

All of Us Are Different: Grade 4 Lesson Plan¹

Overview

This short animated video offers an introduction to students about issues of discrimination surrounding the Komagata Maru incident. The issue of prejudice is challenging for elementary school students thus this video offers a useful departure point for students to raise questions about discrimination. Teachers should be cautious about volunteering more information than students ask for at this grade level. Any discussion around discrimination should be framed around issues of difference with a focus on how much we have in common. Remind students that it is our differences that make us special. In discussing historical discrimination, it is useful to explain that people in the past did not always understand that difference makes us special.

Punjabi Version: <http://komagatamarujourney.ca/node/4517>

English Version: <http://komagatamarujourney.ca/node/4518>

Ideas for Student Engagement

Any of the following activities should take place after students are given the chance to watch the video. Students should be given the opportunity to ask questions regarding its content. These are likely to be clarification questions as to why the boat was turned around and more information on the characters. Invite students to identify any words they are not familiar with.

Activity 1: Write a letter as if you were the boy in the movie to your family back home. In the letter, describe how you feel to be traveling for months to a new home.

Activity 2: Write the ending to this story as you imagine it. Be sure to discuss how the people in the movie felt, making it as believable as possible.

Activity 3: Have students create puppets that look like the actors in the play. Use this to re-enact the script but adding your own ending to the script.

Activity 4: Show students the movie without sound. Ask them to speculate on its content. Invite them to write out the dialogue to complete the storyline. After they have presented their text, allow students to listen to the original video and compare their script with the film.

¹ This lesson plan was created by members of Simon Fraser University's Komagata Maru Project Management team and members of the Critical Thinking Consortium (TC2)

Video Transcript

Opening Narration:

Here is a story about the Komagata Maru, a ship that arrived in Vancouver in 1914. This ship was carrying passengers from India but was turned back two months after it arrived. The ship was not allowed to dock because of laws in Canada that wanted to keep South Asians out. The stories about the Komagata Maru, and the people onboard the ship, are an important part of Canada's history. It reminds us about past wrongs and guides us to act in fair, kind and just ways.

Let us imagine what it might be like on a ship arriving to Canada.

Komagata Maru Arrives

By Ajmer Rode

It is almost morning.

A child ventures out of his cabin and calls her mother.

Mother, look! There is a white bird on the ship!

"Where?"

"There, at the corner!"

"Oh, yes! It is a bird, a big bird...look at his yellow beak, how beautiful! Been so long since we saw a bird, must be from the shore...."

"From the shore?"

Yes, yes my son, we are at the shore. At last. Thank God! No more living under a blue dome forever... no more walking on the wood...soon we shall walk on earth! We have reached Vancouver, my love... thank God," replies the mother as excited as her 5 year old son.

"Vancouver?"

"Yes, yes, it's Vancouver. Nice, very very nice. Remember those pretty pictures we saw in Delhi? Remember! It is that Vancouver! Look there are mountains, look the green trees all around! And there will be birds too, like that bird..."

"And ...and sparrows, crows, green parrots?"

"Yes, yes, there will be sparrows, crows, green parrots, every thing."

"And people?"

Yes, there will be people too, like us. Listen, when we get out of the ship, your uncle will be there on the shore. Fold your hands and say, "uncle-ji, Sat Sri Akal! Okay!"

"Okay (the child folds his hands)."

Closing Narration:

On July 23, 1914 the Komagata Maru was forced to return back to India and most passengers onboard never set-foot in Vancouver. However, despite the many struggles and challenges, for over 100 years South Asians have settled in Canada and have made it their home.