

WONDERFULLY UNIQUE

Key Concept

We are all alike because we are all made in the likeness of God – we are all part of his body. But “a body isn’t really a body, unless there is more than one part”. God has made us alike and, at the same time, he has made us unique. It is our uniqueness that makes us able to do different things well. When we all live and work together, celebrating our wonderful differences, we all win.

Key Scripture

There are different ways to serve the same Lord, and we can each do different things. Yet the same God works in all of us and helps us in everything we do.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:5-6 (CEV)

A body isn’t really a body, unless there is more than one part.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:19 (CEV)

Preparation and Supplies

You will need

- Equipment to show pictures
- Computer chair with wheels
- Blindfold
- Apple
- Large roll or sheets of butchers paper (this can be purchased inexpensively at Kmart, IKEA or craft shops)
- Coloured markers
- Glue sticks
- An A4 size sheet of cardboard for each group of 5 or 6 children
- Markers
- Ball
- Box or container
- Enough small treats (wrapped lollies, novelty erasers, stickers etc.) for each child to have one

Prepare

- Put the treats inside the box or container
- For children who may difficulty writing, print several copies of the ‘Who am I’ table onto cardboard
 - Cut the tables into separate cards, each containing one word



Connecting in

A tag line for the novel, 'Wonder', reminds us that *"You can't blend in when you were born to stand out."* (Palacio, 2012)

Last week we were reminded that we are alike because we are made like God. But take a look around the room and you will see that we are also wonderfully unique.

Let's look at some pictures that highlight uniqueness.

Pictures:

- Three children with brown hair and one with orange hair.
- Three tall and one short person.
- Three with glasses and one without glasses.
- Three with dark skin and one with pale skin.
- Three with a facial deformity and one without
- Three with freckles and one without

Show each picture and ask:

- *Which person stands out?*
- *What makes that person unique in this group?*

Sometimes we stand out in a group even when we want to just blend in. Often when we look at each other skin colour, freckles, glasses or height are the type of things we notice. At first glance, these are the types of things that we think make us or others different or unique.

People who saw Auggie saw his facial deformity first. This made him stand out instantly (PALACIO, 2012).

The way that we look is important and God created us to look the way we do. But each person is much more than just the way that they look. God looks deeper than the way we look on the outside and we can too. The way that we look makes us unique but there are other things that make us unique too. Think about the things that you can do that others cannot. Maybe you can roll your tongue, turn your hand backwards or do cartwheels!

Invite one child to come and sit on a chair with wheels in the middle of the room. Explain to them that they must retrieve an object from one side of the room and bring it to you; however, they must not use their feet or legs.

Allow the child a minute to try to accomplish the task.

Ask another volunteer to come and assist them. Place a blindfold over the eyes of the assistant. The person in the chair must not use their feet or legs. The assistant must not use their eyes. Ask them to work together to accomplish the same task.

In this situation our two volunteers had different abilities. Neither of them could accomplish the task on their own. They needed each other. Nobody can do everything. We need each other. We need each other's different abilities. The Bible, in 1 CORINTHIANS 12, describes us as a body and a body isn't really a body unless there is more than one part. All of the parts work together.

We are different in the way that we look. We are different in the things that we can do. We are different in the things we have experienced. Sometimes we want to be just like everyone else but our differences make us special. God has made each one of us unique. Not one of us is ordinary. Every one of us is extraordinary.

The Main Thing

Jenna was ten years old. She loved sculpting clay, listening to music and doing gymnastics. She was kind, generous and smart. She was medium height with long, blonde hair. Jenna was also blind. Her eyes looked different to the eyes of other children. She could not look at others and others did not want to look at her. She was excluded from parties and teams and friendship groups. She was excluded every day. So, Jenna lived in a dark and lonely world.

One day she was in a classroom with several other students. It was night time. They were preparing for a special art show the following day. Because Jenna could not see, she was more aware of her other senses. She smelled the smoke before anyone else in the room. Soon they all heard the fire alarm ringing. Then Jenna heard the other students begin to scream as the lights went out. The darkness made no difference to Jenna. She was used to moving around the school buildings in darkness. She knew that she could find her way to safety. She started to move towards the door then stopped.

Jenna realised that the other children in the classroom might become confused and lost in the darkness. They might become trapped in the building and in the fire. These children had been unkind to her for years. They had left her out and refused to be her friends. Jenna acted quickly. She gathered them together and explained that she could help them. They formed a line and she led the way. Soon they were safely out of the building.

Jenna was not ordinary. Jenna was extraordinary. You are also extraordinary. Let's take a few minutes to think about who you are. What makes you different, unique, and special?

You might like to think about the way that you look, the things you can do, the experiences you have had, your interests and hobbies, or your personality or characteristics.

Activity – Valuing difference

Divide the children into pairs. Ask them to take turns lying on the paper whilst their partner traces round them.

Ask the children to cut out their body shapes and use coloured markers to write words on the outlines that describe them.

The children can write on their own or each other's. Alternatively, provide the prepared cards for children to choose from and glue inside their outline.

After about five minutes, ask the children to hold up their outline in front of themselves or lay them on the floor and sit on them. Remind the children that the list of words that describe them may grow or change over time.

Discussion – Valuing difference

If you look around the room, I'm sure that you will find that no two people have exactly the same set of words. We are created to be like God and we are created to be unique.

Auggie's deformity made him look different or extraordinary to his friends. Those who took the time to get to know Auggie found out that he was unique and special in many more important ways (PALACIO, 2012).

We are all alike because we are all made in the likeness of God – we are all part of his body. But “a body isn't really a body, unless there is more than one part”. God has made us alike and, at the same time, he has made us unique. It is our uniqueness that makes us able to do different things well. When we all live and work together, celebrating our wonderful differences, we all win.

Do not be too concerned with being like all your friends. Enjoy being you, and allow your friends to be themselves. God has made each person just the way He imagined you to be, Psalms 139 reminds us that you are ‘fearfully and wonderfully made’. God has not made you to be the same, to fit in, or to go with the crowd. You have been made unique, special and for a reason; through God's word you can learn more about what that is.

No one is ordinary; everyone is extraordinary in some way. We are all wonders.

Tying In

Divide the children into groups of 5 or 6.

Give each group an A4 sheet of cardboard and markers. Ask them to draw a circle in the centre of their page (about the size of a large orange). Inside the circle write the words “MADE LIKE GOD”. This is what we all have in common. Around the circle, draw one petal for each member of your group (i.e. groups of 5 will have 5 petals). Ask each group member to write in their petal one thing about themselves that is different to everyone else in the circle.

Reinforce that we are all alike in our image of God but uniquely created.

This week, try this activity with a group of your friends or family members.

Memory Verse Activity

God loves you and has chosen you as his own special people. So be gentle, kind, humble, meek, and patient.

COLOSSIANS 3:12 (CEV)

Ask the children to sit in a circle. Play some music and ask the children to pass the box of treats around the circle until the music stops. When the music stops, the child who is holding the box must say the verse. If they say it correctly then they may take a treat. If they are struggling to say the verse, ask for a volunteer to help. Allow both of these children to take a treat.

Play several rounds.

At the end, invite each child who hasn't had a treat to say the verse together. Ensure that each child gets a treat.

Prayer activity

Ask the children to stand in a circle. Choose one child to begin with the ball. Ask them to pass the ball to someone in the circle and say something about that person that makes them special and unique. Continue until everyone has had a turn.

Pray together *"Thank you that we are made alike in your image but also unique wonders."*

Who am I?

KIND	TALKATIVE
GENEROUS	ARTISTIC
FRIENDLY	BUILDING
FUNNY	CARTWHEELS
CLEVER	SOCCER
COMPUTERS	GAMES
MAGIC	CREATIVE
LEADER	IMAGINATIVE
INVENTIVE	RESPECTFUL
ORIGINAL	CRAZY
READING	QUIET
ENERGETIC	SPORTY
MUSICAL	ANIMALS
COOPERATIVE	SWIMMER
GYMNASTICS	BASKETBALL
PIANO	MATHS
TECHNOLOGY	SCIENCE
EXCITING	NATURE
ADVENTUROUS	FAST
HONEST	SLOW
SHY	THOUGHTFUL