

Template Letter to Families

The intent of including a letter to parents with any materials children may bring home or share about the activity is to provide a rationale for why you are doing this activity with your students. This may also be proactive in preventing particular assumptions or emotional responses about the activity (from yourself or the parents) as well as provide an opportunity for families to continue engagement with their children around racial representation.

Dear Families,

Start with a section explaining what you did in the activity with students. Reference the books read to the whole class and the mathematical (e.g. categorization, counting, comparison, representation), and literacy (e.g. retell stories, describe characters, compare different stories) content that was addressed.

Explain why it was important for students to address diversity in literature and engage them in empathy. Consider particular current events or local contexts that may further clarify the importance of this activity for the students.

If it is appropriate, share potential wonderings students may have about the topic and character diversity. Consider suggestions of additional reading that show diversity in people or understanding empathy and how parents may access them at a local library.

Diverse People Suggestions:

Shades of People (by Shelley Rotner and Sheila M. Kelly)

The Skin You Live In (by Michael Tyler)

Empathy Suggestions:

I Walk With Vanessa: A Story About a Simple Act of Kindness (by Kerascoët)

The Invisible Boy (by Trudy Ludwig)

Conclude with a note about how to best get in touch with you if they wish to talk more about the lesson or how to engage their children further in the topic.