

It's Okay to Be Different—Stories by Todd Parr

Classroom Activities

I Am ME!

- Think about one way you are unique and different—for example, you like to wear mismatched socks, you can whistle any tune, your favorite hobby is crocheting, and so on—and share it with your students.
- Now ask them to think about one way they are unique and different and encourage volunteers to share their ideas.
- Read aloud *It's Okay to Be Different* by Todd Parr. Discuss: What can you learn from this book? What lesson does the author want you to understand? Guide children to understand that the author wants them to recognize that everyone is different—and that is okay!
- Circle back to your initial discussion and talk about how everyone shared something that makes them unique, which also makes them special.
- Give each child a piece of paper, with the words “I Am ME!” at the top. Have children think about four different things that make them unique and different – if needed, you may give them specific topics (their favorite food, their favorite place to go, a special hobby or talent they have). Encourage them to draw a picture for each category.
- Allow children to share and talk about their completed list.

Inspired Illustrations

- Look at Todd Parr's pictures and discuss his style.
 - What geometric shapes does he use?
 - What kinds of colors does he use?
 - What do you notice about all his pictures?
- Draw a person the way Todd Parr does. First, you will be drawing the outline of your person with a black marker. Start with a circle for the head.
- Next, use other geometric shapes for the rest of the body. (Students can choose the shape they want – rectangle, trapezoid, squares, etc.)
- Then, add a pattern to the clothes.
- Finally, use fine line markers to color your person.
- Discuss your images and compare your drawing with one of Todd Parr's. How are they the same? How are they different? How many shapes did you use?

Recycling Sorting Game

In *The Earth Book*, Todd Parr presents practical activities that help children lessen their ecological footprint, such as recycling. Young students love sorting and matching, so make recycling into a learning game! This activity also has a very practical benefit: children who learn how to recycle at school will help out with recycling at home.

- Set up four recycling bins: one each for metal, glass, paper, and plastics. Use visual clues to indicate what belongs in each bin (for example, a picture of a soda bottle for the plastics bin).
- Fill another box with aluminum cans, bottles of various shapes and sizes, plastic containers, papers, cardboard boxes, and bags.
- If this is done as a group activity, each child takes an item from a sample box and then “sorts” it into the right bin. If this is done as an individual activity, the child sorts each item from the sample box into the appropriate recycling bin.

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Mermaid Theatre recommends Todd Parr's
website for more fun activities!

<https://www.toddparr.com/landing-page/todd-parr-fun/>