# Diversity Activities for Kids II

The following activities are a great way to begin developing a sense of acceptance and appreciation for different cultures in the world around us:

## Create Artwork from Another Culture

One way to learn about other cultures and explore cultural diversity deeper is to have your young children learn about and create artwork from another culture. Art has reflected the core values of different cultures for centuries and is a great way to learn more about other groups of people. Here are a few simple and culturally-rich arts and crafts ideas:

* Dreamcatchers (American-Indian)
* Origami (Japanese)
* Rangoli sand art (Indian)
* Paper mache maracas (Carribean and Latin)

When it comes to arts and crafts from other cultures, the options are seemingly endless. One way to narrow down on art activities is to select a different country or a culture that your child wants to learn more about and find out what culture-filled arts and crafts they take part in themselves!

## Go On Virtual Field Trips

Another great diversity activity for children is going on virtual field trips. Traveling can require quite a bit of time and money, however, with today’s technology, children have the ability to explore the world around them right from their own home.

From YouTube videos to Google Map’s street view feature, your child can see how people live in various parts of the world without leaving their home. A fun way to explore this virtual type of travel is to search for kids travel videos on YouTube, or simply drop a pin anywhere in the world on Google Maps and go for a “virtual walk” through an unfamiliar neighborhood. Not only will this act as a fun way to explore cultural differences, it may even ignite your child’s desire to travel and experience the diversity in the world as they get older.

Cultivating an inclusive classroom environment

This will encourage new connections between classmates (and between you and your students) and help engage students of all backgrounds in learning. Check out these 25 classroom activitiy ideas to foster greater appreciation for diversity.

1. Check Teaching Materials - Review your teaching resources with a critical eye and look for ways to increase diversity. Are you sharing a wide range of books and materials that reflect different voices, backgrounds, experiences and ethnicities? If you are using worksheets, do they use clipart and materials that are inclusive? Review your materials and adjust as needed to fairly represent your students.
2. Host a Cultural Fair - Plan a cultural fair where students can share traditional clothes, cultural food, customs, traditions and more. This is a good opportunity to learn about the differences of cultures to better appreciate other cultures.
3. Browse Your Bookshelf - Are you including books that show different cultures and backgrounds? Look for ways to build a more diverse your book collection.
4. Celebrate Names - You will likely have students with names that originate from other languages that may be difficult for other students to pronounce. Encourage everyone to practice until they correctly pronounce all names. Keep it positive and fun.
5. Rotate Music - Do you play music in the background while students work or for transitions? Create a playlist that showcases music from all over the world. Find bilingual songs children’s songs that can blend international flavor into a song.
6. Travel Around the World - Be intentional about exploring different parts of the world in your learning units. When studying different countries, use appropriate greetings, learn how to write a few words in that language, and even watch some videos of customs from the region. Exploring various parts of the world is important for teaching kids about other cultures.
7. Choose a Pen Pal - Kids can connect with pen pals through programs such as PenPalWorld.com. This is a great way to practice writing and sharing their own experiences while learning about life in another part of the world
8. Create a Collage - Allow students to share who they are with a collage that they create. Students can present their collages and explain why they selected the elements they did or you can display them all on the wall for everyone to enjoy.
9. Make a Passport - Create a passport in the beginning of the year that students fill out with each country they “visit.” This is great practice for when they do get to travel one day and have an actual passport.
10. Take Virtual Field Trips - Take a virtual field trip to another country or a cultural destination. Check out this list with 30 virtual field trips including the Great Wall of China and The Louvre in France!
11. Do Global Art - Tie in an art project to your world studies curriculum or virtual field trips. Have students create art inspired by a piece from The Louvre or construct a great wall out of sugar cubes and popsicle sticks.
12. Get Cooking - Cooking food from different cultures is an incredible, tactile experience where students will learn about the different spices, ingredients and cooking methods used around the world. Discuss dishes from around the world in class and send home recipes for students to make with their families.
13. Create a World Map - Spend time creating a large world map that explores the prominent and unique features of each area. Have each student find information about their family’s origin.
14. Research Money - Many kids enjoy learning about money! Start collecting money from different countries or have students bring in some international forms of currency, if they have access to them from family members. Create a little money museum and allow students to look, feel and respond to questions about each international currency.
15. Create Cultural Art - In this art activity, kids will experience a specific type of cultural art, such as learning origami from Japan, making Native American dreamcatchers, discovering the art of Rangoli sand or doing paper mâché. There are so many types of cultural art to explore!
16. Explore Skin Color - One way to share about differences is to explore skin color. We shouldn’t be afraid to discuss and learn about this topic. Allow students to mix a few paint colors to create different skin tones for decorating characters. Or, have the new skin color markers and crayons available by every art station so students can find the color they feel matches them. Look for ways to include skin color in arts and watch as this simple addition helps more students feel welcome.
17. Poetry - Poetry is a powerful and creative way to share our experiences. Reading and writing poetry, from sonnets to slam, offers a rich opportunity to learn about and express different viewpoints.
18. Celebrate Holidays - Each month, sit down with a calendar and look at the global holidays taking place. Creating a short activity around a few holidays will increase interest and appreciation for other cultures.
19. Encourage Questions - Kids are so perceptive and enjoy asking questions. They’ll often ask great questions that will allow you to be a good example and show respect for all people.
20. Allow for Freedom - One way to encourage students to embrace their individuality is to allow freedom and creativity on projects. Rather than defining every element of a project, give them the opportunity to be creative and personalize their work.
21. Bring in Guests - Reach out to your community and welcome diverse special guests who can share or teach something to the class. Your community is a rich resource that you can draw from to help bring people together.
22. Learn a Language - You don’t need to learn an entire language. Each week focus on a few words from a particular language. Find fun phrases kids can use around the classroom to practice the language.
23. Stand in Someone Else’s Shoes - Help students think about the perspective of someone from a different culture. Ask questions from students on how someone from a different culture might perceive the American culture. As a twist, have students imagine themselves living in a country the class has studied and some of the daily differences and challenges they might encounter.
24. Diversity Through Movement - Explore how people move in different parts of the world such as types of dance, exercise and sports. These activities will also give kids a much-needed brain break as they move their bodies.
25. Play Trivia - Once you’ve learned about a culture, create a trivia game and test the class to see how much they have learned. Hand out prizes for correct answers to help boost the fun and encourage continued learning.

Promote diversity in the classroom with intention and continue to revisit your plans throughout the year. Over time, you’ll be able to transform your curriculum to best reflect your students and the world in which we all live. Creating these opportunities for kids helps them develop a global mindset. These activities will help your students learn and appreciate differences in other people. Have fun incorporating these ideas and allow them to inspire you to come up with even more of your own.