

Lesson plan

Me and the others

Tolerance and acceptance

1. **Theme:** Me and the others: Tolerance and acceptance
2. **Grade:** 4th
3. **Lesson type:** for acquiring new knowledge
4. **Duration:** 40 min.
5. **Basic terms:** tolerance, acceptance, respect, traditions, beliefs, religious symbols
6. **Pedagogical methods:** storytelling, presentation, discussion, dialog, reflection, individual work
7. **Means:** board (interactive or otherwise), markers, laptop/computer, multimedia (screen/projector), ppt presentation, flipchart (optional), paper person cutouts, pencils/pens/markers

8. Goals:

○ Educational:

The students

- ✓ Define what tolerance and acceptance mean in their own words
- ✓ Explain why tolerance and acceptance are important for living together in a classroom and society
- ✓ Demonstrate behaviour related to tolerance and acceptance in classroom activities
- ✓ Identify different religious symbols and recognize the importance of accepting that people have different beliefs
- ✓ Create ideas of how to be tolerant and how to show acceptance in everyday situations
- ✓ Compare behaviours and discuss when a person should be tolerant and when certain actions shouldn't be accepted (being rude and offensive for example)
- ✓ Evaluate whether certain actions in given scenarios show tolerance and acceptance, and justify their reasoning

○ Formational:

The students

- ✓ Listen to and show interest in discussions about acceptance and tolerance toward others, including those of different religions or backgrounds
- ✓ Actively participate by sharing experiences and ideas about showing tolerance and acceptance
- ✓ Express the belief that tolerance and acceptance of others is important for friendship and harmony in society

- ✓ Begin to consistently demonstrate tolerance and acceptance in their daily classroom behavior, making it part of their personal value system
- ✓ Advocate and encourage tolerance and acceptance among peers and friends

9. **Cross-curricular connections:** Social studies, Religious studies

10. **Intra-subject connections:** with the lesson plans on the themes: I support others, Me and my environment and the other modules from the theme Me and the others

11. **Expected results:**

- ✓ Students can explain in their own words what tolerance and acceptance mean and why they are important in daily life
- ✓ Students listen attentively and express curiosity about others' experiences, cultures, or preferences
- ✓ Students engage in class discussions, volunteer to include others, and show interest in learning how to be kind and fair
- ✓ Students can distinguish between tolerant and intolerant behaviors in short stories or real-life examples and explain why one is better
- ✓ Students demonstrate inclusive behavior during group work or play, showing kindness and cooperation with all peers
- ✓ Students remind others to be tolerant, help mediate misunderstandings, and promote kindness in group setting

12. **Preparation**

○ For the teacher: Reading the theoretical base, downloading the presentation, printing the paper person cutouts and preparing writing tools for the students

13. **Structure of the lesson:**

Me and the others: Tolerance and acceptance

1. Tolerance and acceptance in society
2. Tolerance and acceptance of others
 - What is the meaning of these words
 - Why are they important?
 - How to show tolerance and acceptance
 - Tolerance and acceptance of different religions
3. Activity: Paper person
4. Reflection and discussion

- The students are prompted to answer several questions on the subject, reflecting on their thoughts and feelings and engaging in a discussion.

14. Structure, content and timeline

1. Introduction (4 min.)

- **Teacher activity:**

- Actualization of prior knowledge on the subject: What do you think means to be tolerant and to accept someone for who they are?; Is it important to show tolerance and acceptance? How do you think we can show someone that we accept them? (2 min.)

- Introduction of new information and terms: (2 min.)

In the family, in the school and in society, it is very important to respect people and care for them. One of the ways in which we do that is by showing tolerance and acceptance. In our world, people come from many different places, believe in different things, and live in different ways. Even though we may not all look the same or think the same, we can still show kindness and respect to everyone. Learning about tolerance and acceptance helps us understand and appreciate what makes each person special. One of the ways people are different is through their religions – and today we'll learn how to respect and accept those differences too. When we are tolerant and when we accept people, we create a world where everyone feels safe, valued, and included. By treating others with kindness and understanding, even when we don't agree on everything, we can be good friends and neighbours to people from all backgrounds.

- **Student activity:**

- Participation in the dialog, asking questions, active listening

- **Methods and tools:**

- Methods: dialog, storytelling
- Tools: board, marker or an interactive whiteboard (for outlining the theme and the terms; optional, for writing down student's ideas, thoughts)

2. Stating the theme of the lesson: Me and the others: Tolerance and acceptance (31 min.)

- **Teacher activity:**

- Short presentation, focused on tolerance and acceptance and ways to be tolerant to people with different beliefs (8 min.)
- Theoretical overview, performed with the presentation:

Tolerance means respecting people who have different beliefs, traditions, or ways of doing things than you do. Acceptance goes even further – it means welcoming people for exactly who

they are and celebrating what makes them special. To be tolerant means to be respectful and patient with others, even when we don't think, act, or believe the same way. For example, you might like soccer, and your friend might like basketball. You don't have to agree, but you can still be friends and respect each other's choices. Tolerance helps us avoid teasing, bullying, or judging others for being different. When we accept someone, we don't just "put up with" their differences – we welcome them and value them for who they are.

Accepting and tolerating people for who they are means recognizing and respecting their individuality, values, and differences without judgment. It involves showing empathy and understanding, even when others think or live differently from us. However, acceptance does not mean tolerating harmful or disrespectful behaviour. We can be kind to someone while still holding them accountable for their actions. True tolerance is about finding that balance – accepting people as they are, while having clear boundaries about what behaviour is good and respectful.

Being tolerant of people and accepting them means understanding that they may have a different culture, language, or religion than ours. It's about showing kindness and respect, even when someone's traditions or beliefs are not the same as what we're used to. We can learn new things from each other and appreciate how our differences make the world more interesting. When we accept others this way, we help make our communities friendlier and more peaceful places for everyone.

An example of a difference people may have is their religion. Each religion has its own traditions, symbols, and ways of showing faith.

For example:

- Some Christian people may wear a cross necklace.
- Some Muslim women may wear a hijab, a headscarf that shows modesty and faith.
- Some Jewish men may wear a kippah, a small cap.
- In Hinduism, some people may wear a bindi, a small decorative dot on the forehead.
- Buddhists may have prayer beads to help them meditate.

All of these are special signs that mean something important in each religion. Even if we don't share those beliefs or wear those symbols ourselves, we can show tolerance and acceptance by being curious, asking respectful questions, and never laughing at or judging anyone for their faith. Tolerance and acceptance help us build a classroom, and a world, where everyone feels safe, respected, and welcome. It's like having a big garden with many colourful flowers – each one is different, and together they make the garden beautiful.

Activity: Paper person (23 min.)

- ✓ The teacher begins the activity with a reference to the previously mentioned tolerance to differences and states that everyone is different, unique in a way

- ✓ The teacher provides each student with a paper person cutout (on a sheet of paper)
 - ✓ The teacher instructs the students to decorate it to represent themselves — with things that make them unique:
 - Favourite colour or hobby
 - Family tradition
 - Language they speak at home or a favourite holiday
 - Something they're good at
 - A value that's important to them (kindness, honesty, etc.)
 - ✓ The student can write in the bubble and/or on the paper person
 - ✓ The students take turns showing their paper person and saying one sentence starting with: "Something that makes me unique is..."
 - ✓ The teacher encourages all statements and then initiates a discussion, posing the following questions:
 - What did you notice about how we are all different?
 - Did you find something in common with someone you didn't expect?
 - How can we show acceptance every day in our class?
 - ✓ While the students are proposing ideas on how to show acceptance in the classroom, the teacher writes the suggestions on the board
 - ✓ The teacher gathers all cutouts and arranges them into a poster and hangs it in the classroom (the ideas on how to show acceptance could also be added)
- Student activity:
 - Participation in the dialog, taking notice of the presentation, asking questions, active listening, thinking of ways to be tolerant and accepting, proposing ideas, working individually, sharing ideas, reflecting on the activity
 - Methods and tools:
 - Methods: dialog, presentation, storytelling, individual work, discussion
 - Tools: interactive board or a screen, laptop/computer, board, marker, flipchart (optional, for writing down students' ideas), paper person cutouts, pencils/pens/markers
3. Reflection and discussion (5 min.)
- Teacher activity:
 - Posing questions for a discussion:

- ✓ What does it mean to be tolerant of someone who is different from you?
 - ✓ What does it mean to accept people for who they are?
 - ✓ Why is it important to try to understand other people's feelings and opinions?
 - ✓ How can we show kindness to someone who looks, talks, or acts differently than us?
 - ✓ What could happen if we don't accept people who are different from us?
- Engaging the students with prompts:
 - ✓ "I once tried a food from another country even though I thought I wouldn't like it. I was surprised! Have you ever tried something new and liked it"?
 - ✓ "I like when people include others in games or activities. Can anyone tell us about a time they made someone feel included"?
 - ✓ "I think this way people would feel more valued; what do you think"?
 - ✓ "Maybe we can try to ask questions, if we don't understand something; what else can we try"?
 - ✓ "I think that if we don't accept people who are different from us, we will argue more; what do you think"?
- Answering questions and clarifying information
- Student activity:
 - Engaging in the discussion
 - Reflection on their ideas and emotions on the subject
- Methods:
 - Methods: reflection, discussion, active listening

15. Variations:

- The "Symbols of peace" activity: The teacher shows pictures of religious symbols (cross, star and crescent, Om, Star of David, lotus, etc.); The teacher discusses with the students the meaning of each symbol, assigning values to it (hope, peace, respect); The teacher instructs the students to create their own symbol of tolerance and acceptance – a drawing or collage that shows people of different beliefs living together in harmony; The teacher gathers all of the drawings and combines them into a larger collage and hangs it in the classroom.
- The "Stories about tolerance" activity: The teacher reads a short story (e.g., a folk tale from another culture or a children's story about friendship across differences); The teacher initiates a discussion, posing questions like "What was the problem in the story?", "How did the characters show tolerance or acceptance?", "What can we learn from them?"; The teacher instructs the students to write or draw a "tolerance message" inspired by the story; The students read their messages and discuss them with the class.
- The "Kind words" activity: The teacher gives each student a coloured strip of paper; The students write a kind message about how to show tolerance and acceptance (e.g., "I will listen

when someone talks about their religion” or “We can all play together no matter what we believe”); The students read their statements; The teacher links the strips together to form a “change of tolerance”.

- The “Around the world” activity: The teacher shows a large map of the world (printed or digital); The teacher shows where the major religions are most common and places a picture or a sticker of the relevant religious symbol on the map; The students share their knowledge about the major religions; The teacher initiates a discussion about tolerance and differences, starting with the question “Do you think people from different religions can be friends in the same country?”.

16. Interesting facts (from Watts, W., 2024, <https://ohmyfacts.com/general/23-facts-about-tolerance/>; <https://www.unesco.org/en/days/tolerance>; <https://fiveable.me/sociology-of-religion/unit-5/religious-tolerance-intolerance/study-guide/sDv2axK2GYQDqcCL>; <https://www.nationalfestivaloftolerance.ae/>)

- ✓ The International Day of Tolerance is celebrated every year, on the 16th of November.
- ✓ Religious tolerance became official policy in the Roman Empire with the Edict of Milan in 313 CE, allowing Christians to worship without persecution and paving the way for broader religious freedoms.
- ✓ The Buddhist Edicts of Ashoka (3rd century BCE) promoted ethnic and religious tolerance, emphasizing unity through the essence of different religions.
- ✓ Across religions, contemporary definitions of religious tolerance involve accepting, respecting, and coexisting peacefully with different beliefs.
- ✓ Many religions outline the importance of tolerance and acceptance and show kindness and respect to people.
- ✓ In Croatia there is a Tolerance festival, which uses films, exhibits and discussions to promote tolerance.
- ✓ Peerla Panduga is a festival celebrated in parts of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana (India) that promotes religious harmony and tolerance between different communities.
- ✓ In the United Arab Emirates there is a Ministry of tolerance and coexistence. They organize a National tolerance festival, aiming to promote tolerance, coexistence and respect.