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Diversity Workshop Reflection

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In November 2007, I attended a Celebrating Diversity Workshop held at Manchester College. This workshop was designed to be a positive environment in which the participants discussed issues of stereotyping, prejudices, and mistreatment of all identity groups. We learned that identity groups include those defined by gender, race, heritage, family roles, religion, age, sexual orientation, nationality, geographical region, and economic class.

We learned that many groups that have been targets of discrimination and stereotyping. The participants of the workshop took part in activities where we practiced stopping prejudicial comments and jokes. In my classroom, I will equip my students with the skills to help each other stop making stereotypical jokes about individuals, as well as skills to stop themselves from making jokes about others; this will hopefully keep problems of discrimination and prejudicial comments to a minimum.

Throughout the day, the leaders of the diversity workshop presented a variety of lectures that focused on discovering and appreciating our own identity groups and gaining awareness of others' identity groups. These discussions made me realize more about my identity groups and myself. If I become more comfortable with who I am, it will be easier for me to feel comfortable

with who others are as well. I realized that it is acceptable to be who you are and I must understand people for who they are.

I think it is very important to make every experience a learning experience for students. I will welcome class discussion about different cultures and traditions of all of my students. I want my students, the student's parents or guardians, and my colleagues to feel comfortable around me. Being sensitive and welcoming to others' differences will make my classroom environment much more relaxing and my students will feel safe and at ease with me. If my students are not worried about being judged they will be able focus more on school work instead of what others are saying about them.