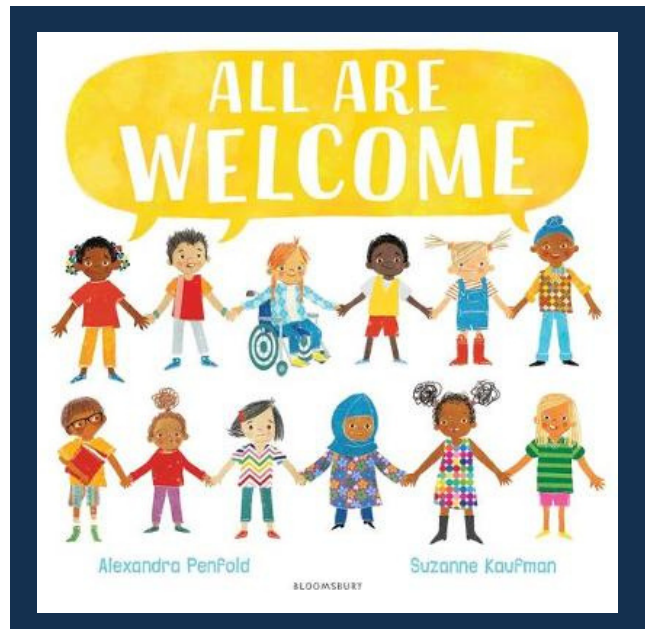


Guided Read Aloud

Creating an Inclusive Classroom

All Are Welcome By: Alexandra Penfold

This book is vibrant and welcoming and lets children know that they have a place and a space in their school. In this picture book, diverse representations of physical characteristics, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or ability are all included. The book represents a myriad of family units, hairstyles, disabilities, races, and ethnicities, etc., through illustrations that uplift diversity and celebrate differences. The theme in this book about representation is so important because we know that children need to see themselves mirrored in the content they learn in schools. This book could show students how to celebrate their differences in an inclusive way and could enable children to learn about the many cultures represented and compare their own daily lives to those depicted in the story.



[Read Aloud Can Be Accessed Here](#)

How to Use this Book

Grades:	Pre-K- 2
Themes:	Inclusion, Representation, Diversity
Subjects:	This resource could be used in Language Arts, Social Studies, Arts, or to create a sense of belonging and contributing in Kindergarten.
When to use this book:	Any time you want to set the tone, or reestablish your safe and inclusive learning environment. You may choose to read this book for the first day of school or pair it with one of the activities listed below!



Discussion

Pre-Reading

- Looking at the front cover, what do you think this story will be about?
- The title of the book is "All Are Welcome," what does this tell us about themes we might find?
- Where do you think the story takes place? Why is it important for all to be welcomed in that setting?

While Reading

- On page 3, pause and ask "What is the story about? "
- On page 3, pause and ask "What do you notice about the characters in the story?"
- What does it mean when the text repeats, "all are welcome here?" what does it mean for all to be welcome?
- What are some key messages from the story?
- On page 7, pause and ask "How are the children different? How are they similar? Why do you think that is?"
- On page 9, pause and ask "What do the children learn from each other about different cultures? "
- You may also want to work s a class to break down statements to be kinder, for example, "instead of this...say this."

After Reading- Reflection

- What about the school, playground and classroom make these safe spaces for everyone? What parts of our school make it a safe space for everyone? Why? Are there parts that don't feel safe? What could we do to make them safe?
- What can we do to make our classroom safe for all students? Class brainstorm. Why is it important to include all students and celebrate everybody's differences?
- Think about your own experiences, can you make a connection to any part of the story? Draw a picture to share your thoughts.
- Do all of your friends look like you? What can you do to include friends who may look different from you, to include and accept everybody.

Activities to Reinforce Learning

Kindergarten: Class Contract- How can we use what we have learned from the story to make a class code for kind, fair and inclusive play? Work with your class to make a behavioural contract to navigate unfair play and foster classroom inclusion. You may also want to work as a class to breakdown statements to be kinder: example, instead of this...say this.

Grades 1-2: Human Bingo- help students break the ice while celebrating different cultures, promoting diversity and building a safe and inclusive classroom. In human or cultural bingo, students will have to interact with other students in the class to sign off on their Bingo Squares. The same person should not sign the Bingo Sheet more than twice. After Bingo has been called, spend some time discussing the significance of the squares and discuss diversity.

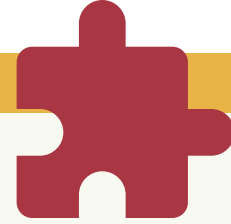
Grades 3 and up: Identity Iceberg- Help students explore the concept of identity and the importance of going "below the waterline" to challenge and avoid stereotypes and identity-based bias. In this activity (completed individually or in groups) students are invited to reflect on different aspects of their identities that inform how they experience and are seen in the world. Above the waterline students write down aspects of their identities that are visible to others, and below the waterline students write down aspects that are not visible. Afterwards, can discuss what surprised you? In what spaces do you experience safety and protection where someone with different visible identities might not? How might it be possible for someone to hold misconceptions about you based on your (in)visible identities? What assumptions could you make about the newcomer(s) based on their visible and invisible identities?



Key Terms

Take the time to go over these terms with your students and check for comprehension:

1. **Inclusion**- The act of including and helping everyone feel like they belong
2. **Diversity**- Diversity means differences, including race, ethnicity, age, disabilities, language, culture, appearance, or religion.
3. **Culture**- A way of life, distinctive to different communities. Culture can include music, art, food, clothing, customs, beliefs and religion.
4. **Adversity**- Experiencing difficulties and hardships for being different
5. **Community**-People with common characteristics



Extension

Develop an appreciation for your students and their unique cultures by welcoming diversity into your own classroom. Throughout the book, "All Are Welcome" there are many pictures of diversity that show the individuality and uniqueness of the students in the story. One way to extend this lesson could be having your students create their own pages to continue the story. You may also challenge the students to welcome their own diversity within and beyond the classroom in a number of ways that help students to feel valued and see themselves represented by what they are learning.

Take the time to go over the key terms listed with your students and check for comprehension.