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Activity Guide

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La Alegría de Ser Tú y Yo

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ABOUT THE STORY

This is a joyous, high-spirited rap about the ways people are different, unusual, strange – but still the same, and still beautiful. Straight hair, curly hair, brown eyes, long legs, short legs – are all celebrated in a hand-clapping, foot-stomping rhythm.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

W. Nikola-Lisa is the author of several children's books, including *Night is Coming* and *America: My Land, Your Land, Our Land*. He was awarded an Ezra Jack Keats Fellowship in 1990 and now works as an associate professor of English. He lives in Chicago with his wife, sculptor Barbara Cooper, and his two daughters.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Michael Bryant has illustrated the picture books *Our People* and *Goodbye Hello*. In 1991, he was awarded the University of Wisconsin Multicultural Mirror Fellowship. Mr. Bryant lives in Pennsylvania with his wife and two daughters.

INTRODUCING THE STORY

Ask the children if they know what rap is. Explain that rap is similar to a poem and has a strong rhythm. Then tell them that this book is a rap about the many ways people can look different and still be similar.

READING ACTIVITIES

Comprehension/Thinking Skills

- "How are the noses in the book different?"
- "How are the eyes in the book different?"
- "How are the arms in the book different?"
- "What does the narrator mean by saying 'Different-but the same'?" (Interpret)
- "Do you agree that people who look different are 'perfectly remarkably strange'?" (Express opinions)

CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Language Arts: ¿Quién soy?

Have each child write up a list of clues about him or herself. Begin with more general clues (I am a boy, I have brown hair) and end the list with more specific ones (I have a Dalmation, I love to play chess). Mix up the papers and take turns reading the clues and figuring out who wrote them. This is also a good activity to do on Parent's Night. Have the children leave the riddles on their desks; let parents figure out which one belongs to their child.

Adjetivos increíbles

Adjectives are describing words and this book is replete with them (admirable, fabuloso, esplendoroso, etc.). Look through the book and have children list as many adjectives as they can find. You can extend this activity by seeing if the children can come up with a synonym for each of the adjectives. Then use them in stories or sentences.

Math: Class Graphs

Use different attributes (eye color, birthday month, favorite food, etc.) to create class graphs. For example, have each child write his or her eye color on a square of paper (you can color coordinate the squares to the different eye colors). Each child posts his or her square in the row that corresponds with his or her eye color. (Have chart made up ahead of time.) When completed, discuss the information shown on the graph.

¿Son mismos los pies?

When is a foot not a foot? Have children trace one of their feet onto a piece of paper and cut it out. Measure with a ruler and record the length. Have children compare lengths of their 'feet' with each other and with a foot-long ruler.

Art: Me, Myself and I

Using large rolls of paper, have children work in pairs to trace and cut out life-size copies of their bodies. Using a variety of different materials, children can decorate cutouts to make paper replicas of themselves. If you want, use the paper 'children' to create a classroom mural. A similar project can be done with paper plates. Using yarn for hair and colored markers, the children can make paper plate replicas of their faces.

When complete, have each child write a short biography of him or herself that can be displayed with their finished projects.

Music: Vamos a cantar

This book is written in the form of a song or a chant. Have children work in pairs or small groups to come up with their own interpretation of the rhythm and beat. They can use musical instruments (drums, xylophones, etc.) to accompany themselves or just their fingers or toes. Let each group have an opportunity to make a presentation to the rest of the class.