



Positive Youth Development ***Appreciating Diversity***

VRKC: Volunteer Research Knowledge Competency Taxonomy

Intended Audience:

4-H volunteers

Learning Outcomes:

- Volunteers will describe diversity, multiculturalism, and culture and why they are important to 4-H volunteer work.
- Volunteers will be able to describe their personal awareness and understanding of diversity and multiculturalism.
- Volunteers will describe how to handle teachable moments that will help youth appreciate diversity.

Time:

20 – 30 minutes

Supplies Needed:

- Pencils and paper
- Markers and flip chart paper
- Power Point, Computer and LCD Projector
- Handouts and Evaluations

Do Ahead:

Prepare handouts.

Author:

Sue Pleskac, Professor, Volunteer Leadership Specialist, and Annie Lisowski, Associate Professor, 4-H Youth Development Agent, University of Wisconsin-Extension

Editor:

Sue Pleskac, Professor, Volunteer Leadership Specialist, University of Wisconsin-Extension

Volunteerism for the Next Generation:

<http://nextgeneration.4-h.org/volunteerism/>

4-H National Headquarters:

<http://www.national4-h.org/>

INTRODUCTION

Diversity is a word that describes the differences among people. Multiculturalism is seeing, understanding, and finding good in cultural differences. Culture includes values, beliefs, and ways of thinking and speaking that a group develops to survive in a particular environment. Appreciating differences and developing multicultural awareness starts with each individual. By building and strengthening these skills, volunteers and youth provide the foundations for developing capable competent citizens, a primary goal of 4-H youth development programs. (Power Point Slides 1, 2)

WHAT TO DO

Activity 1: Personal Self Reflection

Distribute Handout 1. Have participants work individually to write their responses to the self-assessment reflection open-ended sentences. Bring the group together. If people are comfortable, ask them to respond to these questions: Were there any statements that really gave you pause and maybe provided you with some new insights into yourself and how you see others? How could understanding your personal attitudes toward differences in others affect your volunteer work with youth? What ways have you found to describe diversity or multiculturalism to a friend?

Culture is deeply engrained into our understanding and beliefs of who we are as individuals. Think of culture as an iceberg. (Power Point Slide 3) Many of our values and beliefs can be visible to others, while other elements of culture are within us.

Activity 2: Culture is an Iceberg

Distribute Handout 2. Ask participants to consider each element identified and write it in the iceberg, either above the water line (visible to others) or below (elements within you). Ask participants to share their responses. What items were easy to place? Are there similarities in where people placed the elements? Are there differences of opinion in where to place elements? Why is it important to understand how we view our personal cultures? How will understanding how others demonstrate their culture help us work more effectively with youth and other volunteers?



Volunteerism for the Next Generation



VRKC: Volunteer Research Knowledge Competency Taxonomy for 4-H Youth Development:

<http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/comm/vrkc.pdf>

VRKC Research and Design Team:

Ken Culp III, Ph.D., University of Kentucky

Renee K. McKee, Ph.D., Purdue University

Patrick Nestor, Ed.D., West Virginia University

References for this lesson:

- Multicultural Self-Awareness Program, University of Wisconsin-Extension. *Glossary of Multicultural Terms*:
<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/admin/crights/commonlanguage2.html>

(Power Point Slide 4) Providing a safe, welcoming environment that appreciates the differences and embraces culture is important for youth to grow and develop. Considering situations that may occur in 4-H meetings, activities and events can help volunteers be prepared to model and support youth as they develop their own multicultural understanding and appreciation.

Activity 3: Sample Teachable Moments

Distribute Handout 3. Divide participants into four groups and assign each group one of the four situations. Ask each group to review their situation and identify any additional responses they may have or if they have run into a similar situation. Bring the group together and have each group give a brief summary of the teachable moment.

Conclusion:

Appreciating diversity and creating an environment that builds multicultural understanding is an important priority for volunteers when working with youth and other adults. It is a foundational element for positive youth development. (Power Point Slides 5, 6)

TALK IT OVER:

Reflect:

- Why is it important to have a personal understanding of diversity and multiculturalism?
- Why is appreciating diversity and developing multicultural understanding important for 4-H volunteers?
- Why is appreciating diversity and developing multicultural understanding important for youth?

Apply:

- How do we model and create an environment for appreciating diversity?

EVALUATION

Ask each participant to complete the evaluation tool (Handout 4).

ENHANCE or SIMPLIFY

Additional activities to teach appreciating diversity can be found at:
<http://pubs.cas.psu.edu/FreePubs/pdfs/ui335.pdf>

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Volunteerism for the Next Generation



Handout 1

Personal Bias: A Self Assessment Reflection Exercise

Use these prompts to explore your experiences with and attitudes about difference.

The first time I became aware of differences was when...

As I was growing up, I was taught that people who were different from me were...

A time I was mistreated because of my own difference was when...

A time I mistreated someone for being different was when...

I feel most comfortable when I am around people who...

I feel least comfortable when I am around people who...

The memories and experiences I have of differences affect my volunteer work by...

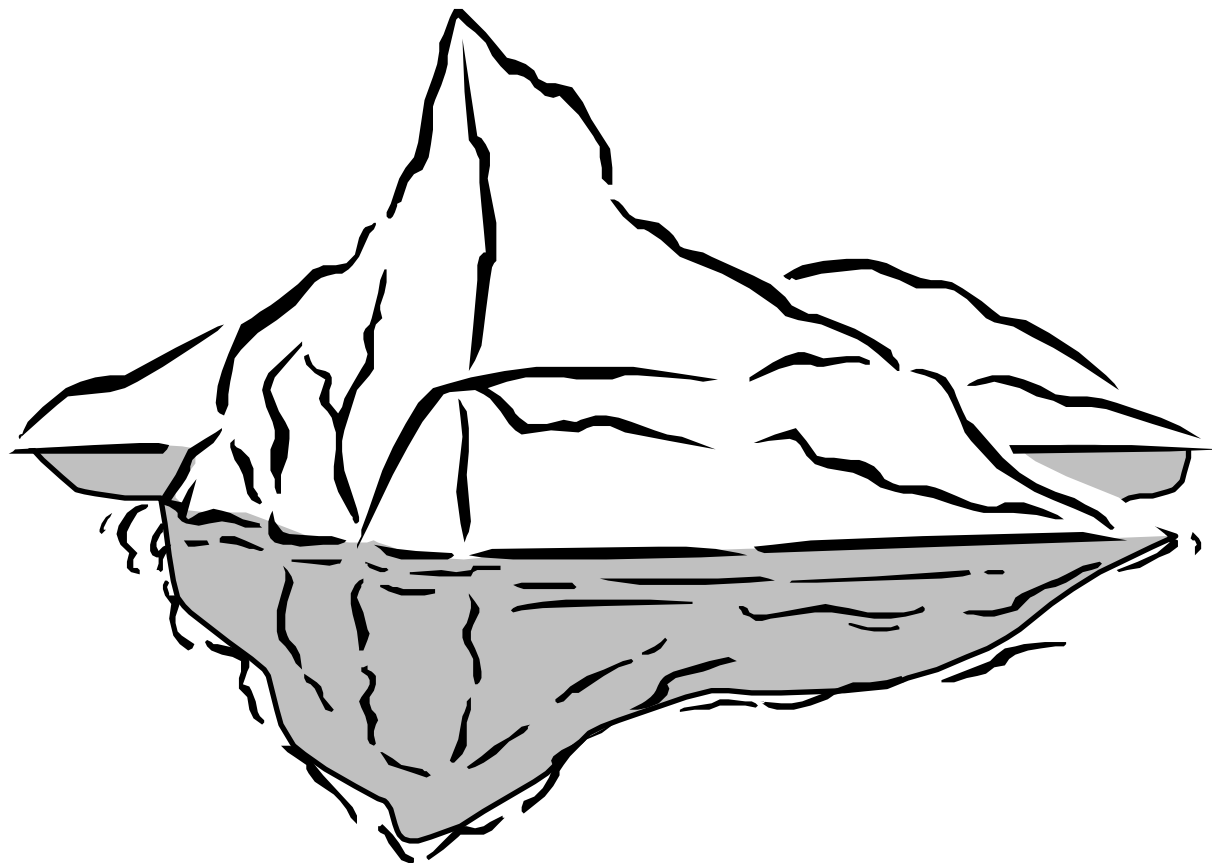
Adapted by Annie Lisowski, 4-H & Youth Development Educator,
December 2009 from "Beyond the Golden Rule" from *Teaching Tolerance*



Volunteerism for the Next Generation



Handout 2



Culture is an Iceberg

Styles of dress
 Ways of greeting people
 Beliefs about hospitality
 Importance of time
 Paintings
 Values
 Literature
 Beliefs about child raising
 Attitudes about personal space
 Nature of friendship
 Ideas about clothing
 Foods
 Greetings
 Facial expressions and hand gestures
 Work Ethic
 Concept of Self

Religious beliefs
 Religious rituals
 Concept of beauty
 Rules of polite behavior
 Attitude toward age
 Role of family
 General worldview
 Beliefs about the responsibilities of teens
 Gestures to show you understand what has been told of you
 Holiday customs
 Music
 Dancing
 Celebrations
 Concepts of fairness



Volunteerism for the Next Generation



Handout 3

Sample Teachable Moments of Multicultural Awareness

Shock Comment

Situation: *While teaching a group of middle school youth at the 4-H project meeting, you hear the comment, “That is so retarded,” promptly followed by, “This is gay.” You are taken aback.*

Effective Response: First, speak up! Let the youth know that you are shocked by their comments and explain why. You may say, “Wow. I’m shocked right now that you use words like ‘retarded’ and ‘gay’. When you use those words I feel disrespected because tolerance is so important to me. I challenge you to show respect for others and me by refusing to use those words in that way.”

You may choose to follow up with the questions, “What do you really mean when you use those words? What is handicapped or homosexual about this?” and “How do you think others would feel if you heard you use those words like that?” Then, explore the definition and historical use of those words. Encourage youth to stop others who use similar language in a derogatory manner.

Ineffective Response: Just saying, “Stop it” or providing little reaction at all. Making sure youth understand that the comments evoke negative feelings for you and others is of the utmost importance.

Honest Inquiry

Situation: *In one of your programs, there is a young person with special needs. After a full day of instructional activities another younger youth asks you, “Why is he different?”*

Effective Response: Address the question first by stating that you appreciate that she values uniqueness enough to notice differences. Ask, “What made you say that about him?” In your response, acknowledge that people are different in many ways and offer opportunities for youth to point out why differences can be positive. On the flip side, points out that people are also often mistreated because of their differences. Encourage youth to share ways that they are “different” or “unique” and how others have treated them as a result.

Ineffective Response: Simply answering that he’s not different implies that everyone is the same and can be a form of oppression itself.



Volunteerism for the Next Generation



Example in Media

Situation: *A group of young people are watching a reality TV show that is threaded with sexist jokes and overtones that are degrading to young women. It appears as if all of the youth (both young women and young men) are enjoying the program; no one seems offended.*

Effective Response: Use questions to start a discussion about the stereotypes portrayed in the TV show and the media as a whole. Ask, “What do you think of this?” and, “How would you feel if this happened in ‘real-life’?” or say, “I’m confused. How is this funny/o.k. with you?” Provide a safe place to have real two-way dialogue about the messages sent by the media (Facebook, commercials, music videos, etc.). Share why someone may be uncomfortable with the discriminatory comments made on TV. Try relating examples in the media with real world examples at school or in the local news.

Ineffective Response: Not raising questions about the messages being sent, even if no one appears offended, suggests your acceptance of the bias and prejudice portrayed.

Life Experience

Situation: *While chaperoning a youth trip, you and a dozen teenagers go to a movie. Youth notice there are several Hispanic students waiting in the lobby and overhear a Caucasian theatre employee comment, “You aren’t like all the other Mexicans that come in here.” As your group finds their seats, you overhear a few youth whispering about what they saw.*

Effective Response: First, ask youth, “What is shocking about that to you?” and discuss why the action was inappropriate. Then, you may even encourage youth to take a stand by walking out of the theatre and/or later sending a letter to the manager about the employee’s actions.

Ineffective Response: Defending the employee by rationalizing that she was just doing her job or it’s none of your business suggests to youth that injustices are part of adulthood and are not to be challenged.

Developed by Annie Lisowski, 4-H & Youth Development Educator, University of Wisconsin-Extension



Volunteerism for the Next Generation



Handout 3

Evaluation

Please complete the following evaluation. The results of the evaluation will be shared with those who work with the program. Your participation in this evaluation is voluntary. Your responses will be combined with the responses of all other participants and you will not be individually identified on any report prepared.

Please answer the questions by circling the number that indicates your level of understanding of the topics listed before and after the training.

1 = Very little understanding

2 = Understand somewhat

3 = Clear understanding

	NOW – After the training			THEN – Before the training		
1. I can describe diversity, multiculturalism, and culture and why it's important in my 4-H volunteer work.	1	2	3	1	2	3
2. I can describe my personal awareness of multiculturalism and diversity.	1	2	3	1	2	3
3. I can describe strategies to handle teachable moments that can help youth appreciate diversity.	1	2	3	1	2	3

- Please list at least two ideas or skills that you learned as a result of this presentation.
- How will you use what you learned in this presentation?



Volunteerism for the Next Generation

