

This packet contains

Free Preschool Lesson Plans

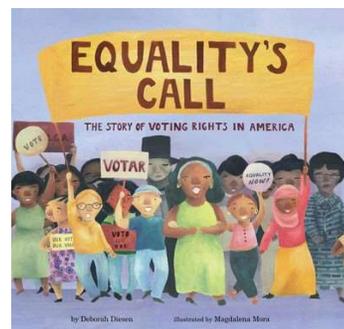
on the topics of

- Feelings & Fairness • Voting •
- Election Day • MLK Jr. Day •

This packet contains four free preschool lesson plans to support active student learning about fairness, democracy, and voting.

Created by early childhood educator Karen Keesling, the lesson plans use *Equality's Call* and other picture books to help students explore important civics concepts as well as SEL competencies.

The lesson plans can be used individually or as a series. The four plans are centered on feelings and emotions, and on the theme of fairness.



Topics covered are:

1. Feelings and Fairness
2. Voting
3. Election Day
4. MLK Jr. Day

Each plan includes virtual learning adaptations. An appendix provides suggestions for singing *Equality's Call*, an activity included in Lesson Plans 2 and 3.

You may make modifications to the lesson plans to tailor the plans to your students' needs. If you would prefer a Word document (rather than this PDF), please just email to request that.

We welcome your feedback on these lesson plans. We'd love to hear about your students' responses to the activities, as well as your comments and suggestions. Please send your feedback and input to deborah@deborahdiesen.com

Thank you!

Preschool Lesson Plan 1: Feelings and Fairness

Lesson Plan created by Karen Keesling

1. Target Grade/Subject
PK-Social/Emotional development
2. Common Core Standards
NYSLS PK SED: 2)b
Appropriately names types of emotions (e.g., frustrated, happy, excited, sad) and associates^[1]_{SEP} them with different facial expressions, words and behaviors.
NYS CC LS: ELA, Key Ideas & Details: 1)a
With prompting and support, ask and answer about detail(s) in a text.
3. Learning Objective (s)
Students will appropriately identify how they feel when something seems unfair or they were angry
4. Assessment (s)
The teacher will gauge participation and understanding by using a combination of techniques (e.g. modeling, questioning/observation, note-taking).
5. Description of Learning Activities:
Introductory Activity (Connection)
Teacher will read any text they have about emotions (*The Color Monster* by Anna Llenas, *The Way I Feel* by Janan Cain, *The Feelings Book* by Todd Parr, *Sometimes I'm Bombaloo* by Rachel Vail etc).

Teaching Point and Modeling

Teacher will ask children to turn their faces into the emotion being described.
Teacher will model. If book only has one emotion teacher will ask children to show that emotion every time it's mentioned.

Conferring Small group Work

In small or whole group discussion, teacher will ask children to turn and talk and discuss if they remember a time when they felt angry or that something wasn't fair.
Teacher will ask children to discuss what helped them to stop feeling that way.
Teacher will go around and check in with each group.

Guided Practice (Active Engagement)

Teacher will call on groups who volunteer to share their experiences and make a PK-appropriate chart of strategies to use when angry-a cool down chart (with shared pictures/shared letter writing, or having students illustrate their own pages which will later become a class book, whatever is appropriate for your class level). Teacher can keep up chart or make class book available in class library throughout the year for children to refer to. Teacher can also use it to preemptively prompt children during days they know may be tough (e.g. rainy days or days with big schedule changes) etc. Throughout year, teacher and class can refer to strategies and see if they change or if different ones work best for different students.

Virtual Learning Adaptations

Teacher can still do read-aloud online and look for child engagement by way of them making faces that reflect the emotion highlighted in the book. Instead of turn and talk, ask children to jump up and down or raise a hand if they want to share about a time they felt angry and what made them feel better. Teacher can take notes as children speak and then generate document to send to parents to show strategies that help their children, teacher can also save this document to use for reference later. Teacher can ask children to draw a picture or send in a photo of them showing different emotion and create PDF file for parents to print out to keep as a book at home.

Teacher Note

We often want to help our students to feel better and while this lesson focuses on how they can take ownership of that, it's also important to note how important it is to just create a space for them to discuss their emotions without being rushed to resolve them. Modeling and allowing space for frequent discussions around emotions will help them develop the skills and practice they need to ultimately resolve them.

A lot of work has been done on the benefits of meditation in the classroom to help calm anxiety and anger. There are many free programs out there like Inner Explorer, or Sesame Street's Belly Breathe song with Colby Caillat and Elmo, which are geared for PK aged children.

Preschool Lesson Plan 2: Voting

Lesson Plan created by Karen Keesling

1. Target Grade/Subject
PK/ELA & Literacy, Math
2. Common Core Standards
Print Concepts 1d) Recognize and name some upper/ lowercase letters of the alphabet, especially those in own name.
Counting & Cardinality:
Count to tell the number of objects
Compare numbers
3. Learning Objective (s)
Students will participate in block voting to decide which center should be open at the end of the week
4. Assessment (s)
The teacher will gauge participation and understanding by using a combination of techniques
5. Description of Learning Activities:
Introductory Activity (Connection)
Teacher will announce that since their discussion about fairness/anger, she has been thinking that it's not fair that (s)he is the one who decides what centers and materials are out all the time since the children are the ones who use them. (S)he will introduce the concept of voting to make a decision on what special materials/center will be open at the end of the week. Teacher will refer to chart of strategies of what helps when someone is angry/unfair to ask children what should they do if the option they vote for isn't the one with the most votes.

Teaching Point and Modeling

Teacher will show the tray of blocks (s)he has from the block area in front of her/him and say when (s)he holds up student's name tag, that student should come and take a block and place it under which center/material they want open (teacher can ask for suggestions from class prior to vote, or give two options that they pick at least for the first vote). Teacher can use the objects (e.g. a doll from dramatic play area or a brush if it's a special paint) and model putting a block underneath one of them.

Guided Practice (Active Engagement)

Teacher will hold up child's nametag and that child will come up and place a block under their choice. As children cast their votes, teacher can ask class what they notice. At the end, class should count number of blocks decide which one has more. Teacher can rearrange blocks flat, stack them high, put them long to show different ways of representing vote. If there's a tie, teacher can ask class how to solve it. Teacher can also ask class what they can do with the choice that wasn't selected. This can be done on a weekly basis or spread out to create more enthusiasm so children gain experience with voting. Teacher can change the way voting is done (privately, as a center during center time, public like in front of the class, also the activity can change, e.g. vote on new play dough color, new book to read etc.) Teacher should ask children how they felt voting, and why.

Virtual Learning Adaptations

Teacher can lead class in vote by holding child's name up to the screen and when it's that child's turn, turn on that child's microphone and let them say their vote for (book of the week that teacher will read, guest puppet appearance, what recipe to send home e.g. slime or play dough or a silly day that the class can have etc.). Teacher will type that child's name under the selection they picked and ask class if they notice anything, as one column gets longer. If there's a tie, teacher can ask children how they should solve it and what to do about the one choice that wasn't picked. Teacher should ask children how they felt voting and why.

Teacher Note

For block voting, some classrooms have printed out (small scale) photos of the students and taped them onto the blocks so each child has his/her special voting block throughout the year.

For further discussion on feelings around voting, teacher can do a read/sing aloud or picture book walk of *Equality's Call*. Try to use illustrations to have children guess how the different people are feeling in the book.

Preschool Lesson Plan 3: Election Day

Lesson Plan created by Karen Keesling

1. Target Grade/Subject
PK-Social/Emotional development
2. Common Core Standards
NYS CC LS: ELA, Key Ideas & Details: 1)a
With prompting and support, ask and answer about detail(s) in a text.
3. Learning Objective (s)
To Learn about the importance of Election Day and voting
4. Assessment (s)
The teacher will gauge participation and understanding by using a combination of techniques (e.g. question/observing, taking notes)
5. Description of Learning Activities:
Introductory Activity (Connection)
Teacher will first do a picture walk of *Equality's Call* and see what children notice.
Teacher will then either sing *Equality's Call* or read the book.

Teaching Point and Modeling

Teacher will point out that today is Election Day and ask children what happens on Election Day, what they know about it and why is it important.

Guided Practice (Active Engagement)

Students will make stickers for each other on name labels for voting. Teacher will then take a block polling station (have children cast one block under yes or no column in a private space set up with a sheet or cardboard-someway so others can't see) to see if any children have gone with their parents to vote/or saw the mail in ballot. Teacher will hand out stickers to each child after they have voted.

Virtual Learning Adaptations:

Teacher can do picture walk or sing/read aloud online and then show photos of voting booths, polling stations and lines for voting. Ahead of time, send a mail-in ballot to each student's house and have them vote on a class topic. On Election Day, count out the ballots with the kids online. Discuss how it felt to mail in a ballot and vote.

Teacher Note

For added engagement (if possible) teacher can have children see voting booth set up the day before Election Day as an in-school field trip. If not possible show photos of people lining up to vote and what a voting booth looks like.

Really focus on the emotions behind voting. How does it feel when you show the way you think through voting? How does it feel if the person you want to be president doesn't win? Should we not vote at all? Should everyone have to vote? Why/Why not? Explain that we still have a lot of work to do, that it's everyone's job to make things fairer.

Preschool Lesson Plan 4: MLK Jr. Day

Lesson Plan created by Karen Keesling

1. Target Grade/Subject
PK/ELA
2. Common Core Standards
3. Learning Objective (s)
To learn about the history of the Civil Rights Movement and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
4. Assessment (s)
The teacher will gauge participation and understanding by using a combination of techniques (e.g. modeling, questioning/observation, guided practice, oral responding, independent practice, etc.). She will then confer with or offer support to 1-2 students and take anecdotal notes with regards to the lesson objective and students' individual goals.

5. Description of Learning Activities:

Introductory Activity (Connection)

It is recommended that teachers spend time days before the actual day reading the stories of *The Story of Martin Luther King Jr.* by Johnny Ray Moore, *Equality's Call* and *This Little Trailblazer* (Rosa Parks Page) by Joan Holub and explain how today is Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday and we celebrate how he helped change the rules to make them more fair.

Teaching Point and Modeling

Teacher should pull out points that weren't fair and try to have children imagine if those were still true today (e.g. couldn't sit wherever you like on the bus, couldn't go to the same school together if skin color was different).

Guided Practice (Active Engagement)

As a whole group, have students act out the story of Rosa Parks not giving up her seat on the bus, and leading into protests.

Conferring Small group Work

Ask students what's their favorite parts of the story and why. If applicable explain that protests are another tool that people use to make things fair. Explain how

things still aren't fair today and so a lot of people are using protests to try to change the rules just like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the rest of the civil rights movement.

Virtual Learning Adaptation

Instead of acting out the civil rights movement, as a whole class, show the video clips and read the books in the Teacher's Note below and discuss as a class what they would say to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr./Rosa Parks/Ruby Bridges and why. How would they feel to be a part of the movement and why?

Teacher Note:

Inevitably students are curious to know what happened and why Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. isn't alive anymore. You can judge for yourself how comfortable you and your class are in discussing it (it is a very scary reality that unfortunately is still possible and that many children might very well have already discussed with their families today). You can just create space for students discuss their ideas about what happened and how they feel. Try to let the children talk as much as possible, with you just listening/facilitating.

For added engagement (and vet for appropriateness) show online video clips of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have A Dream Speech", and the Montgomery bus protests. You can also explain that it's not only adults who fight to make changes (read about Ruby Bridges, children's march in Oakland for Black Lives Matter, show videos of Greta Thornberg etc.).

Appendix: Singing *Equality's Call*

Notes from Karen Keesling

Benefits of music in the classroom:

Early Childhood Educators often joke that their classrooms are like musicals. There are songs for everything from cleaning up to sitting down to saying goodbye, but all of this is practiced with good reason.

Music, chants and songs not only help with word recall (which is great for early literacy and language development especially, for children for whom English is a second or third language), but also reduce anxiety¹, help children's brains develop faster² and help children learn in so many other areas (such as math, gross and fine motor skills, emotional and social skills). If you think back to how you learned the alphabet (a random bunch of words that don't have meaning when you can't read) your first memory is probably singing the song. Music is linked to emotional memory which lasts forever. As children develop fluency and new vocabulary, it frees them up to tackle the hardest part of reading, comprehension. Yet music helps with comprehension too. If you think to the Star Spangled Banner, the crescendos at "the rockets red glare, the bombs bursting in air" help give meaning to the idea of something up high.

Similarly, many children experience different learning styles. Music can employ many styles; reading lyrics or seeing a book/illustrations made of a song stimulates visual learners. Hearing a melody/or song helps aural learners. Singing the song itself will benefit oral learners and dancing or doing hand movements will appeal kinesthetic learners. Music incorporates multi modal learning and often combines many of these different learning styles which will allow many students to access the content better.

But....I'm not musical and can't carry a tune:

It's scary to put yourself out there, but given the benefits of music in the classroom it's a shame to forego using it. No one is saying to go out and perform karaoke, but singing in front of your students may help your perfectionist students to know that it's okay to try things, even if you're not the best at them.

Besides helping to model for them, young children are egocentric, meaning they're thinking more about themselves than how you sound. We're often our own worst critics, be kind to yourself. You can always work your way up to singing. There are many books that are made out of songs already (e.g. *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom*, *Puff the Magic Dragon*, *This Land is Your*

¹ <https://www.ucf.edu/pegasus/your-brain-on-music/>

² <https://news.usc.edu/102681/childrens-brains-develop-faster-with-music-training/>

Land etc.). You can play the songs for your students and show them the book in time with the music. You can also pick books that are in rhyme or when you read them, naturally have great rhythm or a call and response built into them (e.g. *The Pout Pout Fish*, *Max Found Two Sticks*, *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* etc.). Then as you get more comfortable try using common tunes to chants or your intended learning points (e.g. Happy Birthday melody for months of the 12 months of the year or Skip To My Lou to count how many fingers on two hands etc.).

Lastly, if you're uncomfortable with singing then try chanting. The rhythm and beat will still help give many of the benefits of musical learning. You can have your children make up dance moves or hand movements to go with it to enhance comprehension (especially for you English Language Learners). The most important thing is that it should be fun and spark joy for you and your students!

So...why this melody for *Equality's Call*:

Like the Star Spangled Banner example above, the melody is designed to help give meaning to the words. The slowing down before the refrain of "a right isn't right" and the chanting part of it are to help draw attention to the importance of those lines and mimic protest calls.

Go ahead, give it a try!