

BALANCING THE GOOD AND THE BAD

Lesson for Upper Elementary Students

Purpose:

To give children an opportunity to investigate some of the bad and hateful things that happen in society as well as good or helpful things that people do to fight hate.

Materials Needed:

8½" x 11" construction paper (two colors), markers, tape

Time:

20–30 minutes

Directions:

1. Prior to this activity, using two different colors of construction paper, cut in half equal numbers of each color so that half of the students will have a half-sheet of one color (color A) and the other half will have the other color (color B).
2. Introduce the activity by sharing with the class that sometimes bad and hateful things happen in the world that can sometimes hurt people. Explain that we are going to think about some of those things, but we will also think about some of the good and helpful things people do to fight hate.
3. Distribute the construction paper half sheets. Explain that each student with color A should work independently to list some of the bad things that have happened in the world that they have either heard or know about. Explain that the each student with color B will work independently to list some of the specific things people do that help people and communities when bad or hateful things happen. Provide five minutes for students to create their lists.
4. After students have completed their lists, provide another five minutes for students to pair up (a color A and a color B) and share their lists. Provide each pair with tape to fasten the two pieces of paper together, and invite them to post their papers around the room.
5. Lead a brief whole group discussion, using the questions below.
 - a. What were some of your feelings as you created your list?
 - b. How did your feelings change when you joined with a partner to share the different lists of the hurtful things and the helpful things?
 - c. What ideas do you have for responding to bad or hateful incidents in our school or community?