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Diversity Workshop

Celebrating Diversity

After attending the Celebrating Diversity Workshop on October 8, 2006, I have adjusted my thinking. I have gained many different ideas from this Sunday afternoon event as well as a new appreciation for the different types of diversity. I have taken many different concepts from this meeting, some of which could be used in a classroom. The Diversity Workshop has given me many different insights, a new appreciation, and valuable life lessons that I can take with me and apply to my life.

There were several different ideas addressed at the workshop. I found the concept of diversity itself to be very interesting. Before the workshop, the only application and definition of diversity that I had been familiar with was referred to in a manner of race and ethnicity. The word itself was referred to in a negative context. The workshop allowed me to gain a better understanding of diversity. The word is not referred as negative and contains more meaning than just race and ethnicity. The word diversity can refer to any specific thing that a person may believe or enjoy. It can also refer to sex, religious background, social standing, and even the sports we play. The word describes our individual characteristics. Each individual person has his or her own type of diversity.

The Celebrating Diversity Workshop helped me to gain more sensitivity and appreciation from other people and their beliefs. The sensitivity that I gained had to deal with trying to understand and talk to someone before you judge him or her. I always knew this concept but

had never actually seen the example played out. I learned to be sensitive when I speak and avoid words that could offend other people. I gained a new appreciation for the people around me after hearing their stories.

My thinking has changed only slightly after this workshop. I have always been a friendly person who tries to get along with everyone. I try not to judge before I know the true facts, and I always reach out to people who may need my help. The one thing that did change is the fact that some words may offend people that I had never even considered. Certain phrases in our language and dialect originated from other people's unfortunate events. This was never a concept I had dwelled until the workshop. I now try to adjust my speech and refrain from using any controversial and hurtful terms.

There was a very interesting activity that I participated in during the workshop that I would like to use in my classroom. If someone says something offensive or tells a joke that contains an offensive topic, there is an easy way to deal with correcting it. The activity showed how to correct this speech. In a non-threatening, friendly way, you should ask the speaker to explain why he or she uses that word or phrase. Then ask if he or she ever considered that the word or phrase may be offensive. Then in a friendly way, help them understand that the word may hurt someone's feelings and to think of another word that could replace the offensive one.

This workshop was very beneficial to me as a future educator. I feel that I have a better understanding of diversity and other people. I can look at someone without judging and have a better understanding of their world. This workshop helped to open a brand new concept in my life and future occupation.