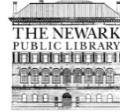




5 Washington Street  
PO Box 630  
Newark, NJ 07101-630



Developed by [Amanda Klein](#),  
Education Outreach Specialist

## Lesson Plan for Grade K-8 (with upper grade level extensions)

### *Summer Lesson Plan #6*

## **Belonging**

### **Overview**

- Students will explore issues of community membership and belonging (inclusion and exclusion) through a fictional example, (Dane Pennerman - a short reading included in this lesson).
- Dane's story provides an opportunity to discuss themes such as conformity, peer pressure, and belonging. These themes will reflect your student own experiences.
- Students will understand what it means to be a member of the Newark community, and how they can help others become or feel like they are members of the Newark community.

### **Learning Goals**

1. Students will be able to define the words victim, perpetrator, bystander, and upstander (community helper), belonging and conformity. This vocabulary helps students think about their roles and relationships within their own communities and can help them recognize the consequences of their own actions or inaction.
2. Students will understand the individual need to be accepted in a community.

### **Materials**

1. Dane Pennerman a short reading
2. basket

### **Activity #1**

1. Have students spend a few minutes writing about times when they have felt included and excluded.

Briefly describe a time when you . . .

- Were included in a community or group: How did this make you feel?

- Were excluded from a community or group: How did this make you feel?
  - Was someone else (friend, family, etc) excluded from a community or group: How did this make you feel?
  - Did something that you thought might be wrong or stupid only because everyone else was doing it: How did this make you feel?
2. Allow students to discuss their answers in small groups or as a class to see if they have had similar experiences.
  3. Ask students to discuss how they think these types of situations should be addressed and by whom (teacher, government official, counselor, police officer, etc.)

### **Activity #2**

1. Have students read Part I: Dane Pennerman's, recollection of an incident in his school cafeteria.
  - The selection can be read as a play or as a regular in class reading.
  - The parts are all relatively short so a short play is possible.
2. After the reading/play students will predict what they think Dane could do to help the situation.
3. Explain to students that Dane's story shows how kids and even adults what to belong and to achieve a sense of belonging, individuals often choose to conform to the norms and behaviors of the group.
4. Ask students:
  - What are Dane's options?
  - Should Dane listen to Hakeem or Roberto?
  - Should Dane join them even though this behavior could be hurtful to others?
5. Allow the students to share their answers in small groups or as a class.

### **Activity #3**

1. Explain to students that if Dane listen's to Roberto he is conforming
2. Define Conformity - Adhering to established customs, religious beliefs, and patterns of behavior.
3. Ask students:
  - a. Can conformity be a good in some cases?
    - maintaining stability and a sense of cohesion
  - b. Can it be a bad in others?

- May lead to a decline especially in times of environmental, economic, or political change.
- War
- Disease
- Famine
- Collapsed economies
  
- A simpler definition can be used for younger students
- Can hurt someone's feelings
- Bullying

#### **Activity #4**

1. Have students predict how this situation might make Dane feel. Allow students to discuss what they think should do before they read about his thoughts on the situation.
2. Allow students to identify the different roles people play in Dane's recollection individually or in groups:
  - victim
  - perpetrator
3. Explain to students others contribute to the prevention or the continuation of injustice.
  - Bystander - someone who witnesses or knows about an act of injustice but chooses not to do anything about it
  - upstander (community helper) - takes steps to prevent or stop this act from continuing
4. Allow students describe the behavior of individuals and groups and identify which character is a victim, perpetrator, bystander, or upstander.
  - Students will note there is no upstander
  - Dane has a choice to be a upstander, bystander, or perpetrator

#### **Activity #5**

1. Have the students read Part II or have a student act out Dane's reflection about the meeting between his friends in the cafeteria.
2. Have students answer the following questions:
  - Dane said, "When did these boundaries go up around me?" Have you noticed such boundaries at your school?
  - When and why do you think divisions between groups occur?
  - What "crowds" exist at your school?
  - Do students socialize across these groups?

- What factors encourage groups in your school to mix? Discourage?
- The author says that “social boundaries are a way to avoid the things we are afraid of, things we may not understand about others.” Do you agree? Why? Or why not?
- What differences keep people in your school apart?

### **Activity #6**

1. Ask students as a class:
  - Why do you think people do nothing even when they know something happening around them is wrong?
  - Can anything be done about it?
  - If a new student moved into the community how might we try and include them in our community/group?
2. Explain to students a welcome basket is something given to new neighbor or guests to make them feel welcomed and they will be creating one to help welcome new students to their community.
3. Welcome Basket – Have students create a welcome basket for new arrivals. Include items like:
  - Important community phone numbers
  - Neighborhood restaurants menus (from their favorite restaurants)
  - Directions to a nearby park
  - A list of things a new student might need to know about their neighborhood
  - Fun places to go in Newark
  - A list of annual events in the neighborhood.

### **Activity #7**

1. Have students pick a moment from their own lives, from history, or from current events where they or someone else felt left out.
2. Have them write a description of the event and then identify the victim, the perpetrators, the bystanders, and the upstanders in their example.
3. Have students identify a moment when they did something to fit in with a group.
4. Ask students to answer the following questions:
  - What did you do?
  - Would you do the same thing again? Why or why not?
  - When can it be useful to conform in order to belong to a group?
  - When can conformity be harmful?

Read or have students act out the reflection below by Dane Pennerman.

PART I

**Narrator:** As Roberto and I entered the cafeteria, I saw my friend Melissa.

**Dane:** "What's up, Melissa?"

**Narrator:** Roberto punched me and said

**Roberto:** "Don't speak to her."

**Dane:** "Why?"

**Roberto:** "She's a Rocker."

**Dane:** "Roberto, she's still my friend."

**Narrator:** As Roberto and I proceeded to the lunch line, I saw my buddy Hakeem.

**Hakeem:** "Hey Dane, come sit with us?"

**Narrator:** Hakeem offered.

**Roberto:** "Go ahead, Dane, I'll catch you later,"

**Narrator:** Roberto said, looking at me blankly.

**Dane:** "No, Roberto you can come to!"

**Narrator:** Roberto looked at Hakeem's table, and said to me,

**Roberto:** "I'll just see you after school, Dane."

1. Is it ok to have friends who are not part of your group? Why? Why not?

**2. Should you try to get all of your friends to get along? Why? Why not?**

**3. Is it ok to ignore your friends if you are with another group? Why? Why not?**

## **Part II**

### **Dane's Thoughts**

Dane (to the audience): All these people were some of my best friends in elementary school. What happened? When did I miss this? When did these boundaries go up around me? And more important, why hadn't I noticed them? Was I trying to pretend that they didn't exist? The close friendships I had cultivated in elementary school were disappearing. All of my friends were now in their own "cliques."

Narrator: The school cafeteria was now divided into Rockers, African Americans, Hispanics, and the Popular Kids.

Dane (to the audience): Why couldn't we all hang out together? Why does Hakeem call me "white boy" when he sees me talking to my Caucasian friends? Why does Roberto only know me between classes? How am I supposed to handle this? I view Hakeem, Melissa, and Roberto as friends, equally. How can I look beyond appearances, when it's the main focus of everyone around me? Am I wrong for not participating in the boundaries my friends create?

Dane (to the audience): Sometimes I try to discuss the issues my friends have with each other. Is there really any basis for the ill feelings? I feel their dislike for each other is unwarranted.

Dane (to the audience ): I have yet to hear valid reasons from anyone. I remember talking to Hakeem. He told me Roberto's not really my friend: "Just because the two of you have a class together and walk in the halls together means nothing. When his Spanish friends come around, he doesn't know you, Dane."