students will show the class their art piece and respond to the following prompts:

My name is _____. One piece of my identity is _____.

Adaptations/Modifications: Students who finish their art project early can help other students with their art projects, especially the younger students with cutting and pasting their heart template onto black construction paper.

Assessment/Evidence of Learning: Teachers will see evidence of learning through each student's final art project as well as during the sharing circle.

Teachers will evaluate students based on the following:

- Student draws and colours 4 images that represent their individual identity
- Student includes border lines
- Student labels each piece of their identity (such as: 'family,' 'hobbies' 'place')
- Student completes the art project: Map of my Heart is cut out and pasted onto black paper
- Student is able to tell the class one part of their identity during the sharing circle

Enactivism/How is Learning Enacted: This art project is relevant to students because it is centered around their identities which makes the project more important and engaging to them. It is also inclusive as all students are able to create their very own map of their heart. During the sharing circle, students are encouraging to share one piece of their identity with the class, helping them to socially connect with each other as they will learn a little bit about each of their classmate's identity. Overall, this will help to build relationships among students and create a community by encouraging students to see commonalities among themselves as well as cultural identities other than their own.