



Same, but little bit diff'rent

by Kylie Dunstan

Right up the very top of Australia there is a special place. My friend Normie comes from there, and says that things are different to what you might see in the city.

This book is not only a visual delight; it is a heart-warming story with a meaningful theme. *Same but Little Bit Diff'rent* is a celebration of people, of cultures, of lifestyles, of traditions, of likenesses, and of differences. Kylie Dunstan invites readers to look past obvious physical differences, and instead seek the similarities they share with people of different cultures or regions.



Family, weather, pets, food and having fun are all compared as Normie chats with his friend.

Key Message for Parents

The First Five Years Lasts A Lifetime

- The brain is far more impressionable (plastic) in early life than in adulthood. This means that young children's brains are very open to learning but it also means that they are vulnerable to negative experiences.
- Young children need secure relationships, rich learning opportunities, positive role models and safe environments to develop to their full potential.
- During the preschool years, children form many of the ideas about the world that will stay with them for their entire lives. Helping children learn to feel positive about themselves and others can also help them develop comfort with human differences.
- Researchers have discovered that social and emotional development is connected to and is as equally important as intellectual development.

Learning Outcomes

Outcome One: Children have a strong sense of identity

Children develop knowledgeable and confident self-identities.

Educators promote this learning when they

- Promote in all children a strong sense of who they are and their connectedness to others – a shared identity as Australians.
- Listen to and learn about children's understandings of themselves.
- Talk with children in respectful ways about similarities and differences in people.

Welcome

Ask carers to write name tags for themselves and their children. **(optional)**

Welcome everyone, introduce yourself, remind adults to turn their mobile phones off and remind them that there will be time for adults to chat after the story and songs.

Sing

Welcome Song (or your preferred song)

Have the words available as a handout or written on a board or butcher's paper for the adults to read and join in.

*Good morning to you
Good morning to you*

*Good morning everybody
And welcome to you!*



Welcome Song (continued)

Prepare 3 or 4 ways of saying hello in another language on some card, laminate them and place a Velcro tab on the back for use on a felt board. Do the same for a photograph of a child who represents that country. If you have children from other cultural backgrounds attending your Story Time it would be great to prepare some of these in advance.

Start by saying (for example); "We just sang our good morning song using English language but did you know that we can sing hello using another language? If we lived in China we would say Ni Hao (Nee How) Can you say that with me? Let's sing it in our song".

Ni Hao to you
Ni Hao to you
Ni Hao everybody
Ni Hao to you!



In some parts of Australia Kuarna (Garna) children would say Nina Marni to say hello. Let's say, then sing these words together

Nina Marni to you
Nina Marni to you
Nina Marni everybody
Nina Marni to you!

To respect the diversity of cultures that may exist within your group and to develop a sense of belonging and connectedness, invite suggestions from the children or parents in your group (and follow these up with laminated cards for use at another time and/or a display in your library).

Share the key message with parents and thank them for coming to share this special Story Time at your library. Remind them that as their child's first teacher, they are very powerful role models in helping children learn, understand, develop and demonstrate the positive social behaviours of acceptance, tolerance and respect for themselves and others.

Another way to ensure diversity in children's lives is to choose toys, books and media that reflect all types of people (e.g., include images of people with a variety of backgrounds, ages, abilities, characters that break stereotypes about men and women).

Share stories of people—family members, historical figures, or contemporary role models that embrace your cultural heritage. Expose your child to different things. Take your child to a cultural festival so they can see and experience cultural differences. Unusual foods, interesting customs, different types of music and dances can be a way a child develops interest in and acceptance of people of different races/cultures.

It can be less threatening for some children to meet people who are different, first in a book. Issues surrounding differences can be discussed in terms of the characters in the book. Then you can broaden the discussion to include children in the group or people in the community.



During reading

You could begin by showing the children a globe of the earth and asking them what they can tell you about it. You might like to record their 'brainstorming ideas' on some butcher's paper. Do they know what country they live in? Choose a child to find Australia on the globe.

Next, show them a large map of Australia and ask what can they tell you about it? Do they know whereabouts on the map they live (can someone show you?)

Continue by saying that today you will share a story about a little boy named Normie, who lives at the top of Australia and his friend who lives in a city, somewhere else in Australia. Explain that the two friends like to do the same kind of things but because of how and where they live, they do these things a little bit differently.

Show them the cover of the book; what can they see? What is different about these children? (Encourage them to look more closely than skin colour; look at facial features and clothing). Can they think of anything that is the same? (eg they are both children, they have 2 eyes, legs, arms etc).

Tell them the name of the book and author.

Open the book to view the inside cover – can they see anything that is the same here (ie that the 2 children are splashing in puddles).

During reading

Look for opportunities to use the illustrations to draw attention to the similarities and differences between the two characters in order to stimulate thinking and to promote discussion. For example: "Both children like swimming but where do you think Normie's friend is swimming?" or "Normie's friend plays inside when it rains, I wonder where Normie goes – what do you think he plays?"

Follow this up by asking what the children in your group like to do when it rains. Where and what do they play?

After reading

Invite the children to reflect upon the story. What were some of the things that Normie and his friend did that were the same? What was different about them? You could record the children's responses on butcher's paper.

Doing this not only helps the children make the connection between the spoken and written word, but it is also a way for children to feel that their ideas are valued.

Children's finger-play - I am Different

I am different from my head to my toes
(point to self then to head and toes)

I am different from my eyes to my nose
(point to self then eyes and nose)

I come from a place that is far and wide
(point to self then spread arms wide open)

A place where we all smile instead of cry
(act like you are tracing your lips into a smile
and bring hands down eyes as if you were crying)

I am very different as you can see
(point to self then at a friend)

But I still have a lot of love in me!
(point to self place hand over the heart then hug yourself)



Activity Time- LBBC - Spot the difference

Match the cards – are they exactly the same?

You will need:

- LBBC Activity Time Template
- Pencils, textas, paint, etc
- Scissors.

Instructions:

- Decorate the template
- Cut out the cards
- Place cards face up and pick the two that belong together.



Activity Time - Make an Identity poster: - About me! (example below)

My name is	Draw self here	My favourite animal is
I am . years old		
I was born in		
I live in		
My eye colour is		
My hair colour is		
My favourite food is		My favourite colour is
There are __ people in my family		My friends are
I like to play		

Using good quality A3 paper, to create a template that asks the children to think about what makes them unique. Leave a space in the middle for them to draw a picture of themselves and they may like to add their hand prints at the bottom. You may like to place some mirrors on the tables so that the children can look at their facial features. Encourage the children to write their own name and age if they can and ask the adults to scribe their other responses.

If you have time, you could share some of the posters with the group before they go home. Comment on whether all children like the same colour or animal etc or are there differences?

You could make a display of the posters at your library, or laminate and bind the pages into a book.

Goodbye -conclude the session with books suggestions that parents may want to borrow explore similarities and differences;

The Hueys by Oliver Jeffers

Same, Same But Different by Jenny Sue Kostecki-Shaw

The Rainbow Stick Boy by Michael Santolini, Kate Santolini

Whoever You Are by Mem Fox

It's Okay To Be Different by Todd Parr

Goodbye Song - depending on the size of your group, you may wish to insert each child's name in the last line rather than 'library friends' as it develops a more personal relationship between yourself, the child and the family.

This is the way we say goodbye (use a waving action)

Say goodbye, say goodbye

This is the way we say goodbye

To all our library friends (or) (to our friend.....)

Just as you did for the greeting, end your Story Time by singing the word goodbye in another language eg in Kuarna (garna) it is Nakkota, in Chinese Mandarin it is Zai jian (Zigh jen).