

Why Blend In: Accepting Individual Differences  
within Self and Others

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## Rationale

The purpose of this unit is to help students become aware and accept the differences in themselves as individuals and others that are around them. Students need to know the importance of what being different from any other person means to anyone, especially them personally, so that they can accept themselves as beings; accepting yourself is more important than others accepting you.

Students in middle school always seem to try to fit into a group so that they are not considered different from others, but if someone does have the gumption to stand outside of the crowd it seems to be frowned upon and no student wants to accept them for who they are. Because being the same as any other student in order to fit into a crowd is important to students, this lesson will help them to grasp the idea that no matter how much they each try to fit into a crowd to be the same as the next person, they are all different in their own ways, and have different perceptions of certain things.

The following four weeks' worth of lesson plans are designed for an eighth grade English classroom. The unit is to show students that they are all different and no matter how much they try to fit into a crowd, they will always be different. This in turn makes them a unique and special human being. I want this unit to teach them that if everyone and everything were the same then the world would be a boring place. This unit is also designed to not only allow the students to find out more about themselves as individuals, but it is also designed to allow them to know that there are also differences in others which need to be accepted. The students will learn

in this unit that they are allowed to be different from a crowd, and that if they are allowed to be different from someone else, than they need to accept other people's differences as well.

It is important to give the students an opportunity to know each other as individuals, and to know what other people's differences are. At this grade level students, do not want to accept the changes that are around them. If someone is a little different no one really wants to accept them, and because of this neglect they may choose not do work as hard in school because they do not want to accept themselves. Neglecting school work and studying is not an option. Students need to learn to work with one another no matter how different they each may be from another. They need to do their school work and feel confident in completing any task that is thrown at them. When students know their identity they will then improve in their school work and communicate with others better because they accept another person's identity as well.

The introduction of the lesson plan has to do with secrets that everyone has to deal with individually. No one secret will be the same, and no student will put their names on the secrets, but the secrets will be posted on the board for everyone to see in the class. Then the book *Holes* will be introduced and talked about as a class along with assignments, tests, questions sheets, and a movie, which have to do with the book. The final assignment, pertaining to this book, will be for the students to learn about each other as individuals since they will be assigned to partners that they need to get to know. The reason why the book *Holes* was chosen is because the characters in the story get to know each other as individuals and they each stand out, but they also accept one another for their differences. The students noticing the characters personalities in the story will allow themselves to connect to the people in the story on another level.

The second half of the lesson plan will do with the novel *Tuck Everlasting*. The reason why I chose this novel is because the main character accepts the other characters in the story for who they are and where they have been, but decides in the end to be different from them. Because of the plot of the story I want the students to realize it is alright to accept people for being different, but to always remember that they are an individual as well. This book will show them to never allow someone to make a decision for them, they make their own path. After the book is read the students will make brochures based on wherever they want to go or come up with. The brochures are supposed to reflect their own sense of adventure.

The goal of this unit is to teach students to accept their individual differences within themselves and others. After completing this unit, the students should not only know a little bit more about themselves and others, but above all else accept themselves as individuals and accept the differences in others without judgment or hesitation.

## Goals

- The students read novels
- Students will learn to listen to instructions
- Students will learn to listen to others
- Students will learn how to become more creative
- Students will get to know about themselves
- Students will get to know about their peers
- Students will improve their writing skills
- Students will become more confident in their work
- Students will become more confident with themselves
- Students will gain a new perspective on themselves and others
- Students will learn how to work with others in the class

# Objectives

SWBAT:

- Tell a secret about themselves
- Be creative with the index cards that their secrets are on
- Learn the themes of the novels
- Answer questions based on the novels
- Take a test on a novel
- Read out loud to the class with confidence
- Discuss chapters in the book
- Work together to complete a task
- Come up with topics for an essay
- Write rough drafts and proof read an essay
- Write a clear and final essay
- Write reflections of questions in their journals
- Make a brochure based on their own creativity
- Complete and understand study guides
- Take a test based on readings
- Make decisions about a fortune
- Make their own fortunes
- Gain knowledge about one another from this unit

## Sunshine State Standards

LA.910.1.5.1 The student will adjust reading rate based on purpose, text difficulty, form, and style.

LA.910.1.6.2 - listen to, read, and discuss familiar and conceptually challenging text.

LA.910.1.7.1- use background knowledge of subject and related content areas, prereading strategies (e.g., previewing, discussing, generating questions), text features, and text structure to make and confirm complex predictions of content, purpose, and organization of a reading selection.

LA.910.1.7.3 - determine the main idea or essential message in grade-level or higher texts through inferring, paraphrasing, summarizing, and identifying relevant details.

LA.910.1.7.6 - analyze and evaluate similar themes or topics by different authors across a variety of fiction and nonfiction selections.

LA.910.2.1.2 - analyze and compare a variety of traditional, classical, and contemporary literary works, and identify the literary elements of each (e.g., setting, plot, characterization, conflict).

LA.910.2.1.6- create a complex, multi-genre response to the reading of two or more literary works, describing and analyzing an author's use of literary elements (e.g., theme, point of view, characterization, setting, plot), figurative language (e.g., simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, symbolism, allusion, imagery), and analyzing an author's development of time and sequence through the use of complex literary devices such as foreshadowing and flashback.

LA.910.2.1.10 - select a variety of age and ability appropriate fiction materials to read based on knowledge of authors' styles, themes, and genres to expand the core foundation of knowledge necessary to connect topics and function as a fully literate member of a shared culture.

LA.910.3.1.1 - generating ideas from multiple sources (e.g., brainstorming, notes, journals, discussion, research materials or other reliable sources) based upon teacher-directed topics and personal interests.

LA.910.3.1.3 - using organizational strategies and tools (e.g., technology, spreadsheet, outline, chart, table, graph, Venn Diagram, web, story map, plot pyramid) to develop a personal organizational style.

LA.910.3.2.2 - establishing a logical organizational pattern with supporting details that are substantial, specific, and relevant.

LA.910.3.3.1 - evaluating the draft for development of ideas and content, logical organization, voice, point of view, word choice, and sentence variation.



LA.910.3.3.4 - applying appropriate tools or strategies to evaluate and refine the draft (e.g., peer review, checklists, rubrics).

LA.910.3.4.3 - punctuation, including commas, colons, semicolons, apostrophes, dashes, quotation marks, and underlining or italics.

LA.910.3.5.3 - sharing with others, or submitting for publication.

LA.910.5.2.2- research and organize information for oral communication appropriate for the occasion, audience, and purpose (e.g., class discussions, entertaining, informative, persuasive, or technical presentations).

## Materials

Pens/Pencils  
Crayons  
Paper  
*Holes* (Novel and Movie)  
*Tuck Everlasting* (Novel)  
Index Cards  
Journals  
Computer  
Markers  
Worksheets  
Box of dirt  
Little paper for fortunes  
Overhead Projector

## Grading Outline

<b>Assignments</b>	<b>Total Points</b>
Secret Index Card	10
Participation/Attendance	50
Bringing Books to Class	20
Reading Assignment Worksheets	30
Essay	100
Journal Entries	30
Brochure	40
Study Guide	50
Test	100
<b>Total:</b>	<b>430</b>

# Thematic Unit

## Week 1, Day 1 (Monday)

3 minutes:

Attendance/Housekeeping

15 minutes:

The teacher will have postcards found on the internet with secrets that were written on them by individual people. Then the teacher and students will talk about the secrets and why people may write them, but without the giving away their names.

25 minutes:

Students will think about a secret to write down on an index card and then write the secret down on a piece of paper. The secret will show them as an individual. They will also think, and maybe do a rough draft, of what they would like to draw as the background to their index cards.

7 minutes:

Wrapping class up and giving out index cards to each student to take home for homework

Homework:

The students will take the index cards home and write down their secret on them, and decorate the index cards. The students will not write their names on the index cards.

Resources: Appendix I

## Week 1, Day 2 (Tuesday)

3 minutes:

Attendance/Housekeeping

15 minutes:

The teacher will ask for volunteers to show their art work on the index cards, and read them out loud if they want to. Then each student will be asked if they did the index card homework and pass the index cards to the front. All the index cards will be put on display on the board so the students can see the individual art and secrets of their classmates. No names will be given about the secrets that are written on the cards. This activity is done to show that each student is a creative individual in their own way.

10 minutes:

The teacher will introduce a new book to the students; *Holes* because it is about boys who are diverse in a lot of ways.

25 minutes:

As a class we will read chapters 1-10, students will pick other students to read chapters.

2 minutes:

Students will ask questions, and homework will be assigned.

Homework:

Read chapters 11-15 and be ready to discuss the chapters on Wednesday in class.

Resources: None

### **Week 1, Day 3 (Wednesday)**

3 minutes:

Attendance/Housekeeping

10 minutes:

The teacher will ask the students to talk about the chapters that they read for homework from the book.

7 minutes:

After discussion, the teacher will ask the students to answer a worksheet of questions based on the chapters that the students were supposed to read for homework and turn it in. This is done to make sure that they have read, or that they read.

25 minutes:

As a class we will read chapters 16-26, students will pick other students to read chapters.

5 minutes:

Students will be assigned homework, and asked if they have any questions about anything.

Homework:

Students will read chapters 27-31.

Resources: Appendix II

### **Week 1, Day 4 (Thursday)**

3 minutes:

Attendance/ Housekeeping

10 minutes:

The teacher will ask the students to answer a worksheet of questions based on the chapters that the students were supposed to read for homework and turn it in. This is done to make sure that they have read, or that they read.

30 minutes:

As a class we will read chapters 32-42, students will pick other students who have not read yet. After all students have read out loud in class, then we will start over in picking readers again.

7 minutes:

Students will be assigned homework, and asked if they have any questions about anything.

Homework:

Students will read the rest of the chapters left in the book; chapters 43-50.

Resources: Appendix III

### **Week 1, Day 5 (Friday)**

3 minutes:

Attendance/Housekeeping

10 minutes:

The teacher will ask the students to answer a worksheet of questions based on the chapters that the students were supposed to read for homework and turn it in. This is done to make sure that they have read, or that they read.

2 minutes:

The teacher will put students into groups of two.

5 minutes:

Each group will be given a box of dirt. After each group has a box directions will be given

5 minutes:

Student will listen to directions. Which are as follows: In a matter of 5 minutes the partners are supposed to come up with questions that they want to ask each other in order to get to know one another more. After the 5 minutes are up they will ask each other the questions that they may have always wanted to ask them. There will be time allotted for that.

20 minutes:

The students will ask each other the questions and write down the answers on the piece of paper that they came up with the questions on. They will learn each other's differences and maybe similarities but either way they will accept one another for who they are.

5 minutes:

Students will ask questions and be told to be ready for Monday.

Homework:

None

Resources: Appendix IV

### **Week 2, Day 1 (Monday)**

1 minute:

Attendance/ Housekeeping

3 minutes:

The teacher will tell the students that they will be watching the movie *Holes* for the next 2 ½ days.

45 minutes:

The students will be watching the movie *Holes* and listen to how each character is different.

1 minute:

The teacher will ask if there are any questions and assign homework.

Homework:

Write at least 3 ideas of what makes you, the individual student, an individual among a crowd.

Resources: None

### **Week 2, Day 2 (Tuesday)**

1 minute:

Attendance/Housekeeping

3 minutes:

The teacher will walk around making sure the students did their homework.

45 minutes:

The students and teacher will watch the movie *Holes*.

1 minute:

The teacher will ask if there are any questions, and assign homework.

Homework:

Students will write a rough draft essay of the 3 things that they came up with on Monday's homework.

Resources: None

### **Week 2, Day 3 (Wednesday)**

1 minute:

Attendance/Housekeeping

3 minutes:

The teacher will walk around making sure the students did their rough draft assignments.

45 minutes:

The students and teacher will watch the rest of the movie *Holes*.

1 minute:

The teacher will ask if there are any questions, and assign homework.

Homework:

Students will write another, cleaner, form of a rough draft essay for an assignment that will be done in class on Thursday.

Resources: None

### **Week 2, Day 4 (Thursday)**

1 minute:

Attendance/Housekeeping

1 minute:

Teacher will walk around to make sure that students did their refined form of the rough draft.

1 minute:

The teacher will ask the students to quietly place their seats in a big circle so everyone is facing each other.

47 minutes:

Students who are comfortable enough to read their essays out loud so other students can critique it will do so in the circle. By critiquing out loud students can receive ideas on how to fix their own papers, even if they don't read.

1 minute:

The teacher will ask if there are any questions and assign homework.

Homework:

Students will write a final draft of their paper.

Resources: None

### **Week 2, Day 5 (Friday)**

1 minute:

Attendance/Housekeeping

1 minute:

The teacher will walk around to make sure students did their homework.



47 minutes:

The students will take turns reading out loud their essays to the class. Having the students do this makes the other students realize that every person's story and essay is different and unique from the rest.

1 minute:

The teacher will collect the essays for grades, and answer any questions that the students may have.

Homework:

None.

Resources: None

### **Week 3, Day 1 (Monday)**

3 minutes:

Attendance/Housekeeping

7 minutes:

Ask students to answer topic on board in their journals, *If you were given the choice to live forever would you, and why? Explain your choice.*

5 minutes:

Introduce the book *Tuck Everlasting*. Ask students if they have any questions

30 minutes:

Read the first 28 pages of the book in class. Each student will pick a student to read after they themselves have read one page.

5 minutes:

Teacher will ask the students if they have any questions.

Homework:

Bring book in on Tuesday for more reading.

Resources: None

### **Week 3; Day 2 (Tuesday)**

3 minutes:

Attendance/Housekeeping

7 minutes:

Ask students to answer topic on board in their journals, *Say you did say yes to living forever, who would you want to live forever with? Explain your choice.*

30 minutes:

Read pages 29-57 in class. Each student will pick a student to read after they themselves have read one page.

10 minutes:

Talk about the pages in class so the teacher can understand what the students understand, or misunderstood.

Homework:

Tell students to bring the book in for class on Wednesday.

Resources: None

### **Week 3, Day 3 (Wednesday)**

3 minutes:

Attendance/Housekeeping

7 minutes:

Ask students to answer topic on board in their journals, *If you could give up your life for someone else would you? Explain your choice.*

30 minutes:

Read pages 57-86 in class. Each student will pick a student to read after they themselves have read one page.

10 minutes:

Talk about the pages in class so the teacher can understand what the students understand, or misunderstood.

Homework:

Tell students to bring the book in for class on Thursday.

Resources: None

### **Week 3 Day 4 (Thursday)**

3 minutes:

Attendance/Housekeeping

7 minutes:

Ask students to answer topic on board in their journals; *What kind of adventures would you go on if you had a different lease on life? Explain your answer.*

30 minutes:

Read pages 87-115 in class. Each student will pick a student to read after they themselves have read one page.

10 minutes:

Talk about the pages in class so the teacher can understand what the students understand, or misunderstood.

Homework:

Tell students to bring the book in for class on Friday to finish it up.

Resources: None

### **Week 3, Day 5 (Friday)**

3 minutes:

Attendance/Housekeeping

7 minutes:

Ask students to answer topic on board in their journals; *What has Tuck Everlasting taught you about the choices or decisions that you make in your life? Explain your answer.*

30 minutes:

Read the rest of the book to the end in class. Each student will pick a student to read after they themselves have read one page.

10 minutes:

Talk about the pages in class so the teacher can understand what the students understand, or misunderstood.

Homework:

Tell students to come prepared for an activity on Monday.

Resources: None

### **Week 4, Day 1 (Monday)**

3 minutes:

Attendance/Housekeeping

7 minutes:

Ask and answer any questions that the students have about *Tuck Everlasting* before the in class activity of the day begins.

5 minutes:

The teacher will give instructions about having each student make a brochure about a place where they could live forever at. The instructions are as follows: After each student has a piece of construction paper they will make a brochure about the type of fantasy land they come up with for their place that they would want to visit; the places can be fake or real. The ideas will put some kind of individual identity on each student's personality and ideas that they may have received from the book.

30 minutes:

During this time students will pull out their pens, pencils, crayons, etc, in order to make their brochures.

5 minutes:

Students will finish their ideas in their brochures at home, and they will be prepared to talk about them in class the next day.

Homework:

Be prepared to talk about your brochures after you work on them tonight.

Resources: None

#### **Week 4, Day 2 (Tuesday)**

3 minutes:

Attendance/Housekeeping

15 minutes:

Each student will talk about the brochures that they have made for the place that they have created. They will talk about the activities that they put in their brochures based on their own diverse ideas.

25 minutes:

Students will work individually on their study guides. They will answer each study guide question to the best of their ability as individuals.

7 minutes:

Answer any questions that they did not understand or was not clear on the study guide worksheet.

Homework:

Ask them to finish up study guides to review them tomorrow before the review game for the test on Thursday.

Resources: Appendix V

#### **Week 4, Day 3 (Wednesday)**

3 minutes:  
Attendance/Housekeeping

2 minutes:  
Teacher will walk around classroom and check to see if they all have study guides filled out, and then go over study guides to make sure they have correct answers to review for test tomorrow.

20 minutes:  
Teacher will make 5 groups of 5 students for the review game. Teacher will ask questions from the test and the group with the highest score in the end will get extra credit points on the test.

5 minutes:  
Teacher will remind them to study, and ask if they have any questions.

Homework:  
Study for test.

#### **Week 4, Day 4 (Thursday)**

3 minutes:  
Attendance/Housekeeping

5 minutes:  
Answer any questions students may have before passing out test

2 minutes:  
I will pass out test as students take out pen or pencils for the test.

30 minutes:  
This time will be given primarily to taking the test.

5 minutes:  
For students that are finished with the test will take out their journals and answer the question *What are you going to do for fun during the weekend?*

5 minutes:  
Teacher will take up any tests that are not completed and ask if students have any questions.

Homework:  
Clean minds tonight for tomorrow's assignment.

Resources: Appendix VI

#### **Week 4, Day 5 (Friday)**

3 minutes:

## Attendance/Housekeeping

10 minutes:

The students just learned what it is to make decisions as an individual, and what makes you stick out of a crowd. The teacher will give instructions on how to make fortunes based on their own sentences that they will create on sheets of paper that the teacher will pass out. After the students write down the fortunes they will put them in a box. Each student will pick a fortune out of the box and read it out loud. No vulgarity.

20 minutes:

Students will be given this time to come up with their fortunes and put them inside the box.

15 minutes:

Students will pick fortunes out of the box and read them out loud to their classmates.

2 minutes:

The teacher will ask if the students have any questions.

Homework:

None

## Accommodations

Accommodations will be made for each and every lesson plan according to the student's schedules and diverse learning patterns because any accommodation will be made when seen as necessary. The lessons will stand as is until an issue comes up and then the plan of flexibility will come to order to help and assist in the assurance that all students understand what is being gained from this unit. I will personally help a student if they need the help, and I will accommodate to how a specific student learns whether it is verbally, visually, or by listening. Any accommodation will be taken place in order for every student to have the same, fair, amount of information learned and retained.

# Appendix I

## Postsecret secrets

1. Signing onto Facebook always makes me sad and jealous because everyone looks so much happier than me.
2. I joined the army no because I have pride in my country...But because I just want to be someone's hero...
3. My fellow men of the world: Put the video games down. Man-up, suit up, and wine and dine a beautiful girl.
4. I just sold my range rover so I could afford to adopt my niece.
5. The only time I feel like it's appropriate to cry in public is when I see soldiers say goodbye to their loved ones in airports.
6. I don't think people truly appreciate what our troops do for us until someone important in their life becomes a part of it all. I know I didn't.



## Appendix II

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Period: \_\_\_\_\_

### Chapters 11-15, Holes

1. If Stanley found anything in the holes what was he supposed to do with the items?
  - a. Keep it a secret
  - b. Tell the warden
  - c. Give it to one of the guys (X-ray)
  - d. Throw it away
2. Why does Stanley think he always has bad luck?
  - a. Because he is always in the wrong place at the wrong time
  - b. His no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather
  - c. His cousins bad luck
  - d. Because Zero is back luck
3. What does Stanley want to do as a job when he grows up?
  - a. Work for the FBI
  - b. Become a firefighter
  - c. Become a restaurant chef
  - d. Dig more holes
4. What is the theme of these few pages? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What is Stanley nickname? \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix III

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Period: \_\_\_\_\_

Chapters 27-31, *Holes*

1. Where do you see individualism in these chapters? Explain? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Why won't Mr. Sir fill up Stanley's canteen? Explain? \_\_\_\_\_

3. How does Kate Barlow die?

- a. Raccoon bite
- b. Heat exhaustion
- c. Yellow Lizard bite
- d. Dehydration

4. Why does Zero dig Stanley's holes?

- a. Because he is dumb
- b. Because it gives him good exercise
- c. Because they are friends
- d. Because Stanley is teaching him how to read

5. What does the mountain look like? \_\_\_\_\_

# Appendix IV

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Period: \_\_\_\_\_

## Final Chapters, *Holes*

1. Summarize the story in the novel? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. *Holes* has to deal with many things, but a main thing is finding friendship with people that are very different from oneself while trying to find oneself. Please give an example of a friendship that is based on differences and explain that friendship. \_\_\_\_\_

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# Appendix V

## Study Guide for *Tuck Everlasting*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Period: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Who are the two main characters in the story?
2. How are the Tucks able to live forever?
3. Who did Winnie see by the tree?
4. What is/are the themes of the story?
5. A theme can be diversity, how? Explain and give examples.
6. How is friendship and love also a theme? Explain and give examples.
7. Why was Winnie not allowed to drink the water at first?
8. What happened to the man in yellow when he went to the Tuck's?
9. Did Winnie drink the water? Why or why not? Explain.
10. What did Winnie give the toad?

# Appendix VI

*Tuck Everlasting* Test

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Period: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is/are the themes of the story? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. What does the water do if you drink it? \_\_\_\_\_

3. How are the Tucks able to be ageless? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Who is the first person that Winnie sees by the tree? \_\_\_\_\_

5. A theme in the story is being diverse and making your own decisions in the end. How does Winnie epitomize this theme? Explain and give an example from the novel.

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6. Another theme in the story is falling in love and friendship. How is this applied in the novel? Explain and give examples.

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7. What happened to the man in yellow when he went to the Tuck's? \_\_\_\_\_

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8. Did Winnie ever drink the water? Why or why not? Explain. \_\_\_\_\_

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