

## *A STUDY GUIDE FOR TEACHERS*

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*UNC-TV's Documentary Exploring Diversity in North Carolina's Public Schools*

*By the year 2020, the descendants of North Carolina's first white settlers will likely be in the minority again for the first time in nearly three centuries. How we prepare the next generation to recognize and respect difference may be the most significant lesson our schools have to teach.*

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# Something in Common PROGRAM SUMMARY

Recognized as one of the nation's best places to live and work, North Carolina continues to attract families from hundreds of countries. The challenge to accommodate so many new people and the languages and cultures they bring with them is nowhere more pronounced than in the state's public schools.

UNC-TV's 2001 documentary, **Something in Common**, offers a candid portrait of how North Carolina public schools are dealing with differences in faith, race, ethnicity, economic status, sexual orientation, ability, and culture both in and outside the classroom. Through interviews with students, teachers, parents and administrators, the hour-long program considers the many ways in which North Carolina has become more representative of the world at large.



*The highest result of education is tolerance.*

--Helen Keller

*Tolerance (n.) The capacity for or the practice of recognizing and respecting the beliefs or practices of others.*

--The American Heritage Dictionary

*"In real life, on your high school campus for instance, you're all individuals walking through life at your own pace, expressing yourselves in unique and various ways. You could be a White person, you might be an African American. You might be a Native American or a Latino. You could have been raised as a Christian or as a Jew or as a Buddhist or as a Muslim. You might be a varsity athlete or somebody who has to use a wheelchair. The point is we're all different, we're all unique, and it's important to respect, accept and honor each other's differences."*

-- Elaine Penn, "One Vision" trainer

## FEATURED SCHOOLS

The documentary features the following schools across North Carolina:

1. Sweetwater Elementary School (Catawba County)
2. Ligon Middle School (Wake County)
3. Haw Creek Elementary School (Buncombe County)
4. Asheville High School (Buncombe County)
5. Siler City Elementary School (Chatham County)
6. Asheville Middle School (Buncombe County)
7. Red Springs High School (Robeson County)
8. Northern Durham High School (Durham County)
9. East Chapel Hill High School (Orange County)
10. New Hanover County (representatives from area schools)

# GOAL OF THE TEACHER GUIDE

This guide provides a framework to continue the discussions begun by the students who appear in “Something in Common.” Using segments of the documentary as a springboard, teachers may find the additional discussion questions and activities provided here as a means to explore various aspects of difference, respect and tolerance. These materials are intended to be freely adapted to generate meaningful, age-appropriate discussions about the diverse communities found in your school.

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Watching “Something in Common” can generate rich classroom discussions. On the next page, you’ll find a listing of the video segments in the order in which they appear, along with the running time for each piece. Each segment opens with a map of the state and a title for the county featured. Cueing the tape to these graphics should be relatively simple if you want to show one segment at a time and follow up with the suggested discussion and activities.

Teachers may use various segments of the documentary to launch a discussion around a particular theme without necessarily showing the entire video to the class. However, it is recommended that teachers view the entire program in advance to determine those segments which will be most useful and appropriate for your school and curriculum objectives. The program features students at the elementary, middle and high school levels.

Each segment has been given a theme for the class to explore. In the right-hand column of the guide, you’ll find a summary of the segment content along with notable quotes from students and others in the documentary. In the left-hand column, teachers will find an analysis of the theme and key concepts in the segment, suggested discussion questions and activities, a list of vocabulary words, and recommended topics for further study where appropriate. Show the segment and then engage! The theme of each segment can easily work in sequence, building upon the lessons of the previous segment.

This guide provides material sufficient for study units on diversity/tolerance ranging from one or two days to a week or more, depending on how creatively the teacher may be able to integrate the activities and discussion topics across the curriculum. The information is relevant to social studies, language arts, history, and even science (biodiversity). Teachers should note that the world wide web is a rich resource of additional materials on the topics of tolerance, cultural diversity, and overcoming prejudice. An extensive list of additional Internet and print resources is included as an appendix to the guide.

From these activities, students should be able to:

- *Recognize and identify examples of prejudice, intolerance and stereotyping*
- *Understand that beliefs and attitudes are based on personal experience and knowledge*
- *Consider how a person’s behavior influences the feelings and actions of others*
- *Demonstrate an awareness that all persons have the need to belong and to be accepted by others*
- *Recognize how physical and cultural differences both enrich and challenge the collective life of any community*

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## SEGMENT 1

# Overview of Diversity in N.C.

**ANALYSIS:** The experience of feeling different from others is a common human condition that is particularly amplified during adolescence. Students at all grade levels might productively consider the lyrics to the title song of the documentary as they explore their own feelings of being different and the many kinds of difference among people in their school and local community.

## ACTIVITY

As a group, have the class make a detailed inventory on the board of all the kinds of difference – by race, languages, abilities, religions, ethnicity, rural/urban, family incomes, neighborhoods, ages, etc. – that are represented in your school and your grade level.

- 1. How do students in your school organize themselves along lines of sameness? Why do you think they do that?**
- 2. When does difference matter? When does it not matter?**
- 3. Where and when do you feel most different from others around you?**
- 4. When does being different make you feel most uncomfortable or lonesome?**
- 5. When does being different make you feel proud?**
- 6. What does it mean to be privileged? Do you know anyone who is privileged?**

Pass out the lyrics to "Something in Common" and have students consider whether they agree or disagree with the paradox in the song.

## VOCABULARY

<b>diversity</b>	<b>ethnicity</b>	<b>privilege</b>
<b>culture</b>	<b>accommodate</b>	<b>paradox</b>

## TITLE SONG

### *Something in Common*

*Ask any person  
you see on the street  
what makes them different  
from others they meet.*

*All of us have something  
that sets us apart,  
makes us feel lonesome  
and awkward and lost.*

#### **CHORUS**

*It's differences  
we all have in common --  
the loneliness  
of being alive.  
Naming our fears  
is the way we come home.  
Yes, we all live together – alone.*

*There's color and culture  
and gender and age...  
There's who we love and how we love,  
privilege and faith.*

*But difference is smaller  
than all that we share,  
and who taught us anyway  
that we should compare?*

#### **REPEAT CHORUS**

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For more information on sheet music,  
call Minnow Media (919) 454-7429

## SEGMENT 1 CONTINUED

**ANALYSIS:** The history section of the opening segment (verbatim narration at right) offers an historical context to help viewers examine the pace of demographic change over the last century in North Carolina and to consider the economic and political factors that have helped shape the state's present population.

### ACTIVITY

As part of an oral history project, find old pictures of schools in your community. (Perhaps your school has yearbooks in the library?) Then, if possible, have students interview some long-time residents about what the schools were like 20 to 50 years ago or invite a guest or two to class who can speak to local history. Have students explore the answers to the following questions in reflective writing assignment and/or discussion.

- 1. What can you see from old photos about how the population of your community changed?**
- 2. What do older and longtime residents say about these changes?**
- 3. Were there any particular moments of conflict around the racial integration of schools in your area?**
- 4. Are there particular stories people tell about how things used to be?**
- 5. Who are the most recent newcomers to your community?**
- 6. If you were making a documentary about your school, what stories would you tell about yesterday and today?**

### TOPICS FOR FURTHER STUDY

- North Carolina's first "education governor," Charles B. Aycock  
[fbia.com/~aycock/](http://fbia.com/~aycock/)
- Jim Crow laws  
[www.ci.salisbury.nc.us/nctrans/cars/1211info.htm](http://www.ci.salisbury.nc.us/nctrans/cars/1211info.htm)
- History of Native American Education in North Carolina  
[www.uncp.edu/nativemuseum/](http://www.uncp.edu/nativemuseum/)
- Techniques in collecting oral history  
[www.bcpl.net/~dcurtis/oralhistory/howto.html](http://www.bcpl.net/~dcurtis/oralhistory/howto.html)

## NORTH CAROLINA HISTORY

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in North Carolina, Governor Charles B. Aycock called for universal education -- for boys and girls, Black, White and Indian alike.

"Open wide the schoolhouses and give to every child the opportunity to develop all there is in him."

It was a bold plan in a state where Jim Crow laws had just passed, making sure black citizens were separate, if not equal, and where the Native American population was the largest east of the Mississippi. It meant that North Carolina would have three different school systems.

By the 1920s and 30s, because of Aycock's vision, North Carolina led the nation in new school construction. More children were riding in school buses each day than in any other state. When the civil rights movement forced the unification of North Carolina's public school system, many students experienced racial diversity for the first time. By the 1970s because of the state's economic development, more people were moving into North Carolina than were leaving.

With the latest waves of immigration to our state in the 1990s, the Hispanic population has grown by almost 400 percent, while the Asian population has doubled. North Carolina is now home to Hmong and Muslim, Iranian and Ukrainian people from New Dehli and New York.

So much cultural diversity has brought a reexamination of bedrock beliefs about interracial relationships, sexual orientation, and long-held religious and political values. The challenge to accommodate so many new people and ideas is nowhere more pronounced than in our public schools.

## SEGMENT 11

# *Melting Pot vs. Salad Bowl?*

**ANALYSIS:** The principal of Sweetwater Elementary talks about how public school is sometimes characterized as a melting pot or a salad bowl. Both are vivid metaphors, but the two images represent diametrically opposite views on how we deal with differences among peoples. The “melting pot” suggests that everyone should blend together in a stew. The “salad bowl” image suggests that a cucumber is still free to be a cucumber though it may share the same bowl with many other vegetables. The discussion questions here are aimed at encouraging students to think about what we gain and what we lose when we ask (or expect) newcomers to assimilate fully into the “dominant” culture of a local community. You may also want to engage parents by having a multicultural night at your school!

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. **Why is getting everyone to speak English the goal at Sweetwater?**
2. **What does it mean to be “working class”?**
3. **Do differences in family incomes make it harder for students to get along? Why or why not?**
4. **Draw your idea of a “melting pot” and then a “salad bowl”? How are they different? When we are talking about appreciating differences, which one works better as a symbol?**
5. **How can people come together as “one” and still retain their individuality?**
6. **If your school had a multicultural night, what would it look like? How would you celebrate difference?**

### VOCABULARY

<b>Hmong</b>	<b>translator</b>	<b>multicultural</b>
<b>assimilate</b>	<b>interpreter</b>	<b>working class</b>

## SWEETWATER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

There has been a school on the site of Sweetwater Elementary School in Hickory, North Carolina since the Civil War. Today the school is known in the community as “the little United Nations.” Fifty percent of Sweetwater’s students are Hmong, from the hill county in Southeast Asia. Another thirty percent come from Latin America.

Not only do the Hmong children at Sweetwater learn English, but like their American counterparts, they are practicing their Spanish, too.

On multicultural night at Sweetwater, parents demonstrate their heritage through music, dance, costume and food.

*“School has always been a melting pot or I’ve heard it called a salad bowl also – a mixture of kids, whether in the old days, whether it was the rich kids and the not-rich kids. The great part about this school is that my kids are all of need, almost without exception... We’re a working class area here. So whether they be White, whether they be African-American, Spanish, Hmong, you’ve got families that are working for a living just to feed their children and to raise their kids.”*

--Sweetwater Principal, Ed Sigmon

*I am but a small voice  
I have but a small dream  
To smile upon the sun  
Be free to dance and sing  
Be free to sing my song everywhere*

#### CHORUS

*Come young citizens of the world  
We are one. We are one.*

--song sung by the Fifth Grade

## SEGMENT III

# Norms and Name Calling

**ANALYSIS:** Even in a magnet school where, in this case, most students share a common interest in the performing arts, differences in behavior, speech, style, fashion, cultural practices, race, ethnicity, and social status can cause conflicts. This segment of the documentary may be used to consider the prevalence of particular “norms” in your school culture. What is “in” and what is “out”? And who decides? And what is the impetus behind name calling? How can you reduce student-on-student harassment at your school?

### ACTIVITY

Read aloud: *Name-calling has played a tremendously powerful role in the history of the world. It has ruined reputations, stirred men and women to outstanding accomplishments, sent others to prison cells, and made men mad enough to enter battle and slaughter their fellow men. Name-calling usually links a person to a negative symbol. The person who uses this technique hopes that the audience will reject the person on the basis of the negative symbol, instead of looking at the available evidence.\**

- 1. What is considered normal at your school? Is there a dominant group? What are their characteristics?**
- 2. Do students harass each other at your school for not being “normal”? How?**

Brainstorm a list of scenarios where conflict occurs between students in your school. Then have groups of four students role-play a peer mediation session. Two students will mediate and two will act out the conflicts. Following a general discussion of the results, have each student draw/paint a picture of what harassment or name-calling does to his/her emotions. Then have students meet in threes to share stories about themselves, a close friend or a relative who was harassed or called a bad name.

- 1. What did the person do in response to the name-calling?**
- 2. What would you do if you were being harassed?**
- 3. How do teachers, counselors, parents help resolve problems or issues that you don't feel comfortable about?**

Bring the class back together to share stories and then brainstorm ways you can reduce harassment in your school.

\* Adapted from [www.carmen.artsci.washington.edu/propaganda/name.htm](http://www.carmen.artsci.washington.edu/propaganda/name.htm)

## LIGON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Ligon Middle School has the recent distinction of having the most diverse student body in the Wake County Schools, North Carolina's largest local system. Ligon is located in a low-income neighborhood in downtown Raleigh.

Ligon is a magnet school for the performing arts, and while most students share this common interest, the racial, economic and ethnic diversity at Ligon has posed some challenges. A recent survey of students revealed that the number one problem they see at school is student-on-student harassment.

*“I've seen racism. I've seen people saying “Oh he sat here and he's Black so he must have done that.” I've seen people saying, “I don't like the things you wear. I don't like the clothes, I don't like the color of your skin, I don't like the way you believe so I'm going to punch you.”*

-- a Ligon peer mediator

When disputes arise, students may be referred to a peer mediation program. Sixth graders, trained in conflict resolution, help their classmates resolve their differences.

*“Not everybody's going to be the same, act the same, or think the same, and just because they don't look like you or think like you or believe in what you believe in, doesn't mean that they aren't people and that they don't care about others just as you do.”*

-- White girl

*“When you get older it's not going to be, ‘well, you're separated,’ because when you have a job there are people from all walks of life there, and so you start younger and you start dealing with other people from different races and appreciating them being there. So I think it's very, very important.”*

--African-American girl

## SEGMENT IV

# *Making a Place at the Table*

**ANALYSIS:** When school counselor Vicki Rogers asks the students at Haw Creek Elementary whether the children who have been living in the area for most of their lives have been welcoming to the new students who've just moved there, one boy gives a very candid answer: "Well, I think they welcome the English people, but sometimes I don't think they welcome the Russian people." New immigrants from dozens of countries are moving into North Carolina every day. Will we make a place at the table for them? (Teachers may want to use the marble activity shown in the video, especially if there has been racial tension in the class or school.)

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Have you ever been the new kid in a neighborhood, school, or group? What was it like?**
- 2. How does it feel to approach a table and to be ignored? What does it really mean "to make a place at the table" for someone? Why are some groups and individuals more welcomed than others?**
- 3. What is the national origin of your family? If you are not a Native American, when did your relatives first come to the United States? What do you know about how were they treated?**
- 4. How do people born in America act? Is there an "American" culture?**

### ACTIVITIES

Have different groups of students role play the behaviors of not welcoming a newcomer and of welcoming a newcomer – at the bus stop, in the cafeteria, in the hallway, at the bathroom mirror.

Mark off two areas of the classroom and have students vote with their feet: *Should people who move to the U.S. give up their customs and act like they were born here?* Discuss and then allow students to change their votes. Next vote: *Should you have to learn the native language of the country where you live?* Discuss and revote.

Give a pop quiz in gibberish with only one or two familiar words and have students try to figure out the assignment. Or invite a guest to give a ten-minute lesson in a foreign language to the class. Discuss what it is like to be unable to understand a new language or to be illiterate.

### HAW CREEK ELEMENTARY

Of the 650 students at Haw Creek Elementary in Asheville, about a hundred are African-American. The rest are Caucasian, but fifty of those children are recent immigrants from Eastern Europe. Many of these students have moved into traditionally African-American neighborhoods, and relations are strained.

*"Black and white people together -- it's bad. It's like in my class, Montrell, he always call me stinky or something like that."*

-- Ukrainian girl

*"Ilya's family, they ride my bus, and there are some other kids who don't like them just because they're from Russia. And they're kind of like my friends and they just like slap them for some reason, and I keep on asking them to leave them alone."*

--Ukrainian boy

*"And I have heard from my children things like, 'Well you live in America, you need to learn to speak American.' And I have heard that. I've had more difficulty with the parents than I have with the children."*

--DeDe Swift, Spanish teacher

## SEGMENT V

# *Out of the Comfort Zone: Fear of "Other"*

**ANALYSIS:** All humans are more comfortable with the familiar. It's a natural impulse to spend time with people with whom you share some common interests, background, beliefs and attitudes. Many of us develop these "comfort zones" and seldom step outside of them. When we find ourselves in strange territory - where the customs, habits and languages are foreign - it can be frightening. This fear often keeps us from establishing relationships with persons from other cultural groups. The activities here offer students a chance to examine the boundaries of their own comfort zones and to consider how they might step beyond them. Being uncomfortable can be seen as a positive sign of growth and is usually a temporary condition.

### ACTIVITY

Using masking tape, mark off ten squares in a row on the classroom floor, each about two feet square. Label the squares from one to ten, with one being "Most Comfortable" and ten being "Least Comfortable." In groups of five to ten, have students approach this "comfort scale" and stand in the square that best describes their comfort level when:

- **They visit a nursing home**
- **A blind person asks for directions**
- **They are asked to hold a baby**
- **A panhandler approaches on the street**
- **Someone is praying in a restaurant**
- **A couple is having a fight in public**
- **Someone talks to you right in your face**
- **Someone is in a wheelchair**
- **A couple is hugging and kissing in public**
- **Someone famous is in the room**
- **People are speaking a foreign language**

Students may want to add their own examples to the list and continue the survey. The point is that our comfort zones are not all the same. Different kinds of difference are scary to some and not others. Have students also consider how their decisions about which box to choose were affected by watching their friends' choices and the choices of people they do not know very well.

*Continued on next page*

### ASHEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

In addition to learning about the histories of marginalized groups, students in the multicultural studies class taught by Jackie Burris and Diane Rutledge at Asheville High are given permission to name the prejudices and problems they see around them everyday. The teachers created the class as an antidote to "people who don't want their children to learn about people of different colors or to associate with them," Burris says. "I feel like what I'm doing is right, and if I step on some toes, then, so be it. I really don't mean to step on toes, I really mean to stomp on them... And if I'm making you feel uncomfortable, that's okay, too."

Song

*We've got your dream, Mr. King  
It's in our hearts  
We've got your dream, Mr. King  
And Ms. Rosa Parks  
Rosa Parks, you know  
You're in our hearts*

*We've got your dream of peace  
Love and harmony  
It's a vision of the way things  
Gotta be, gotta be  
You know they gotta be*

-- "Mr. King" by Donna the Buffalo

*"At times, it's black and white and some times it's have and have-not or it's just people don't understand. What people don't understand they are afraid of. And when people are afraid of something they try to get rid of it as soon as possible."*

-- Asheville High student body president

*"I really don't go to church, not really. Church is big here in Asheville, because I realized that churches are prejudiced against other churches and what church you go to and what religion..."*

--African-American girl

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **By keeping a child from learning about other cultures, what are parents really doing?**
2. **What does it feel like to know someone is afraid of you?**
3. **What do you do when you are afraid? What have you found is the most effective way to deal with fear?**
4. **How well does television depict the actual ethnic diversity in your community? In North Carolina? How might increasing the ethnic diversity we see on television change the way people feel about different groups?**

Teachers may want to frame a deeper discussion around the quotations from students at the right and have students identify some of the behaviors that show fear, such as:

- To fight
- To ignore
- To expose or make fun of
- To exhibit anger as a mask for fear
- To run away

To overcome fear, teachers may suggest that students:

- Get information
- Get reassurance
- Get support

As many of the students at Asheville High suggest, it is misinformation or a lack of information that often causes fear and leads to conflict. One of the ways that we stay afraid of “the Other” is if we are part of the “norm.” Those who are members of the “dominant culture” don’t necessarily have to learn anything about those who are in the minority.

## TOPICS FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

Search the web for:

- “Driving while black” – racial profiling by police
- Rosa Parks, Montgomery, Alabama 1955
- “I Have a Dream” speech by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

*“I work at a grocery store. I am assistant bookkeeper and one day I was collecting money from the register, and this white lady said this comment about that I was so lucky that Bi-Lo gave me a chance to work there, ‘cause I was Mexican. Made me feel kinda bad but I ignore what she say ‘cause I mean, it wasn’t, it wasn’t going to hurt me, I mean, I don’t care what they say, ‘cause I ignore people who be giving those kind of comments ‘cause I know they, like, ignorant people.”*

--Hispanic student

*“I started driving last year and within the same month that I got my car I had gotten pulled over like six times. Now I mean that is like a lot in one month to get pulled over six times.”*

-- Muslim student

*“She got in her car and locked her door like I was going to get out and take her car or something. So this white dude walked past me and I locked my door and he looked back and rolled his eyes and I just wanted to say ‘that’s how I feel on a daily basis when you do that to me. I have my own car. I have my own job. There’s no reason for you to lock your doors every time I get out of my car and walk by.”*

-- African-American student

*If Ms. Burris was teaching this [class] to all Black people, they would most likely have the same response to the things that are being taught. But if you teach it to the White students and the Hispanic students and the Native American students along with the Black students, they can all get each other’s feedback and kinda incorporate that into their daily lives, you know?*

-- African-American student

## SEGMENT VI

# Does Diversity = Division?

**ANALYSIS:** This segment can be used as a jumping-off point for discussion of the economic factors that often bring in immigrants and the resulting fear of displacement among citizens who have been in residence in a community for a long time.

Teachers may want to point to local examples of economic difficulties or booming development and have students consider how these changes have affected their families, local employment, and immigration trends.

The images of the anti-immigration rally in Siler City are vivid examples of how the fear of displacement by new groups moving in can stir strong emotions and even violence against newcomers.

### ACTIVITY

Have the class divide up into teams of five. Give each group one of the words below to look up in the dictionary or on the Internet. Have them prepare to report back to the whole class on how the word relates to this segment of the video.

<b>anti-Semitism</b>	<b>Ku Klux Klan</b>	<b>xenophobia</b>
<b>scapegoat</b>	<b>marginalize</b>	<b>bigotry</b>

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. What is the effect of rapid change on the jobs and economy in a community? How do people generally react to major change?**
- 2. What did the signs carried by the protesters at the anti-immigration rally in Siler City say? What do the signs mean?**
- 3. Do you think as David Duke does that diversity brings division? How can the recognition of differences and divisions become a useful step in the process toward respect and acceptance of others?**

### ACTIVITY

Write a diary entry or an internal monologue as if you were a Hispanic person standing on the street in Siler City during the anti-immigration rally. How did it feel to be watching? What did you see? What did you want to do?

Make signs and have a rally in your school for racial harmony.

## SILER CITY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

In 1987, there were only two Hispanic students in the entire Chatham County school system. Today, more than 40% of the residents of Siler City are Latino. Tensions peaked in February of 2000 when former Klansman David Duke was invited to speak at an anti-immigration rally there.

*"This community is basically being invaded. It's being transformed where people do not feel safe anymore on the streets here. They're not happy with the education their children are getting in the schools..."*

*"...A house divided against itself cannot stand. When you have more diversity, you have more division. You end up having more conflict."*

--David Duke

Because the growth in the Latino population has been so rapid and the local response so divided, Siler City Elementary has enlisted the aid of the Latin American Resource Center. The Center works in the classroom and after school, using art as a means to help children express and overcome prejudices toward people of different cultures.

*"What we do is going to be affected by the attitude that we have, and that attitude that we have about the other – the different – is based on our perception."*

-- Aura Camacho Maas

## SEGMENT VII

# *Assumptions and Stereotypes*

**ANALYSIS:** Difference is undeniable, though some people want to counteract stereotypes by suggesting that everyone is really the same underneath. Such simple thinking, however, obscures the greater richness and complexity of living among people of different races, incomes, ages, beliefs, orientations, and cultural backgrounds. It is also important to recognize that people who share a common trait – color, age, or country of origin – are vastly different from one another as individuals. According to the National Network for Child Care (NNCC): “Stereotypes are generalizations about people usually based on inaccurate information or assumptions rather than facts. Stereotypes do not take into account the great diversity of people within a group of people.” The goal of tolerance is to overcome stereotyping and assumptions while at the same time recognizing and appreciating difference.

### ACTIVITY

As a group, make an inventory of all the many formal and informal names of hate. From this list pick a few target groups and list some of the stereotypes associated with the group. How are teenagers stereotyped? Discuss how you can reduce or eliminate stereotypes in your life. Here are eight steps from the NNCC to consider and discuss in small groups. Break in to small groups and each take an item from the list to consider how they would accomplish it.

- 1. Focus on every person as an individual.**
- 2. Become more aware of stereotypes and how they interfere with our ability to perceive and interact with people.**
- 3. Remember that there are more differences within a group than between groups.**
- 4. Recognize that we're all part of many groups, none of which can totally explain or define who we are.**
- 5. Learn to look at things from the other person's point of view.**
- 6. Adapt a more humble, tentative attitude about the accuracy of our judgments.**
- 7. Be willing to learn more about the culture and background of people different from us.**
- 8. Take opportunities to neutralize stereotypes we hear.**

## ASHEVILLE MIDDLE SCHOOL

At Asheville Middle School, many of the teachers come from very diverse backgrounds. The school has also been working with the local Center for Diversity Education (See appendix.) In Reid Chapman's social studies class, Center staff have helped create a curriculum that tackles issues of religious difference. The class also represents a broad range of academic achievement and socio-economic backgrounds. Some students are reading at a third grade level and others at the college level. Some students come from two parent families, both of whom work, some live with their grandparents in public housing.

**“When we went to visit Atlanta at the end of our religion unit, I met somebody from the Muslim religion. I think I was kind of prejudiced, too, because the way they dressed, ‘cause they wear veils and some of them wear face masks and they can’t, like, they have to always wear long pants. And I thought that was kind of odd and different, but once you get to realize what their religion is all about, it’s not really that different because they are just following the laws of their, um, Koran.”**

--White girl

**“I said, I couldn’t really say anything about the way you look and you dressed, because you could probably look at me and say ‘ooh what has she got on?’ I mean because that’s just the way they were raised and that is the way they were taught to grow up and dress. And if I was to say something it would be wrong on my part.”**

-- African-American student

**“I’m tired of people calling kids bad. They are not bad.”**

-- Gloria Benton, chorus teacher

## SEGMENT VIII

# Messages in Community History

**ANALYSIS:** According to the Robeson County Green Map Project sponsors: “A Green Map is a map, not of roads, but of what is ‘growing’ (i.e. green) in a community. This growth includes what has been and is being created through nature alone and through human nature and relationships.” This segment encourages dialogue about local community landmarks and how these landmarks tell us about the people who live in the local community today, those who have come before, and how changes in the landscape, the businesses, and the names of places can tell us much about who is in charge of a community and how the demographic make-up of a community can be transformed.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. What are the local landmarks that distinguish your neighborhood or town – statues, parks, schools? Are these facilities named for particular people? Who were or are these people?**
- 2. List a half dozen street names for each of three or four neighborhoods that students are familiar with. What groups or individuals do these names represent?**
- 3. Are there any particular groups – by income, race, family name, or other distinctive factor – that dominate the sites, statues, or place names in your community? What does this say about the history of your community?**
- 4. Whose names are missing?**
- 5. Have the names of streets been changed to commemorate new leaders anywhere in your town?**
- 6. What is the impact of seeing these names of places and statues of particular persons every day of your life as you walk or ride by? Does the impact change if you are White, African-American, Latino or Native American? What messages are internalized by these aspects of the local scenery?**
- 7. What is the story behind the name of your town? Your county? Does it still fit?**
- 8. What is biodiversity? What does science say about the ecological reason for so many different forms of life?**

## RED SPRINGS HIGH SCHOOL

By some accounts, Robeson County is the most racially diverse rural county in the nation, and certainly in North Carolina. It is home to African Americans, Lumbee Indians, European Americans, and, more recently, Hispanics. It is also home to a great bio-diversity. Students and teachers in Robeson County have been mapping everything from landmark trees and buildings to ancient burial grounds. The end result, they hope, will be cross-cultural understanding, giving young people a greater appreciation for their own backyard.

*“Before integration, in the community that I grew up in, we had a common bus stop and three buses would come to the same stop – one from the traditional Indian school, one from the White school and one from the traditional Black school. But what was so unique was that we were segregated during the day but we would find an open field in the afternoon and we would play ball with each other until we couldn’t see. We would play hide and seek and all those kids’ games. We were in and out of each others’ houses eating biscuits and molasses and those kinds of things.”*

-- Danny Stedman, Principal

*“When my parents went to school Indians went to one school, Blacks went to one school, Whites went to the other school. I think that back then it should have been, I wish back then it could have been that they could have all combined together, because nowadays it’s like your parents don’t like Black people ‘cause they never got to know them, and they’re teaching their children, you don’t hang out with this kind of person because they don’t know their race. And I think that if the parents had of went to school with all three races combined, then the families wouldn’t have such big differences about other races.”*

-- Lumbee girl

## SEGMENT IX

# *The Hardest Conversation: Sexual Orientation*

In the last 18 minutes of the documentary, students and teachers from Durham, Orange and New Hanover counties talk frankly about the most controversial frontier in our schools' efforts to teach respect and tolerance for difference – youth who discover they are gay or who are questioning their sexual orientation.

At Northern High, one student describes her experience of going to the prom with another female as her date. A teacher tells about how she was “outed” as a sophomore at the school where she now teaches.

Students at East Chapel Hill High debate the morality of being gay and of being tolerant of gay lifestyles.

Then, in Gaston County, a parent talks about the prejudice toward homosexuality that he had to overcome as an adult when he discovered his son was gay. The documentary also considers a number of statewide and local groups that are working to make schools safer for gay teens and to dispel the stigma surrounding the issue in high schools.

The last stop in this section of the documentary comes in New Hanover County, where local student leaders come together for a weekend to learn more about how to build an atmosphere of safety and respect for difference in their schools. The workshop, called “One Vision,” works in small groups with students across the state.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Which student or students in this segment did you identify with the most? With whom did you agree? Disagree? Why?**
- 2. When the topic of sexual orientation/identity comes up, what is your experience of how people tend to react? List the various reactions.**
- 3. Why is sexual orientation so hard to talk about with friends or at school?**
- 4. The students at East Chapel Hill talked about the risks and consequences of being gay in their school. What are the risks in your school?**

*“Well, everyone’s discussing racism, and that’s a big thing. I’ve noticed around Northern, a lot of homophobia among my peers. I personally, I’m not gay, but I let anybody do what they want to do if that makes them happy.”*

-- White girl, Northern HS

*“Some things that some people say can be very, very hurtful. I don’t think they realize that they are hurting somebody but yeah, sometimes it really, really does hurt because this is not something that I woke up one day and said okay I guess today, I’m going to choose to... ya know, it’s not like that. It’s just who I am and if anyone can’t accept that then that’s their problem, it’s not mine.”*

-- African-American girl, Northern HS

*“I was 15 years old and I had three years of school left here at Northern, and everybody thought that I was a big ole queer, and I was, as it turns out. But at that time I wasn’t, I didn’t know what it meant except that I was in deep trouble.”*

-- KirstenWestcott, photography teacher

*“I think that if someone is gay they’d be afraid of what people would think of them to come out--in high school, especially at this school. I don’t think there is an environment where they feel secure, like coming to terms with their own sexuality.”*

-- White girl, East Chapel Hill HS

*“I knew someone that was gay but he was afraid to come out because people had already stereotyped him as gay. And so he dropped out of school because he felt being gay was bad--which I think is really unfair.”*

-- African-American girl, East Chapel Hill HS

*“People who practice homosexuality, I think, personally, I think that’s gross. I go to church every Sunday and I’ve been brought up that--my parents feel the same way and everybody in my family feels the same way. I mean, the thing about people being born that way I don’t believe it.”*

-- African-American boy, East Chapel Hill HS

5. **How do you think your family would react if someone – you or a brother or sister – came out?**
6. **If you were a parent and learned your child was gay, what would you do?**
7. **There are some forms of difference that are more obvious than others, such as skin color. Do you think it is possible to be gay and have that fact be invisible to others? What are the consequences to the gay or lesbian person of remaining in the closet?**
8. **How much do you think sexual stereotyping locks everyone into rigid roles that inhibit creativity and self-expression?**
9. **What is your reaction to the person who says “*Regardless of what your beliefs are about the morality of being gay, all students have the right to be safe in the schools. All students have the right not to be harassed in the schools, and all students have the right to get an education free from fear*”?**

## ACTIVITY

According to Dr. Gregory Herek\* – a noted authority on sexual prejudice – heterosexual people who get to know gay people tend to have less prejudice than those who have no personal acquaintance with gay persons. Without personal acquaintances, gay people tend to be seen as symbols rather than real people, and, says Dr. Herek, “attitudes toward symbols serve a different kind of function. Such attitudes help people to increase their self-esteem by expressing important aspects of themselves – by declaring (to themselves and to others) what sort of people they are. Affirming who one is often is accomplished by distancing oneself from or even attacking people who represent the sort of person one is not (or does not want to be).”

Have students write a one-page “Personal Declaration of Self” that explains who they are, where they come from, what they hope to become. The only rule is that a student cannot make any declaration that defines himself or herself by what he/she is not.

Have students read these declarations aloud and discuss whether it was difficult to make only positive statements rather than comparisons or declarations using the word “not.”

\* See <http://psychology.ucdavis.edu/rainbow/index.html>

*“I don't understand how Christianity can preach to hate gays and to, like, damn them to hell when you are supposed to love your fellow man. I think it's so hypocritical, like, to be homophobic.”*

-- White girl, East Chapel Hill HS

*“If it's okay to be gay, it should be okay to think being gay is wrong.”*

-- White girl, East Chapel Hill HS

*“We were all brought up to be basically rednecks and we treated other people as if they didn't exist if they weren't like us and that's really a bad way and a bad thing to do but we did that.”*

-- Doyle Criswell, parent, Gaston County

*“There's still a lot of homophobia in the schools. It seems like prejudice against gays and lesbians is still the last accepted form of prejudice.”*

-- Mark Slattery, teacher

*“Regardless of what your beliefs are about the morality of being gay, all students have the right to be safe in the schools. All students have the right not to be harassed in the schools, and all students have the right to get an education free from fear.”*

-- Ian Palmquist, Gay Lesbian Education Network board member

*“Many, many of our students feel suicidal or very depressed because they believe what their parents or grandparents are telling them--that they are sick and that they can change their ways and believe what their churches say... They want to assert themselves as a healthy gay student but they can't because they believe what their idols and people they've always looked up to are telling them.”*

-- White girl, New Hanover County

*“It's not all about being different. It's about being human, and that's the common thing we all should strive for.”*

-- African- American boy,  
New Hanover county

## SEGMENT X

# *A Summary of the Challenges*

As a conclusion to your study of the documentary and its accompanying themes, it may be useful for students to do some research on the most recent U.S. Census Bureau figures for your county and the state at large and to consider the impact of projections for future population growth and diversity.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. What do you think the future of the United States will be like in terms of immigration and social harmony?**
- 2. What do you think is North Carolina's biggest present challenge in terms of adapting to and appreciating diversity? What will be the future challenges?**
- 3. Would you ever want to live in another country? Why or why not? If yes, where would you want to live?**
- 4. What do you think it will be like for your family in the year 2020 if the prediction is true that White people will be in the minority?**

### ACTIVITY

Throughout this teacher guide, the students who spoke on camera have been labeled with various adjectives (at right)– White, African-American, Muslim, boy, girl, etc. Charlotte scholar Elizabeth Minnich says that the farther away we are from the “dominant culture” in the USA, the more adjectives we are likely to have applied to us. So, for example, it is rare to hear a White person refer to another White person as “White.” Have students develop a list of the various adjectives that might be applied to them including, gender, age, race, nationality, sexual orientation, religion, family income, height, weight, eye color, physical abilities and impairments, academic achievement and challenges, etc. Let students determine which of these adjectives are not embarrassing to claim and consider if the embarrassing attributes are actually societal prejudices. Give students a stack of 3 x 5 cards and as you call out the adjectives, have them write each one that applies to them on a separate card. Then have them move around the room joining in the various groupings that fit. See how many adjectives each person can accumulate. Then celebrate each student's unique collection of cards and create a Wall of Honor for the many differences represented in your class.

Song:

*Before I am black  
Before I am woman  
Before I am short  
Before I am young  
Before I am African  
I am human I am human*

*“I am Human” by Dionne Farris*

*“We are probably the first country in history that's ever tried, at least said it was going to try, to educate all of its children. If you go back and look at the dropout rate in the good old days in the fifties, it was about fifty percent, and so if look at what we are attempting to do and the extent to which we are attempting to do it, we're having more success with kids than we've ever had.”*

-- Dr. Isaac Thomas, Northern HS Principal

From the beginning, the American experiment has been about people coming together from different countries and cultures.

By the year 2020, the descendants of North Carolina's first white settlers will likely be in the minority again for the first time in nearly three centuries. How we prepare the next generation to recognize and respect difference may be the most significant lesson our schools have to teach.

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

## *Based in North Carolina*

### **Center for Diversity Education, Asheville, NC**

Works to increase the ways diversity is covered in the curriculum through traveling trunks, exhibits, and staff development. [www.diversityed.com](http://www.diversityed.com) or [www.main.nc.us/diversity/html](http://www.main.nc.us/diversity/html)  
828-254-9044

### **Facing History and Ourselves**

National organization with a state presence in Charlotte. Teaches a model to study history that relies on primary source documents, eyewitness accounts and individual student research.

[www.facinghistory.org](http://www.facinghistory.org)

704-365-1433 Jackie Fishman

### **NC Holocaust Council, Raleigh NC**

Offers regional programming and staff development [www.dhhs.state.nc.us/holocaustcouncil](http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/holocaustcouncil)  
919-781-2349 Linda Sher

### **World View**

An international program for educators at UNC Chapel Hill

208 North Columbia Street

Chapel Hill NC 27599

Email: [worldview@unc.edu](mailto:worldview@unc.edu)

919-962-9264 Yan Li

### **Latin American Resource Center <http://www.thelarc.org/index.html>**

PO Box 31971

Raleigh NC 27262

919) 870-5272 Aura Camacho Maas

### **NC Center for the Advancement of Teaching [www.nccat.org](http://www.nccat.org)**

Offers a host of weeklong seminars for teachers on various topics related to diversity

276 NCCAT Drive

Cullowhee, NC 28723

in NC: 1-800-922-0482

### **Greensboro Jewish Federation**

Teacher loan program/lending library on holocaust materials

336-852-5433

Diane Hines

### **ONE VISION**

Leadership and Diversity Training

Elaine Penn

4096 Ironbound Road

Williamsburg VA 23188

[Penne@uncwil.edu](mailto:Penne@uncwil.edu)

in NC call 910-962-2657

## *Web Resources*

[www.ncss.org](http://www.ncss.org) An information resource for social studies educators.

<http://www.greenmap.com/> The Green Map System is a globally connected, locally adaptable framework for community sustainability. Robeson County represents the first rural Green Map project ever undertaken. E-mail: Mac Legerton at the Center for Community Action in Lumberton [Kindone5@aol.com](mailto:Kindone5@aol.com) for more information on the NC project.

[www.gen.umn.edu/faculty\\_staff/yahnke/aging/chapter/ageism.htm](http://www.gen.umn.edu/faculty_staff/yahnke/aging/chapter/ageism.htm)  
This site provides IMAGES OF AGING: A Film and Video Resource Guide

[www.inlink.com/~tfc/class.html](http://www.inlink.com/~tfc/class.html) About social stratification – refers to the ranking of members in a society in terms of the power, wealth and prestige they possess.

<http://fisher.osu.edu/diversity/teach.htm> For teachers working in a multicultural classroom – offering tips on how we treat our students, how our students treat us, and how our students treat each other.

<http://www.splcenter.org/teachingtolerance/tt-index.html> In response to an alarming increase in hate crime among youth, the Southern Poverty Law Center began the Teaching Tolerance project in 1991 as an extension of the Center's legal and educational efforts. Through the support of Center donors, Teaching Tolerance offers free or low-cost resources to educators at all levels.

<http://www.diversitycentral.com/> Focuses on diversity in the corporate workplace.

<http://www.rla.unc.edu/lessons/Menu/title.htm> Site for *Intrigue of the Past: North Carolina's First Peoples, A Teacher's Activity Guide for Fourth through Eighth Grades* Compiled and Edited by: Margo L. Price, Patricia M. Samford, Vincas P. Steponaitis, Research Laboratories of Archaeology, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

<http://hills.ccsf.cc.ca.us/~tolerant/> A collaborative web resource for learning and teaching how to understand, create, nurture, and find tolerance. Created by the City College of San Francisco.

<http://www.jsu.edu/depart/library/graphic/xeno.htm> Part of the World Youth Forum. Site provides links to information about the organization, news items and consideration of the problem of xenophobia.

<http://www.nncc.org/Diversity/divers.rea.stereotypes.html> *Realities Of Stereotypes* from Marilyn Lopes, Extension Specialist, Family Life Education, National Network for Child Care

[www.welcome.com](http://www.welcome.com) Through a question and answer format, browsers can learn about the Amish, Mennonites, and other "plain people." Questions submitted will be presented to local Amish and Mennonite people and answers will be sent by email.

[www.hanksville.phast.umass.edu/misc/Naresources.html](http://www.hanksville.phast.umass.edu/misc/Naresources.html) Native culture including resources for education, music, books and video.

[www.maxwell.syr.edu/nativeweb](http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/nativeweb) This site "touches ancient teaching and modern technology."

[www.webactgive.com/webactive/cgibin/wniadirsearch](http://www.webactgive.com/webactive/cgibin/wniadirsearch) Comprehensive website on race and ethnicity with links to other websites

[www.ed.gov/offices/OCR](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OCR) Office of Civil Rights has extensive list of publications and other resources.

[www.afronet.com/WB/040497-3.html](http://www.afronet.com/WB/040497-3.html) Debate about Ebonics in Oakland CA.

[www.glsen.org](http://www.glsen.org) Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network

<http://www.pflag.org/> National site for Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays.

[www.religioustolerance.org](http://www.religioustolerance.org) Site maintained by four volunteers who are open to a variety of beliefs. Many links.

[www.ushmm.org/education](http://www.ushmm.org/education) U.S. Holocaust Museum website posts questions that explore issues of prejudice and intolerance.

[www.actwin.com/cahp](http://www.actwin.com/cahp) Citizens Against Homophobia

[www.stolaf.edu/network/iecc](http://www.stolaf.edu/network/iecc) Intercultural E-mail Classroom Connections links teachers and classes from different countries and cultures for pen pal and other exchanges.

[www.kidlink.org:80/KIDPROJ/MCC](http://www.kidlink.org:80/KIDPROJ/MCC) Multicultural calendar with recipes for holiday foods, historical background, and significance of holidays and special observations.

[www.nova.edu/Inter-Links/diversity.html](http://www.nova.edu/Inter-Links/diversity.html) Link page for diversity sites and issues.

[www.firstnations.com](http://www.firstnations.com) Forum for all Indigenous Peoples.

[www.webactive.com/webactive/directory/topic-index.html](http://www.webactive.com/webactive/directory/topic-index.html) Links to bisexual, gay and lesbian communities. Also links to race and ethnicity, religion and range of diversity subjects.

[www.geocities.com/Athens/Forum/1910](http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Forum/1910) Website asks the question: What would the world be like if it only had a population of 1,000 people?

[www.usdoj.gov/kidspage/](http://www.usdoj.gov/kidspage/) Department of Justice website. Visit *Hateful Acts Hurt Kids* with scenarios for students at home and in school – playground, neighborhood and lunchroom.

### ***Books and Publications***

**A World of Difference.** Teacher/student study guide designed as a full course of study to promote reduction of prejudice. Anti-Defamation League, 230 S. Broad St., Philadelphia PA 19102 (215) 735-4267

**Teaching Tolerance** Magazine published twice a year. Subscriptions free to educational institutions. Southern Poverty Law Center, 400 Washington Ave., Montgomery AL 36014.

**Hate Hurts: How Children Learn and Unlearn Prejudice,** by Caryl Stern-LaRosa and Ellen Hofheimer Bettman and the Anti-Defamation League. From Scholastic Press, 2000. Many additional resources and extensive bibliography.

## CREDITS

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*We welcome your comments, suggestions and reports  
on the use of this teacher guide in your classroom.*