

Families of All Shapes and Sizes

Session Design by McKenna Finley and J.S. Peterson

Time: est. 30min

Summary: Students will participate in several activities that will lead them to learn about families and the different dynamics that come with different groups of people supporting each other. They will have a short discussion (questions provided) about USU's production of *Getting Near to Baby*, where they can discuss the family dynamics seen there. They will wrap it all up by writing a letter to someone they miss. This letter is not assessed so that the students can be open with it.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Content Standards

- **Drama Standard 6.T.R.2:**
 - Justify responses based on personal experiences when participating in or observing a drama/theatre work.
- **Reading 5: Literature Standard 2**
 - Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.

Essential Questions

- What does family look like?
- How can family help in times of need?

Enduring Understandings

- Students will understand that families have different dynamics and don't always have to consist of those who are blood-related.

Key Knowledge

- Students will know that there are many different types of families.

Skills

- Students will be able to identify the different groups of people that make up their various families.

ASSESSMENT

Performance Tasks

- Students will create tableaux of different family units they see in their lives in order to show that they can identify the different groups of people that make up their various families.
- Students will get into various groups based on prompts given to them in order to identify that there can be many different types of families based on interest, hobbies, experience, and situational location.

- Students will justify responses based on personal experiences when participating in or observing a drama/theatre work by reviewing USU's production of *Getting Near to Baby* in order to understand that families have different dynamics and don't always have to consist of those who are blood-related.
- Students will determine a theme of a drama from details in the text, including how characters in the drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text by engaging in a discussion about USU's production of *Getting Near to Baby* in order to gain a deeper understanding of the meaning of family and what a family can look like.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Teacher Materials

- N/A

Student Materials

- Paper
- Writing utensil

LEARNING PLAN

Summary of the lesson (including noting it coming after the show) (Est. 30min)

Setup

1. Ensure the class has watched USU's production of Y York's *Getting Near to Baby*
2. Students will gather in a circle, remind them that the point of the activity isn't to stay with your friends, but to find people with similar interests to you.

Framing/Hook

3. Grouping Activity (5 mins)
 - a. Facilitator will explain that students will have five seconds to find others who have similar traits or likes as them. They will group together when they have found each other. Facilitator will say:
 - i. Get into groups with people who:
 1. Born in-state vs out-of-state
 2. Same favorite color
 3. Same favorite season
 4. The same first letter of the first name
 5. Same favorite hobby
 - b. Facilitator will have students get back into a circle and ask them questions about the activity, such as:
 - i. Did you learn something you didn't know before?
 - ii. How does knowing what things you have in common with your classmates change about this class?
 - iii. Does having these similarities help you know how to comfort a classmate if they are having a hard time?

Process

4. Discussion of Play (5 mins)
 - a. Discussing USU's production of *Getting Near to Baby* use the below questions.

1. What kind of families did you see on stage?
 - a. Willa Jo and Little sisters' family: Mother grieving death of Baby, absent father.
 - b. Aunt Patty and Uncle Hob: Took the girls in to give their Mother some time, wanting them to heal but in their ways, not always patient with Willa Jo and Little Sister.
 - c. The Fingers Family: neighbors to Aunt Patty, have a lot of children, very accepting of Willa Jo and Little Sister.
 - d. The Wainwrights: Mother is the head of the Ladies Social League, daughter goes to etiquette classes, not very accepting of Willa Jo and Little Sister.
 2. How did Willa Jo and Little Sisters' family change throughout the play?
 - ii. For this next question, ask students to react by holding up thumbs up if they agree, thumbs to the side if they somewhat agree, and thumbs down if they don't agree.
 1. Have you ever had experiences where you felt like your family was changing based on what you needed or who you were with?
5. Family Portraits (10 mins)
- a. Facilitator will explain: Each group is going to create a tableau or a frozen picture of what a family looks like to them. In these frozen pictures, there is no movement or talking, so everyone should pick a position that they can hold for a while. While they are performing, the facilitator will tap each of them and they will say who they are (i.e. father, mother, grandfather, sister, dog, etc)
 - b. Facilitator will split the class into even groups, 5-6 in each. The class will have 3 minutes to create their tableau.
 - i. While the students are creating their tableaux, the facilitator can walk around ask questions such as:
 1. Where is this family at?
 2. Who is your character?
 3. How are you related to the others in the picture?
 - c. When the 5 minutes are up, the Facilitator will choose which group is going to show their tableaux first, everyone else will move so that they can see the picture. The facilitator will then tap each of them on the head and they will say what their role is in the family. When they have each spoken, they will refreeze, the class will applaud them, then the next group will go.
 - d. Once all of the groups have gone, the Facilitator can ask the following questions:
 - i. What was similar in most of the tableaux?
 - ii. What was different?
 - e. For this next question, have the students respond with a thumbs up if they agree, thumbs sideways if they kind of agree, and thumbs down if they don't agree.

- i. Were these tableaux a good representation of what your family looks like?
- ii. If you're willing to share, what would you add to make it a better representation of your family?

Reflection

6. Letters to someone who you miss (10 mins)
 - a. Facilitator have the students get out a paper and a writing utensil. Each student will pick someone who is part of their 'family' that they miss.
 - i. This could be a friend who moved, someone or a pet who passed away, or anyone who the student doesn't get to see often.
 - b. Give the student about 10 minutes to write this letter then have them sign it and do with it whatever they want