

David Pontrella
Becoming a better LGBT ally/What to do if someone comes out to you
Human Rights Education Internship
Montclair State University
pontrellad1@montclair.edu
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LESSON PLAN

Unit Topic: Becoming a better LGBT ally/What to do if someone comes out to you

Rationale for the Lesson: There are still so many stigmas and prejudices about the LGBT community. Even in 2018 people still do not understand what it means to be LGBT or really know how to be a good ally. With these lessons and activities they should help try to educate those who do not understand what being LGBT means and how do be 100% open minded about it if someone comes out to you. The coming out process can be stressful for many LGBT people and so many individuals do not fully understand the stress it can put on someone who is going to come out. So this lesson will try to give some sort of perspective and aid to those who do not have to come out so they can try to understand.

Essential Question/Guiding Question: What can you/your school do to help someone who comes out to you? How can you/your school/faculty be better allies?

New Jersey Common Core State Standards:

Social Studies 6.1.4.A.3 Determine how “fairness,” “equality,” and the “common good” have influenced new laws and policies over time at the local and national levels of United States government.

Social Studies 6.1.4.A.9 Compare and contrast responses of individuals and groups, past and present, to violations of fundamental rights (e.g., fairness, civil rights, human rights).

Objectives:

- Students will be able to:
 - assess their feelings about any prejudice they hold.
 - evaluate their feelings to become more open.
 - become an ally to the LGBT community
 - gain knowledge about the LGBT community.
 - empathize with someone who identifies as LGBT and gain a new perspective.

Lesson Opener/Anticipatory Set/Lead-In/Do Now: Hand out a GLSEN(<https://www.glsen.org/safespace>) word matching paper to see what students already know when it comes to. Assess understanding and prior knowledge.(5 Mins)

Step-By-Step Procedures with Time Allocations:

(Include 3-4 questions and mini-activities to check/monitor student understanding during the lesson.)

1-”Dealing with Homophobia” Q&A(10-15 minutes): This asks the students questions on how they deal with any homophobic remarks/comments heard at school/work/home/etc. It gives them a chances to begin to think about how they could do more to prevent such actions from happening in the future. Using made up questions and some from the GLSEN Safe Space Kit <https://www.glsen.org/safespace>

- Have you heard any homophobic/transphobic comments in your school?
- Have you ever used that kind of language, even without it being malicious?
- Have you stopped others from using that language? How did they react?

2-Laramie Project Clip and Discussion(10 minutes):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u1qiTmF0p4A>

Using a clip from the Laramie Project, we can create a discussion on discrimination and hate crimes against the LGBT community.

-1:01:09 to 1:03:10 clip of re creation of what Matthew Shepard's' friends did when the Westboro Baptist Church came to protest his funeral with anti-gay signs and speech.

- How do students react to hearing anti LGBT language, especially given the situation

3-Coming out stars(15-20 mins):

<https://lgbtrc.usc.edu/files/2015/05/Coming-Out-Stars.pdf>

This was created by the University of Southern California, it give a hands on perspective of how it feels for many LGBT individuals to come out of the closet. There are different color stars that have a different path that your life goes when coming out.

-divide colored stars (randomly) and hand out to students. Each star has a different path your life goes when you com out

- Have students stand in a circle(if space allows)
- Hand out stars w/ pens
- Do activity
- Take a few minutes to reflect, answers, questions, and gather feedback

Lesson Closure: Have a brief discussion about what they learned, what the activities taught them, and how they can take what they learned about being a better ally and actually use it to make the world a much better and safer place. Since it is more interactive and gives the perspective, this will be the most impactful part of the lesson. I will also compose a list of resources for them to educate themselves further and resources if they are LGBT and want to help their parents/family/friends/etc.

Materials and Equipment Needed:

20-30 Blue, Purple, Red, Orange(Assorted) paper stars and pens for Coming out activity.
Connection to internet/access to projector

Assignment: Simply just ask that they keep what they learned in mind and know that their voices have so much power to change the world and that they should use it wisely.

Assessment: (how will I evaluate student learning?): The students should feel free to ask any questions they have during the lesson. I will also stop several times to make sure that any questions get answered while also being able to stop and ask them questions about what they are learning to keep them in check.

Modifications for diverse learners (how does this lesson make accommodations?): This lesson can be rearranged and modified in order to fit the school class time so the students still get the full impact but in a condensed or longer version of the lesson plan. If presented to a Gay Straight Alliance, there can be less general informative activities and more hands on activities

Annotated Bibliography

“Everybody Carries A Piece Of The Truth .” 2002.

http://occr.ucdavis.edu/ccbp2004/laramie_teacher.pdf

This lesson provides a hand in hand guide to the film “The Laramie Project created by TIME Schools. This asks the student to watch the film and really think about what happened. It makes the look at what their own views are and what they can do to become more open. It allows the student to paint some sort of portrait of Laramie(where it takes place) and the people, to know how their voice has power, and to to get involved in creating change. The big picture question in this lesson is “Why Teach Laramie?” and there is a quote in the document that summarizes that question perfectly “The Laramie Project has the potential to inspire students to ponder, explore, listen, empathize, stretch and respond.”.

“GLSEN Safe Space Kit: Be an ALLY to LGBTQ Youth!” *GLSEN*, www.glsen.org/safespace (Links to an external site.)[Links to an external site.](#)

The GLSEN safe space kit is designated and designed to be used to create safer learning environments for LGBT students. The GLSEN website says “The kit not only guides you through making an assessment of your school's climate, policies and practices but it also outlines strategies that you may use to advocate for change”(GLSEN 2017). The kit is free to download via GLSEN. The kit also provides many different resources that can help educators make their schools more comfortable and accepting place for LGBT students. Since my topic is what schools can do to support LGBT students, This is a great resource for my lesson plan

LaramieProjectMovie. “The Laramie Project.” *YouTube*, YouTube, 6 June 2012,

www.youtube.com/watch?v=u1qiTmF0p4A (Links to an external site.)[Links to an external site.](#)

This is a link to the movie adaptation of the play “The Laramie Project”. Created by the Tectonic Theater Project in the late 90’s, it is a play made of collections of interviews conducted in Laramie, WY. These interviews are about the murder of Matthew Shepard, who was gay, and the trial of Aaron McKinney and Russell Henderson. They conducted over 200 interviews with people who have different backgrounds and views. This play shows how different, and yet so similar, the times are. It's a story that shocked the nation and the world, but yet sparked so much change and left a permanent mark on history and the LGBT community.

“LGBT-Inclusive Curriculum.” *LGBT-Inclusive Curriculum | GLSEN*, www.glsen.org/educate/resources/curriculum (Links to an external site.)[Links to an external site.](#)

These are a list of resources to lessons for different age groups in schools and is created by GLSEN. GLSEN(Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network) creates dozens of resources that help create positive environment for LGBT people in school, work, and day to day activities. It’s hard to teach younger(K-3)students about LGBT issues. However, there is an activity here called “The Boy With The Rainbow Heart” and “Heather Has Two Mommies” that are very helpful in

making them understand what being LGBT is and that it is normal and everyone should still be kind and respectful to one another.

Sadowski, Michael. *Safe Is Not Enough: Better Schools for LGBTQ Students*. Harvard Education Press, 2016.

This book highlights how schools and educators can make schools more LGBT friendly and help those students achieve their full potential. It tackles issues on schools that are religion based, schools, that already have LGBT inclusion and what more they can do, and even information for students on how to approach their administrative staff if they want to see change in their schools. In the book, there is a passage called “Bigger moves toward inclusive curriculum” this is something I had actually tried doing in my high school. However, they approached me about it during the last few months of my senior year and it fell through. Here it gives some steps on how schools can start creating an inclusive curriculum “Promote positive images of LGBT people, make age appropriate LGBT resources and books available, etc”. These are some of the steps that can start helping many students.

Shepard, Judy Peck. *The Meaning of Matthew: My Son's Murder in Laramie, and a World Transformed*. Plume, 2010.

This book is a written by Judy Shepard(the mother of Matthew Shepard) and is a powerful memoir of how she struggled to understand what no mother should have to understand, the death of a child. She and her husband Denis fought to bring justice to Matthew, even after he lost the fight for his life. Through her struggle, she found strength to face his killers in court and even create the Matthew Shepard Foundation. It shows how a mothers love can be strong even though her son is not here.

“University of Southern California.” *Educational Activities | LGBT Resource Center | USC*, lgbtrc.usc.edu/education/activities/.

This is a list of activities created by the University of Southern California to promote LGBT acceptance and awareness. These activities are very interactive for a classroom. One activity that I have my eyes on to use is the “Coming Out Stars”. This gives a perspective to coming out with different scenarios. It simulates the coming out process for those who do not have to actually come out. I had to do this for Safe Space training here at MSU last spring and it really opened my eyes. When I came out I was very lucky to have every ounce of support and love from my family. It helped me realize that there are people out there who are not so lucky, who get thrown out of their homes for being who they are.

Resources for LGBT Youth

The Trevor Project

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/#sm.00000d4om92dend7yvnb4zsjl67mt>

It Gets Better Project

<https://itgetsbetter.org/>

LGBT Hotline

<https://www.glbthotline.org/hotline.html>

Born This Way Foundation

<https://bornthisway.foundation/>

GLSEN

<https://www.glsen.org/educate/resources>

PFLAG

<http://www.pflag.org/>

Parents' Influence on the Health of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Teens

https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/protective/pdf/parents_influence_lgb.pdf

Human Rights Campaign

<https://www.hrc.org/>

Garden State Equality

<https://www.gardenstateequality.org/>

More Resources!

<https://www.cdc.gov/lgbthealth/youth-resources.htm>

