



Shifting the Perspectives of Aging in the Education Setting is Essential to Learning

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Governors' Village Stem Academy

This curriculum unit is recommended for:

Literacy in / Pre-K

The unit can be taught as a mini-unit of study.

Keywords: ageism, stereotypes, life cycle, bias

Teaching Standards: See [Appendix 1](#)

Synopsis: This unit will introduce children to the diverse awareness of ageism in education at school and in their community. I will show that children can access and identify ageism awareness and its role in their family and school culture. This unit will encourage the perception of aging and the development life cycle as a continuum. I will engage the family to build the personal connection of older adults who are significant to the child. The components for the lessons that will be taught will increase awareness and appreciation for older adults. The children will learn about contributions made to improve life as people age and mature in the cycle of life. We will learn how to change common traditions in school, such as the 100th Day of School Celebration, by bringing awareness to diminish bias and showing the contributions that are made to increase the value of life for everyone and how age is a benefit to help build our learning with vast opportunities and education. I will focus on bringing awareness about centenarians and having a more inclusive measure of participation for the 100th Days of School celebration, acknowledged as a catalyst for stereotyping older adults and changing the narrative from a negative view of the celebration.

I plan to teach this unit during the current trimester, the first part of the year. This is during the beginning of the year's introduction and acclamation to school. This unit will help transition to classroom structure while building the school community.

I give permission to the Charlotte Teachers Institute to publish my curriculum unit and synopsis in print and online. I understand that I will be credited as the author of my work.

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Carolyn Simmons

Introduction

The many changes in education impact on how children learn, from testing to small groups based on the scores, determining who can learn best by needs. Often, Pre-K is measured on the early childhood scale of learning needs deficits, even when the classroom is in an elementary school setting. We are inundated with testing and standards that propel children's growth and learning. In the mixture of all the required mandates, I want to be able to teach my Pre-K children about the importance of ageism and bring awareness to older adults. The connections gained from knowing how older adults make outstanding contributions and the value in the life cycle for everyone, will become evident.

The role of a Pre-K Teacher is one that is supportive and engaging to children. In many ways, it takes great patience to steer children into early learning with academic and social-emotional development. The opportunity to build social skills and prepare young minds for information that can be very impressionable gives way to molding concrete ideals and dispelling biases that can have negative connotations for young children. In this unit, I will show how we can change negative perceptions of aging. The unit will provide opportunities for children to explore their family and the community to gauge awareness, build relationships with adults, and learn to understand that older people provide a wealth of knowledge to life.

Young children need exposure and opportunities to engage with people of different ages. Children will be exposed to literacy in the classroom and learn about young and older people from books and subjective experiences. I will engage children with literacy in books and various learning opportunities to influence positive perceptions of older people. The home-school connection with activities to learn about ageism can change perceptions and biases. I will use the objectives to intentionally teach the lessons rigorously and provide learning opportunities in the classroom. To use read-aloud concerning older adults. To use literacy as a family connection and to build family awareness. To use literacy to provide opportunities to celebrate the one hundred days of school. We will focus on the following topic:

- ❖ The teacher will provide daily opportunities to model the use of literacy and encourage children's engagement with artifacts of ageism.
- ❖ Daily read-aloud, including content strategies, questions, and discussions.
- ❖ Use technology to incorporate reading mediums.
- ❖ Provision of classroom social-emotional learning and social awareness of aging adults.

I plan to introduce and make the curriculum available for other Pre-K teachers at my school. Beyond that, my goal is to promote awareness of ageism in early childhood classrooms so that families and children can learn about the perspectives of aging. Children need the opportunity to gain experience. It is important to acknowledge that everyone has value regardless of their age.

My goal is to use the information I have gained from the seminar to teach and elevate the awareness of ageism through literacy and bring awareness to changing the narrative of the 100th Day of School Celebration to eliminate stereotypical images related to ageism. I want to engage students with activities and intentional learning opportunities to gain experience with aging adults. Pre-K students are at the beginning of their education process and will experience many opportunities to learn about ageism throughout their education journey. The focus of their education for the next thirteen years is either college or career readiness. However, it is critical for them to develop critical thinking opportunities, especially pertaining to aging. The curriculum outcome will show the formative and summative assessment results to engage additional learning and growth opportunities. Children should be aware of ageism and build positive knowledge of people and their abilities. This curriculum will be taught as a mini-unit study at the beginning of the year.

Rationale

This unit aims to change the mindset of ageism in education to reframe the view of aging amongst society, especially students for this unit. Stereotypically, society believes being older is not valuable or essential. This unit will dispel the stereotypical view that older people are less effective and intellectually challenged to contribute to society. This unit aims to change how older adults are recognized in school functions and celebrations. The purpose is to celebrate centenarians and highlight the aging process as the healthy growth of all people. Young children are impressionable and learn from many senses and opportunities. The imagery presented to children in Pre-K as they view the 100th Day of School Celebration on the perceptions that older people are mimicked and marked to represent those one hundred years old and described in a biased viewpoint. This unit will show that family connections and intergenerational representation are valuable for enhancing education and changing the narrative so that children can learn and engage with a better learning perspective.

As a Pre-Kindergarten teacher at Title 1 school, majority of the students I teach come from multicultural backgrounds, shaping their perspectives on aging. Some of them live with grandparents at home, and others do not. This shapes their view of aging by exposing them to the life experiences of the aging adult, and those who are not intricately connected to an aging adult in the household have a limited viewpoint of aging. This presents an opportunity for the students in my classroom to have a beneficial learning experience of learning about aging in a positive light. According to authors Lytle and Levy (2017), education related to aging reduces ageism in students and has a positive long-term impact overall. I aim to engage students in learning opportunities about effective interactions and social practices to enhance their educational and personal success. This will improve their overall understanding of aging and the aging population's contributions to society to deter children from having a stereotypical perspective of aging.

I have developed a plan to carry out various interventions in the classroom to help students improve their understanding of aging. My students can benefit from connecting with integrating aging education in the pre-Kindergarten curriculum. Awareness of ageism and the attention to making concrete connections will positively bring change. This awareness can allow older people to effectively enhance learning and create opportunities that can benefit from learning.

The students in the pre-Kindergarten program can also begin to learn how to pay attention and develop intergenerational relationships that can help them grow and eliminate negative mindsets that can prohibit them from understanding the wealth in ageism.

Demographics

I am a pre-K teacher at Governors Village Stem Academy Lower Campus. This is my 25th year teaching Pre-K in the Charlotte Mecklenburg School System Bright Beginning Program. I am one of five Pre-K teachers at the Governors' Village Stem Academy. We teach the Create Curriculum using Teaching Strategies Gold Objectives for Development, Learning, and North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development. The children in my class have many literacy resources, and technology enhances and supports learning within the classroom. The Governors Village Stem Academy is a school located in the heart of the University City Community that was associated with the name the Governors' Village from North Carolina Governor Jim Hunt. The school was built in 1996 as the first of four schools to support the thriving IBM and Banking community. The original school was Nathaniel Alexander Elementary School, a Title 1 program organized to meet the needs of the students based on social, economic, and educational needs. The school served 752 Pre-K to Fourth-grade students on the lower campus. The percentage of the students who showed proficiency in Reading /Lang is 33%, and 43% in math proficiency. The school has a teacher-student ratio of 16-1. The school has a minority enrollment of primarily African American, Asian, and Hispanic, with a small percentage of Caucasian students.

Objectives

At the beginning of the school year, the students are excited and ready for new learning opportunities. This is the time to build the foundation of this unit and engage the students in the learning process as we study families. The students will learn about group settings and family units. They will engage in experience to bring their prior knowledge of family and the ages of different family members. The students will find guidance and partnership with social-emotional development and gross motor movement. They will participate in reading aloud and build literacy skills as they discuss books about people of all ages.

Content Research

The development and methods of identifying ageism. Many people view being old as unresourceful for society. From this viewpoint, age is divided into the young and old and that they are two different beings. There is a divide between how young people are more joyful and explore the world and how older people sit in rocking chairs as time passes. To teach children that aging is a daily process that occurs with every age it begins at birth and is the process of life until it ends. To show children how the process of growing is a part of all living organisms and how the process is part of the biological lens of aging. Teaching and learning are the attitudes in how you think and feel (Gendron, 2022).

To reach young children in their most impressionable years, the cognitive component is that older people are stereotyped or considered to be older and not great at basic things. How we say

things that can cause the affective element of ageism, which can express prejudices to children and embed negative mindsets, is essential. When teaching and working with children, saying negative things about older adults can lead to behavioral components that can lead to intentional and unintentional discrimination in the mindset of children. It is the awareness that we must understand that our attitude can form behaviors that play into discrimination, and we then promote ageist mindsets. How do we know that ageism is terrible for our lives? It is not expected to hear about all the other factors that can shorten our lives. Instead, we continue to find those things interesting and vital. In the retrospective, much research supports the growth and well-being of seniors. Ageism matters because people who work and share have an extended life span. It matters because it can take away rights for older people, creating a deficit of social, economic, and political equality. It is when you have decided how you want to live your life regardless of the perceptions of ageism. The thought of aging is a gradual process that takes on many changes. The thought of physical decline and how older people may be unable to do some of the things they have done and focus on daily aches and pains changes the effect of doing things. Some things that are ordinary and unexpected happen in the body and lead to empathy. There is research that supports the idea that people who experience aging as a part of a lifelong journey sometimes feel that the later ages are engaging and bring about renewal and excitement in life (Gendron, 2022).

The views of ageism in education are the perception that old people are not helpful and are partially in the way. In our society, pictures of youthfulness and vitality are not associated with the old. The definition of aging is an orientation process for the future. "This is partly because they are seen as parts of the past, not part of the future" (Holmes, 2007). It must be the move of our society that we live in together. We can all live together and have happy lives, but it depends on the responsibility of the teacher's lessons. Young children are more impressionable to the perception of aging, "When the wrong message has been set to show impartialness to aging adults, the teacher can have the responsibility to interrupt ageist thinking and correct the misguided mindset" (Holmes, 2007). The issues with ageism and aging are relevant and acknowledged by students in their formative years, but they also impact their future as adults. The epitome of these issues by an educator is to view the life span of teaching and learning. The best practice would be integrating aging issue decisions into all curricular areas. To show that aging is part of the natural life cycle. To begin with the change, we need to stop making jokes and laughing about ageism and aging and instead embrace the process that will apply to humans.

The educator can change the view by providing curricular materials discussing aging and healthy lifestyles. This can change the view of people who are often cast away as lonely people. In literature and books, ageism is pointed out as an institutionalized bias, and it can present problems for teachers as they want to use new materials that may not be updated with current research and information (Holmes, 2007). A lifespan approach to teaching and learning is a level of multicultural education and awareness of ageism. It aligns with traditional multicultural cultural curricula, such as a practical life span, and teaches children in early childhood how life is connected and continues in cycles. The most proficient outcome is to teach children how to reduce bias and use critical thinking skills as they learn about how people are the same in many ways and recognize differences. It can help children build realistic attitudes about aging and learn from people in their families and community.

There needs to be more literacy in society that represents aging. Research indicated that most young people, including young children, have negative attitudes about aging people (Dodson & Hause, 1981). In our society, seniors are the fastest-growing minority group. The problem with literature is that many stereotypes are portrayed negatively in books. The message needs to be changed, and the description needs to be positive and respectful. The representation of sitting in rocking chairs and being grouchy means people need to be dispelled. More appropriate literature and representation of ageism in a life cycle must be available to enhance aging projection with grace. The focus of celebrating the 100th Day of school will reshape the minds and beliefs of many educators. The thoughts of ageism reduction and interventions are not typical and often have mixed or inconclusive results due to the lack of a theoretical or guiding framework to reduce ageism (Levy, 2016).

Instructional Implementation

The classroom activities will focus on cooperative literacy and social-emotional strategies in the learning environment and the family unit. The children will have read-aloud and interactive activities to support the beginning stages of the family units and older adults' awareness of the family and community. They will view how to develop connections to helpful celebrations such as the 100th Day of School as a less biased view of imitation of older adults. The lessons include five days of interactive reading, curriculum-related activities, and home engagement projects. The students participated in pre-and post-KWL charts and the question-of-the-day data analysis with a formative and summative assessment component. This unit will be taught based on the program's pacing guide during reteach day at the end of the study.

Activity 1: study for the week.

Mini Study:

Week of _____ - _____ Teacher: _____

Beginning the Year: Learning to embrace family and view the lifecycle and aging.

Focus Questions: Engage awareness of family and older adults in the family and community.

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Social-Emotional Development	Poem: <u>Everybody Has A Name</u> by Jean Warren Read the poem and discuss how everyone has a name.	Book: <u>The Way I Feel</u> by Janine Amos Read the book and introduce the feelings in the text. Invite the students to make a graph of the feelings	Book: <u>A Sick Day</u> for Amos McGee Read the book and discuss how you feel when you are sick. Also, discuss how people feel	Book: <u>Today I Feel Silly and Other Moods That Make My Day</u> by Jamie Lee Curtis Read the book and review how moods are essential and we	Book: <u>When Sophie Gets Angry... Really, Angry</u> by Molly Bang Read the book and think of ways that are

	<p>Encourage the children to name the members of their family.</p> <p>Objectives: TSG: 3a Foundations 3a: ESD-5</p>	<p>and discuss the age at which they begin to experience them and how older adults in their family have feelings.</p> <p>Objectives: TSG: 11a. Attends and engages. Foundations: 11a. Attends and engages</p>	<p>as they grow older.</p> <p>Objectives: TSG: 11a. Attends and engages. Foundations: 11a. Attends and engages</p>	<p>can express our feelings. Discuss how you feel as you grow older.</p> <p>Objectives: TSG: 3a Foundations 3a: ESD-5</p>	<p>appropriate to show anger.</p> <p>Objectives: TSG: 3a Foundations 3a: ESD-5</p>
Question of the Day	<p>What does age mean?</p> <p>Create a KWI chart to assess prior knowledge of what age means to the students.</p>	<p>Who are the people in your family?</p>	<p>What is a centenarian?</p>	<p>How will we celebrate the 100th Days of School?</p>	<p>What can you do at 100 years of age?</p>
Large Group	<p>Welcome Song:</p> <p>Open Routine: Welcome students to large groups.</p> <p>Talk about the question of the day.</p> <p>Discussion and Shared</p>	<p>Welcome Song:</p> <p>Open Routine: Welcome students to large groups.</p> <p>Talk about the question of the day.</p> <p>Discussion and Shared Writing: Who</p>	<p>Welcome Song:</p> <p>Open Routine: Welcome students to large groups.</p> <p>Talk about the question of the day.</p> <p>Discussion and Shared Writing:</p>	<p>Welcome Song:</p> <p>Open Routine: Welcome students to large groups.</p> <p>Talk about the question of the day.</p> <p>Discussion and Shared Writing: How can we celebrate the</p>	<p>Welcome Song:</p> <p>Open Routine: Welcome students to large groups.</p> <p>Talk about the question of the day.</p> <p>Discussion and Shared Writing: Tell the students they will have a</p>

	Writing: What is a family?	are the people in your family?	Who are the centenarians?	100 th day of school celebration?	family tree project to work on at home with their family.
Read-Aloud	<p>My Grandparents Love Me by Claire Freeman & Julie Abbot</p> <p>Introduce the book and discuss its content. Pause for understanding when reading the text.</p> <p>Who are the characters?</p> <p>What is the main problem?</p> <p>Objectives: TSG: 3a</p> <p>Foundations: ESD-5</p>	<p>Old to Joy by Anita Crawford Clark</p> <p>Introduce the book and discuss its content. Pause for understanding when reading the text.</p> <p>Who are the characters?</p> <p>What is the main problem?</p> <p>Objectives: TSG: 3a</p> <p>Foundations: ESD-5</p>	<p>One Hundred Days of School by Trudy Harris</p> <p>Introduce the book and discuss its content. Pause for understanding when reading the text.</p> <p>Who are the characters?</p> <p>What is the main problem?</p> <p>Objectives: TSG: 3a</p> <p>Foundations: ESD-5</p>	<p>The Oldest Student: How Mary Walker Learned to Read by Rita Lorraine</p> <p>Introduce the book and discuss its content. Pause for understanding when reading the text.</p> <p>Who are the characters?</p> <p>What is the main problem?</p> <p>Objectives: TSG: 3a</p> <p>Foundations: ESD-5</p>	<p>I'll Teach My Dog 100 Words by Michael Frith</p> <p>Introduce the book and discuss its content. Pause for understanding when reading the text.</p> <p>Who are the characters?</p> <p>What is the main problem?</p> <p>Objectives: TSG: 3a</p> <p>Foundations: ESD-5</p>

Assessment Exit Tickets	KWL Chart comparing the answers	Make a graph	Create a board with years of age and invite the students to count by tens to 100.	List things to do for the 100th Days of School celebration. Then, create a class project for the celebration.	Make a list on the chart paper of what you can do at 100 years old.
<p>Family Partnerships: Invite a family member to help their student with the family tree.</p> <p>Invite families to access the eBooks <i>The Delany Sisters Reach High</i>, <i>One Hundred Steps</i>, and <i>The Lobster Lady</i> via QR code.</p>					

Appendix 1

Implementing Teaching Strategies

This unit impacts the various standards of effective teaching. It provides students with opportunities to gain experience in the spectrum of aging within families and communities. This is a literacy-based unit that spans out to impact socioemotional perceptions. It fosters appropriate teaching standards within the early childhood spectrum of education. The core content is derived from the course of study standards and objectives, which are directives from the Charlotte Mecklenburg Bright Beginnings Program and the North Carolina Early Division of Child Development. The objectives are aligned with the foundational principles of early learning and development supported by the North Carolina Foundation for Early Learning and Development and the Teaching Strategies Gold Objectives for Development and Learning. The students can learn about ageism and the productivity of people of all ages.

Objectives:

TSG: 3a Balances needs and rights of self and others

TSG: 11a. Attends and engage

Foundations: ESD-5 Children demonstrate the social and behavioral skills needed to successfully participate in groups.

Foundations: APL-8: Children maintain attentiveness and focus.

The unit will address literacy, social-emotional development, and awareness of ageism within a student's family and community.

Figure 1

Anchor Chart

KWL		
What I Know	What I Want to Know	What I Learned

Figure 2

Question of the Day Data Tracker

Day	Question of the day	Data Points	Data Points

Figure 3
Anchor Chart

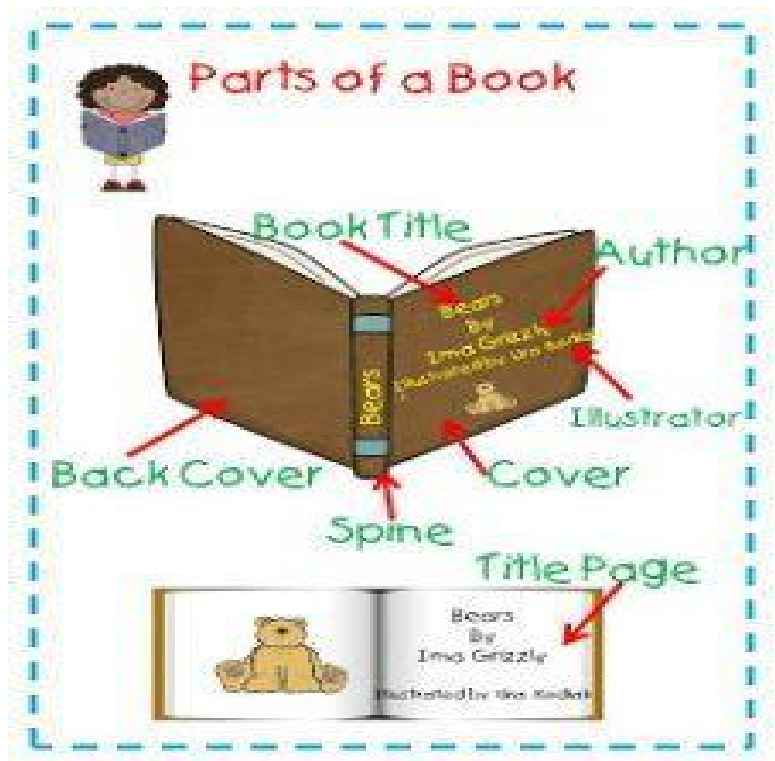
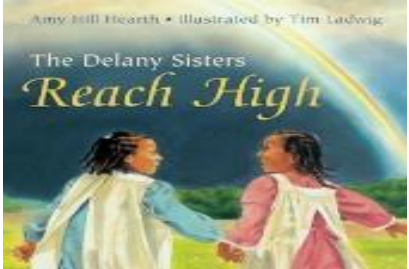

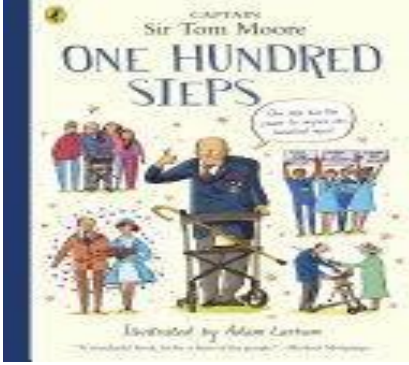



Figure 4

Home Digital Read

<p>Digital Reading at Home We will focus on digital instruction opportunities for reading books at home. Our objective is to integrate more technology into learning from school to home. At home, read the book by scanning the QR Code with your phone or tablet. Enjoy the book. After reading the book, record it on the reading log. This option encourages digital reading and provides additional opportunities to learn about older adults and the significant input people make at all ages.</p>	<p>Digital Reading Questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do you relate to the book? 2. What is your favorite part? 3. What would you change in any part of the book? 4. What are some things you can identify with the age of the characters in the book? 	<p>Non-Technology Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher book packet • School Library • Public Library
<p>Day 1 Book: The Delany Sisters Reach High</p>		
<p>Day 2 Book: One Hundred Steps</p>		


<p>Day 3 Book: The Lobster Lady</p>	 <p>The Lobster Lady A woman's 100-year-old legend Richard A. Walsh illustrated by Maury J. Gross</p>	 <p>billy</p>
<p>Day 4 Book: Llama Llama Grams and Grandpa</p>	 <p>Llama Llama grams and grandpa Anna Dewdney</p>	 <p>billy</p>
<p>Day 5 Book: Fauja Singh Keeps Going</p>	 <p>FAUJA SINGH KEEPS GOING The story of the world's oldest marathon runner by GURPREET SINGH Illustrated by MURRAY CLOSE</p>	 <p>billy</p>

Figure 5

Take Home Activity

Family Tree

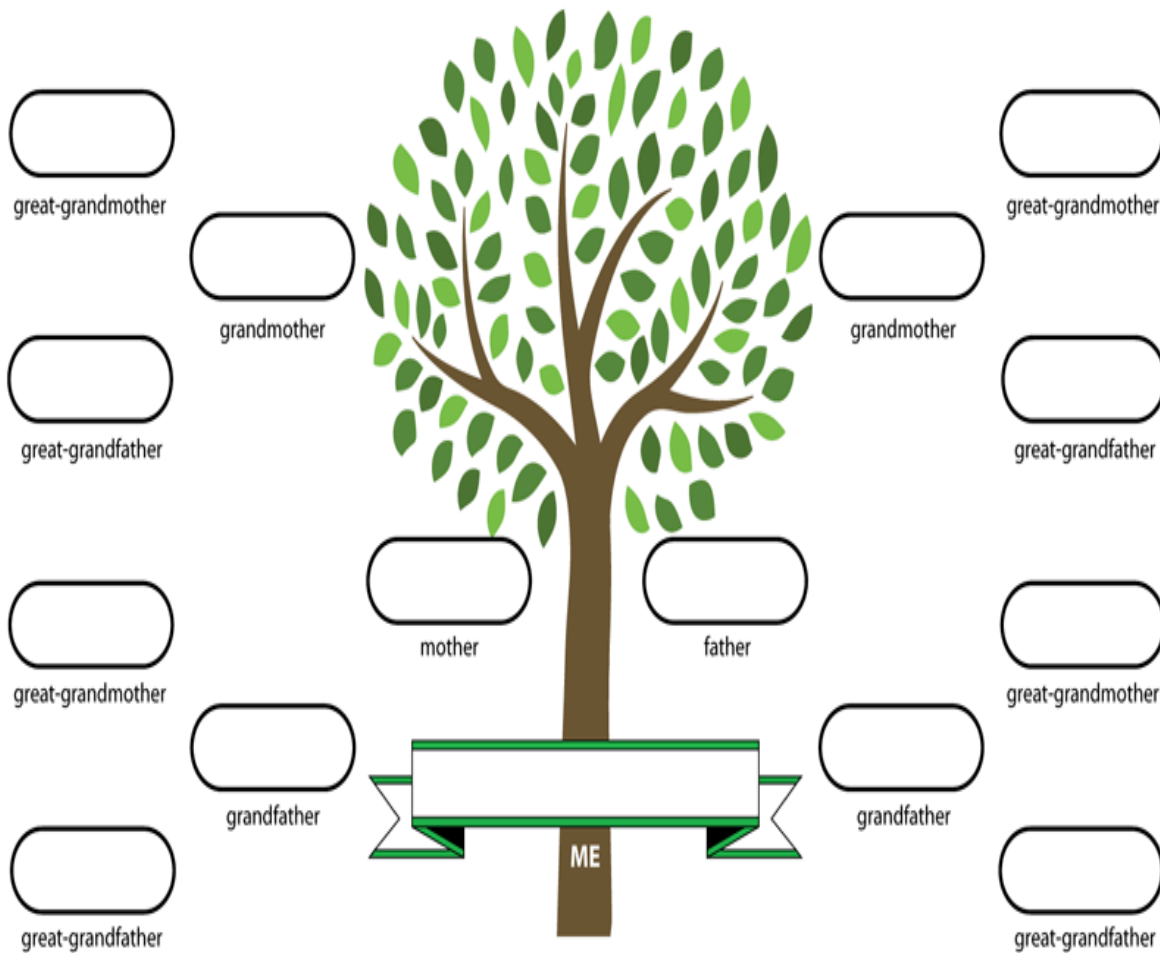


Figure 6

Formative Assessment

Ageism Awareness Formative Assessment

Question	Answer	Un Clear In Process	Clear Proficient
What is age?			
Can people of different ages have fun?			
What can an older person do?			
How do you treat older people?			

Formative assessment will be administered during interest areas at the beginning of the study.

KWL Chart

What do you know (The teacher will assess at the beginning of the lesson)

- What age is an old person to you? Record the answer on a graph.

What do you want to learn (The teacher will assess before teaching students about ageism)

- Share experiences and ask questions that you would like to know about older adults.

Figure 7

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment will be administered during interest areas at the end of the study.

KWL Chart

What did you learn (The teacher will use the learned column under the L area of the KWL chart for the summative assessment)

- Invite the students to share what they have learned about ageism.

Invite the students to draw a picture and share their drawing with a partner

- Draw a picture of what you now think an older person looks like.
- The students will join a group conversation and indicate what they have learned about ageism and their perception of older adults.

Ageism Awareness Summative Assessment

Task	No	Un Clear In Process	Clear Proficient
Students show awareness of ages.			
Do students understand that people of many ages can engage in various activities?			
Can older people do things that all people can do?			
Are all people equal and should be treated the same?			

Figure 8
Material List

Anchor chart: The Parts of the Book

This is used to introduce the children to book awareness

Chart paper and markers

This is used for the KWL charts, graphic organizers, modeled writing, and question-of-the-day tracker

Read-aloud books kit

This is used to read books to the students.

The home reading book set

This is used to provide the students without technology the books to read for the home reading project,

Figure 9
Student List

Primary writing paper

Assessment sheets

Family Tree sheet

Digital Reading

Reading List for Students

Poem: Everybody Has A Name by Jean Warren

The Way I Feel by Janine Amos

Sick Day for Amos McGee

I Feel Silly and Other Moods That Make My Day by Jamie Lee Curtis

Sophie Gets Angry...Really, Angry by Molly Bang

Book:

Book: A

Book: Today

Book: When

Read Aloud

Book: My Grandparents Love Me by Claire Freeman & Julie Abbot

Book: Old to Joy by Anita Crawford Clark

Book: One Hundred Days of School by Trudy Harris

Book: The Oldest Student: How Mary Walker Learned to Read by Rita Lorraine

I'll Teach My Dog 100 Words by Michael Frith

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