


AMAZEworks Anti-Bias Curriculum Implementation



Mel Andersen
Lesly Gámez
Kate Skappel

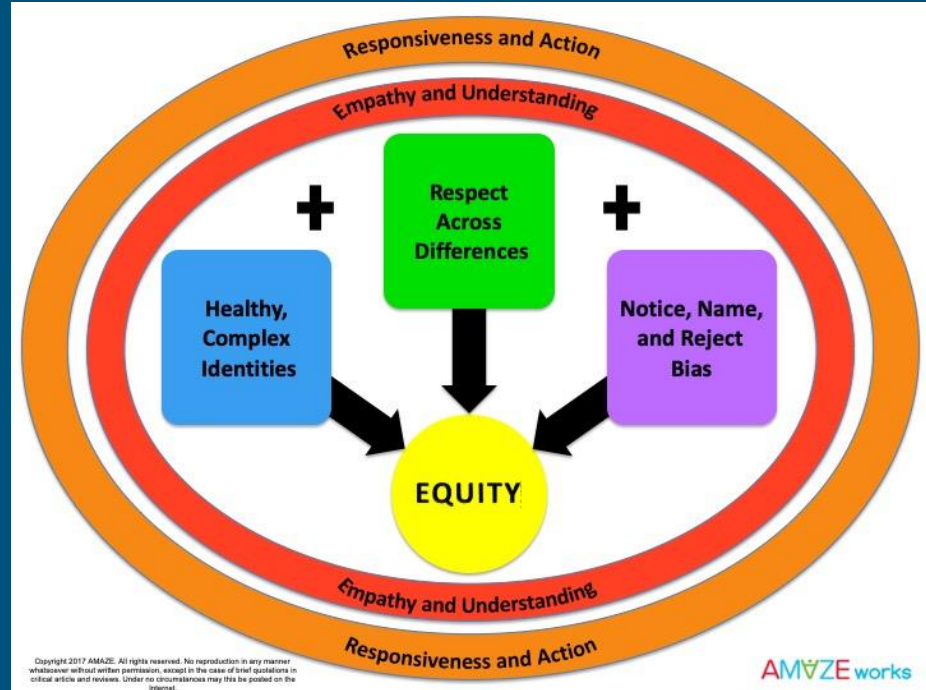
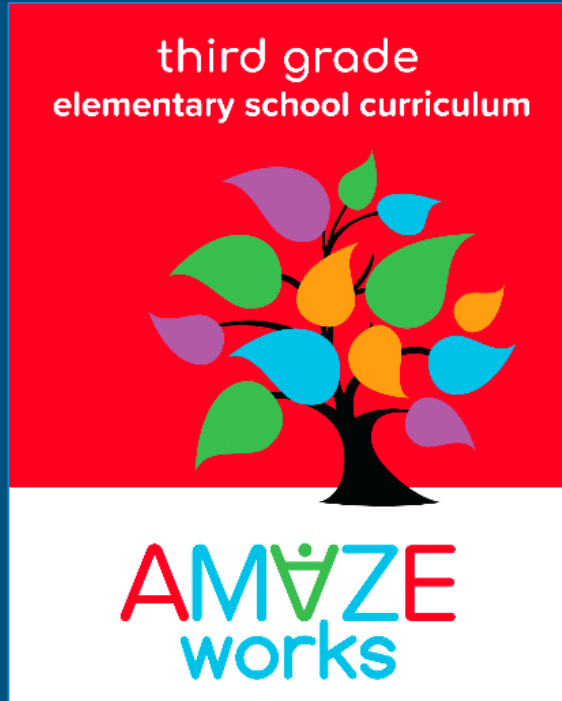


2021-2022 School Year

- Focused on Anti-bias education.
- Directly aligns with Focus Area #2 and our beliefs around Equity from our [Strategic Framework](#).
- We took the tenets of Anti-Bias education and applied them to our own curriculum and adult behaviors.
- Throughout the sessions our presenters shared examples of books and resources they have as a part of the AMAZEworks curriculum.

Based on the feedback from staff, our strategic framework and the recommendations of our equity audit, to systematically include conversations about race, racism, equity, inequity, etc in the curriculum starting in elementary school, we have decided to begin implementing the AMAZEworks resources in our PreK through 4th grade classrooms.

AMAZEworks Elementary Curriculum





Kids who only see themselves in books miss out on seeing things from other viewpoints. And children who rarely see themselves in books miss out on seeing the beauty of their own culture.

Windows: Provide a window into the lives of others.

Mirrors: Provide a mirror that reflects the lives and identities of each child.

Source: Marc Boston, author (<https://marcboston.com/2019/04/mirrors-and-windows-seeing-yourself-and-others-in-the-pages-of-a-story/>)

Identities & Lived Experiences

- Race/Ethnicity
- Religion/Faith
- Disability
- Gender
- Gender Identity
- Sexual Orientation
- Socioeconomics Status
- Immigration/Migration
- Family structure:
 - Adoption
 - Foster Care
 - Divorce/Break Up
- Families Apart
- Incarceration
- Death/Loss/Grief
- Deployment

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Competencies through an Anti-Bias Education Lens



Our Process

- Carefully curated books, written and illustrated from authentic voices as much as possible
- Curriculum created using backwards design
- Discussion questions and journal prompts guided by Six Facets of Understanding Framework (Wiggins and McTighe)
- Task forces of educators, community members, caregivers, and specialists vet and provide feedback on books and lessons
- Anti-Bias Education, Social-Emotional Learning, and literacy alignments

Guidelines for Respectful Discussion

1. **Everyone listens.**
2. **Agree to disagree.** It's okay to have different opinions and perspectives.
3. **Respect each other's personal stories.** It's your choice to share or not. Share only your own story. Everything shared is private, honored, and respected.
4. **Step back / Step forward.** If you rarely share, take a risk. If you share often, make room for someone else.
5. **Be aware of your impact.** Your words or actions might have an unintended impact on someone. Saying, "I didn't mean it," if you hurt someone or make them uncomfortable is not enough. How the other person feels is what matters. If you hurt someone, acknowledge it, and ask what you can do to make things right.

Student Discussion Guidelines

A more in-depth explanation of these guidelines along with considerations for tough conversations can be found in the curriculum guide.

These are also covered in the training teachers will receive prior to implementation.

Identity/Lived Experience Primers

- Ability/Neurodiversity
- American Indian
- Diverse Family Structures
- Gender Diversity
- Immigration/Migration
- Racial Identity/Racism
- Religion/Faith
- Socioeconomic Status

One written and illustrated by Kathryn Otoshi

Identities & Themes

- Feelings
- School success
- Standing up for self/ others

Teacher Reflection Questions

1. What is your experience with bullying behavior (teasing, mistreatment, and exclusion)?
2. How can you help children understand how to safely intervene when they see someone else being mistreated?
3. How do you feel about giving others a second chance? How can you and your students find a way to give each other second chances?

Background Information for Teacher

This book gives teachers and students the opportunity to discuss an all-too-common situation in which a child is subjected to bullying behavior that others notice but don't know how to respond to. It shows students what it's like to be on the receiving end of bias-based mistreatment, offering an opportunity to build more empathy and understanding and respect across differences. It also shows students what it's like to give others a second chance to show who they really are.

Bullying is used to describe teasing or physical, verbal, or emotional harassment behaviors that create mental, emotional, or physical harm. It is important to talk with your students about how these behaviors are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Encourage students to talk to a trusted adult if they see those behaviors, whether they are directed at themselves or others.

At AMAZEworks, we encourage teachers and school leaders to try to understand mean and teasing behavior by examining the reason behind the behavior. We encourage educators to stop using the word "bully" when referring to a child. When we label a child as a bully, we miss an important opportunity to see the whole child and address the purpose of the behavior. In addition, the label of "bully" can stick with a child and can often become a self-fulfilling prophecy as adults and peers look to confirm their negative biases of that child. (Read more from the AMAZEworks blog.) Describing the behavior rather than giving a child a label encourages school success identities and helps children discover empathy and kindness.

Anti-Bias Education Tenets & Social-Emotional Learning Competencies

- Empathy & Understanding
- Healthy Complex Identities
- Respect Across Differences
- Notice, Name, & Reject Bias
- Responsiveness & Action

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
- Social Awareness
- Responsible Decision Making
- Relationship Skills

Identify

- Feelings & needs
- Strengths in self, community, & culture
- Relationship between feelings, thoughts, & behaviors

Demonstrate & Practice

- Resilience in the face of obstacles
- Regulating one's emotions
- Compassion for self
- Awareness of strengths in self & others
- Considering the well-being of self & others
- Recognizing one's responsibility to behave ethically

Healthy, Complex Identities

ABE Foundations

Read this to the students before reading the book:

Blue is a quiet color, and Red is a hot head who likes to pick on Blue. The other colors don't like it when Red picks on Blue, but they don't know what to do about it. Listen to see what happens when One comes along and takes a stand.

Discussion Questions (essential questions bolded)

1. **We don't know why Red acted the way he did. What things might have been happening in Red's life that caused him to make these choices? What might have happened if someone had asked Red if he was okay?**
2. Sometimes we hear that someone who is being teased should stand up for themselves like One did. This doesn't always work. Share some of the reasons why.
3. **Most of the time mistreatment stops if a friend of another child steps in. Why do you think the other colors didn't step in to help Blue?**
4. When no one stepped in to stop Red, what happened to Red? What happened to the rest of the colors?
5. **Can you think of things the other colors could have done to help in this situation? (HINT: You can lead the students to talk about non-confrontational ways they could step in, such as ask Red to join in doing something other than picking on Blue; ask Blue to join their group and protect him from Red; tell Red as a group that they would like to all be friends; ask an adult for help.)**
6. **At the end of the book, Blue invited Red to join the group. Why do you think Blue did that? How do you think that will affect the way Red acts in the future?**
7. What agreements could we make as a classroom that might prevent something like this from happening?

Journal Prompts & Extension Activities

1. Tell about a time when you felt or acted like one of the colors in this book. What happened? How did you feel?
2. Sometimes we make up our minds about who someone is based on a mistake they made. Tell what you think Red's life would have been like if they weren't given a second chance to be nice? How can we make sure we give each other second chances?
3. **Interactive Read Aloud:** Invite seven students to act out the characters in the book. Provide these colors of paper plates or paper with the following numbers on one side:
 - Blue: six
 - Yellow: two
 - Green: three
 - Purple: four
 - Orange: five
 - Red: seven
 - White: one

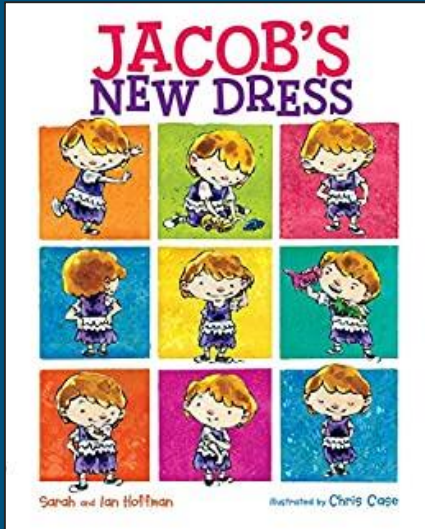
As you read the book aloud again, have students silently act out the characters using facial expressions, body language, and movement and holding up the color only side of their plate/paper (except One, who should always show their number). When it's time for the colors to count, students should turn over their plate/paper to show the number. You can do this activity multiple times, perhaps on different days, with different students acting it out to give all students a chance to be an actor and show different ways of portraying each character.



Literacy Connections

- Realistic Fiction
- Identify theme or main message
- Character point of view
- Using illustrations/pictures/photos to gain information
- Make text connections (to self, text, the world)

Gender Identity and Expression in Kindergarten



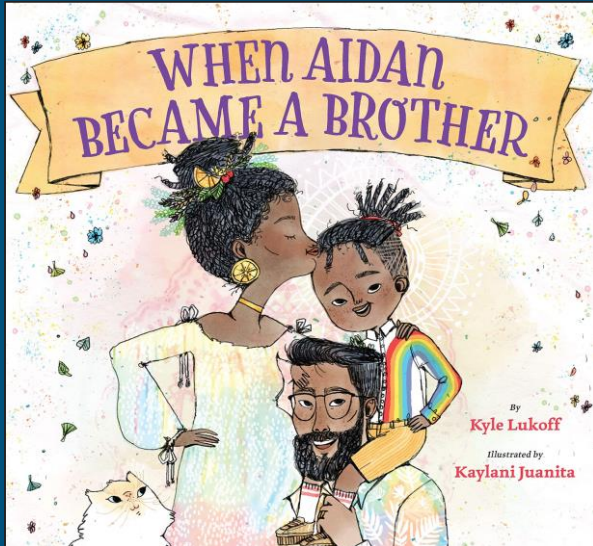
Description of the book:

This is a story about Jacob. For a while, Jacob gets teased about something. But after getting help from his mom and his friend, he finds a way to stand up for himself.

Discussion Questions:

1. Some people reacted pretty strongly when Jacob was wearing a dress. (Christopher told him he should wear something different; the teacher thought maybe he should pretend to be something different; his mom was quiet, and his dad said, "Well, it's not what I would wear.") Why do you think they reacted in these ways?
2. How do you think Jacob felt about those reactions?
3. How do you think he felt when his mom helped him make a new dress?
4. Has anyone ever told you that you shouldn't play something or wear something because of something about you, like being a boy or girl or how you look or sound? How did that feel? How did you respond?
5. Some people helped Jacob when he was told he shouldn't wear a dress. Who helped Jacob? (Emily, his mom, and Jacob himself) How did they help?
6. How do you think Jacob felt when people helped him?
7. Who do you get help from when people tease you?
8. Who do you get help from when you see someone else being teased or hurt?

Gender Identity and Expression in 2nd Grade



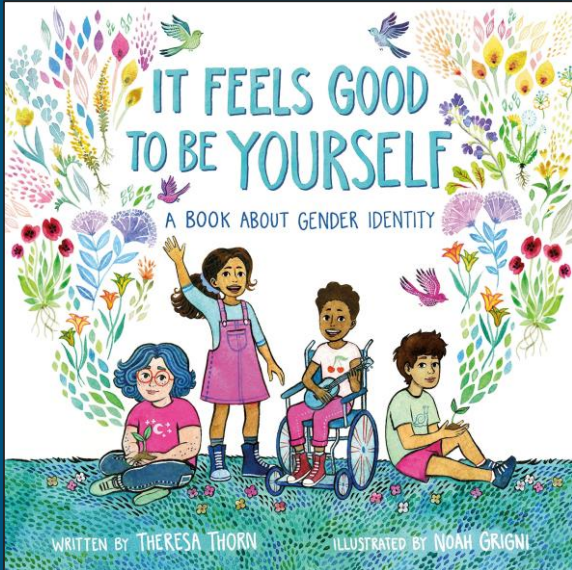
Description of the book:

When Aidan was born, everyone thought he was a girl. When Aidan told his parents he felt more like a boy, they were responsive and fixed things in his life so they fit him better. Now, Aidan's parents are about to have another baby, and Aidan is very concerned with getting everything right for his new sibling. He shows he knows how to love and be a big brother through his preparations and considerations for the new baby.

Discussion Questions:

1. How did Aidan and his parents know he was really a boy? What did Aidan's parents do after they realized this?
2. What did Aidan do to prepare for the baby? Why was Aidan worried?
3. What preparations did Aidan and his parents make in order to make sure they didn't misgender the baby and they could grow up to be whoever they are?
4. How does Aidan advocate for himself and his identity? How do Aidan's parents do this, too?
5. The book says, "Maybe everything wouldn't be perfect for this baby. Maybe he would have to fix mistakes he didn't even know he was making. And maybe that was okay." When have you had to fix a mistake? What did you do? How did it feel before and after?
6. When has someone made a mistake about you? What did you do? How did you respond?

Gender Identity and Expression in 4th Grade



Description of the book:

Gender is personal, and it is part of our identity. People experience gender in many different ways. This book explains some of the many different ways people experience gender and how they may identify.

Discussion Questions:

1. What does it mean to be cisgender? Transgender? Non-binary? Both a boy and a girl? Neither a boy nor a girl?
2. The book says, “There are a never-ending number of ways to be yourself in the world.” What does this mean to you?
3. Have there been times when people confused your racial or ethnic identity (or perhaps another part of your identity like ability or age) for another? How did you feel when that happened? How do you think people who are not cisgender feel when others call them by the incorrect gender pronoun?
4. How might someone feel when they realize the adults guessed their gender wrong as a baby?
5. What's a respectful way to ask another person about their gender pronouns? What if you or someone else makes a mistake in identifying your or someone else's gender and accidentally uses incorrect pronouns. What can you do?

Training and Implementation

- Three year opt-in implementation as a Training Academy course. (22-23, 23-24, 24-25)
- Teachers receive a \$700 stipend for Training Academy
- Teachers may complete an Action Research project for an additional \$700.
- Teachers will receive the curriculum materials for their classroom.
- Teachers may opt in and participate in the Training Academy course for the 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 school year.
- Those who do not opt in during Training Academy will receive the materials and training will happen during the school day during the 2024-2025 school year.

Questions?
