

Lesson Plan: Family Tree

Grade Level: 1st Grade

Background Information:

Students will already have learned about families and differences in families. They will have discussed and listened to family stories. They will have learned vocabulary words about families, like: ancestor, grandparent, sibling, uncle, generation, etc. They will know that all our family trees are different and our ancestors came from many different places and lived many different kinds of lives. They will have taken a letter from teacher home asking about names of parents and grandparents for a family tree. Ideally, it would be great to invite parents in to help with this assignment.

Objective:

Given the story All Kinds of Families, and a discussion on ancestors, students will be able to create a family tree going back at least three generations. Children will understand that they are an important part of a family tree, that they have value no matter how their family tree is made up.

Materials:

Pencils, crayons or markers

Example family tree(s)

Family tree worksheet

List of parents, grandparents and great-grandparents names (have your students get this information from home prior to this activity)

All Kinds of Families

Procedure:

1. Review lesson on family history. Briefly discuss the main ideas so that students will tie it in with the family tree activity for this lesson.
2. Explain to students that today that they are going to develop a family tree with the family names that they have collected. Share with them that the story they are going to hear today discusses families, what makes a family, and what a family is like. Ask them to try and recall the things that the story All Kinds of Families talks about.
3. Guided Discussion. After discussing the story, remind your students that many families are different than others. Ask them some questions in review. Some of the questions you might ask are... What kinds of families were there? Were they all the same? Who made up these different families? Did they have grandparents, parents, cousins, brothers, sisters, aunts or uncles? What makes a family? Do all families have to be biologically related? Do all families keep in close touch with each other? Many students may have a family that isn't traditional. They may include step-mothers and fathers, half brothers and sisters, they may be adopted. Explain that this diversity is great, and that none of them should worry about not being able to do a family tree. They will still be able to do it.

5. Discuss family history and family generations. Explain that parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents are ancestors for your students, and that each one is a different generation. They are the youngest generation of their family and will some day be the ancestors for someone else.
6. Model on the chalkboard or large piece of paper what a family tree is. Use your own family as an example. Begin with you and move to your parents, then grandparents, great-grandparents and so on. Also, model an imaginary family that has a step-parent, brother/sister, foster care, or an adopted child. Show a few different ways they can do it. They may use their biological family if they know their names, or just use their family that they are living with now. Help your students who are doing their family tree with a non-traditional family. If they would like, they may do more than one family tree so that they can include everyone. Be sensitive to their needs.
7. Check for understanding from your students by asking them verbally if they understand what the family tree is and how to do it themselves. If they don't understand, do more examples and let them choose what they need to do with you guiding them carefully.
8. Each student will then use the family tree worksheet and their names to create their own family tree. They need to go back at least three generations, where possible.

Evaluation:

Observation of student family trees going back three generations will identify their understanding of the family tree by what they have created.