About Others

The theme of this unit is exploring our own multiple identities through the William stories. It acknowledges the many diverse factors that contribute to our identity and contrasts with the stereotypical attitudes explored in Activity 5.

Valuing and Celebrating Cultural Difference and Diversity

**Suggested stories**

- Dr Seuss. *Oh the Places You’ll Go* (Random House: 1990) 0 67980527 3
- King-Smith, D. *Lady Daisy* (Puffin Books: 1993) 0 14034416 0
- Gavin, J. *Grandpa Chatterji* (Methuen Young Books: 1993) 0 41619021 9
- Brett, J. *Town Mouse and Country Mouse* (Putnam Publishing: 1994) 0 39922622 2
- Cave, K. and Riddell, C. *Something Else* (Puffin Books: 1995) 0 14054907 2
- Mayer, M. *Just Me and My Dad* (Golden Press: 1982) 0 30711839 8

**Anti-Defamation League, Stern-LaRosa, C. and Hofheimer, E.** *Hate Hurts: How Children Learn and Unlearn Prejudice* (Scholastic Paperbacks: 2000) 0 43921121 2

**CCEA Primary Values** (CCEA: 2005) 1 85885337 0

**Goldthorpe, M.** *Poems for Circle Time and Literacy Hour* (LDA: 1998) 1 85503269 4

**Ideas for Connected Learning** (CCEA: 2007), including the ‘Journeys’, ‘Once Upon a Time’ and ‘Journey Through the Year’ resources

**Suggested further reading**

- **Naylor, Y.** *Stepping Out* (from the Transforming Sectarianism - SEED Project by the Irish School of Ecumenics at Trinity College, Dublin) www.creni.org
- **Naylor, Y.** *Who We Are - Dealing With Difference* (as part of the Transforming Sectarianism SEED Project by the Irish School of Ecumenics at Trinity College, Dublin) www.creni.org

**Suggested additional resources**

- **Mosley, J.** *More Quality Circle Time: Evaluating Your Practice and Developing Creativity Within the Whole School Quality Circle Time Model, Vol.2* (LDA: 1998) 1 85503270 8
- See also www.circle-time.co.uk.
- **Think of Me, Think of You**: An Anti-discrimination Training Resource for Young People by Young People (Save the Children: 2004)

Noticing difference is biological, but the formation of attitudes to prejudice and discrimination is social. It is learned from watching and listening to others. If no one addresses instances of exclusion, for example in comment or joke, then children will think this is how it is meant to be.

This is when two people talk together loudly enough to hear each other but not so loudly so as to disturb others from working or talking together. Use it when everyone is discussing something at the same time.

**Partner Voice**

Challenge Prejudice and Discrimination

Teaching approaches

*Celebrate Difference*

When children value difference and are comfortable with their own and others' individuality they are less likely to be prejudiced. Use opportunities to help children understand other points of view.

**Worry Box**

When placed discreetly in the room, a Worry Box gives children an outlet for expressing their concerns. These could be about, for example, a problem with understanding work, feeling left out in the playground or being called sectarian names. A child might be too embarrassed to speak openly to someone but may be willing to place a note in the box. This is another way of creating a ‘safe’ environment, but there must be agreed procedures for its use.
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Partner Voice
This is when two people talk together loudly enough to hear each other but not so loudly so as to disturb others from working or talking together. Use it when everyone is discussing something at the same time.
**Key Experiences in valuing and celebrating cultural difference and diversity**

**Building on Key Stage 1**

**Similarities and differences between people:**
- appreciating ways we are similar and different;
- being aware of our own cultural heritage its traditions and celebrations;
- recognising and valuing the culture and traditions of one other group who shares their community, and
- being aware of the diversity of people around the world.

**Working at Key Stage 2**

**Value and celebrate cultural difference and diversity:**
- examining and exploring the different types of families that exist, the roles within them, and the different responsibilities;
- knowing about aspects of their cultural heritage including the diversity of cultures that contribute to Northern Ireland;
- recognising the similarities and differences between cultures in Northern Ireland, for example food, clothes, symbols, celebrations;
- acknowledging that people differ in what they believe is right or wrong;
- recognising that people have different beliefs which shape the way they live;
- developing an awareness of the experiences, lives and cultures of people in the wider world;
- recognising the similarities and differences between cultures, for example, food, clothes, symbols, celebrations, and
- recognising how injustice and inequality affect people's lives;

**Moving towards Key Stage 3**

**Citizenship Key Concept: Diversity and Inclusion**

**Progress in learning**

- I understand that using hurtful words on purpose is wrong.
- I understand that everyone has a right to be part of the class.
- I try to understand what other people think.
- I can talk about what makes me different to other people.
- I can talk about the ways that I am similar to other people.
- I know when someone is talking in another language.
- I can say some words in another language.
- I am interested in meeting new people.
- I can ask others questions about themselves.
- I understand that using 'put downs' is not showing respect.
- I try to show respect in what I say.
- I try to show respect in what I do.
- I am starting to learn about stereotypes.
Learning intention

Recognise and value diversity in people’s lives.

Planning together

Actively involving children from the beginning to establish a context that matters to them is vital in providing not only a stimulus for the learning but also a reason for future work.

This is how one teacher planned to explore the topic and how one child represented his multiple identities.

Building on Key Stage 1

Similarities and differences between people:
- appreciating that we are all unique and different;
- being aware of their own cultural heritage in traditions and celebrations;
- recognizing and valuing the similarities and differences of one another group who share their community, and
- being aware of the diversity of people around the world.

Working at Key Stage 2

Value and celebrate cultural difference and diversity:
- examining and exploring the different types of families that exist, the roles within them, and their different responsibilities;
- knowing about aspects of their cultural heritage, including the diversity of cultures that contribute to Northern Ireland;
- recognising the similarities and differences between cultures in Northern Ireland, for example food, clothes, symbols, celebrations;
- considering that people differ from what they believe to see or hearing;
- recognising that people believe differently because of what shape the way they look;
- developing an understanding of the experiences, lives, and cultures of people in the wider world;
- exploring the similarities and differences between cultures, for example food, clothes, symbols, celebrations, and recognising how people and culturally different people live.

Moving towards Key Stage 3

Citizenship Key Concept: Diversity and Inclusion

Progress in learning

- I understand that using hurtful words on purpose is wrong.
- I understand that everyone has a right to be part of the class.
- I try to understand what other people think.
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- I know when someone is talking in another language.
- I can say some words in another language.
- I am interested in meeting new people.
- I can ask others questions about themselves.
- I understand that using 'put downs' is not showing respect.
- I try to show respect in what I say.
- I try to show respect in what I do.
- I am starting to learn about stereotypes.
Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities by the end of Key Stage 2

Managing information

Be able to ask deeper and wider questions to clarify a task and to plan and set goals;
Begin to challenge conventions and assumptions;
Be able to classify, compare and evaluate information, and to select the most appropriate methods for a task;
Develop methods for collating and recording information and monitoring progress on a task; and
Have a sense of audience and purpose.

Thinking, problem solving and decision-making

Show the ability to use memory strategies to deepen understanding;
Identify and order patterns and relationships through a range of strategies such as grouping, classifying and reclassifying, and comparing and contrasting;
Make and test predictions, examine evidence and make links between possible causes and effects;
Discriminate between fact and opinion and question the reliability of evidence;
Understand more than one point of view;
Examine options and weigh up pros and cons;
Try alternative problem solving solutions and approaches; and
Use different types of questions systematically and with purpose.

Creativity

Pose questions that do not have straightforward answers and seek out problems to solve and challenge the routine method;
Use all the senses to stimulate and contribute to ideas;
Experiment with different modes of thinking;
See opportunities in mistakes and failures;
Learn from and build on own and others’ ideas and experiences;
Value other people’s ideas;
Experiment with objects and ideas in a playful way;
Make ideas real by experimenting with different ideas, actions and outcomes; and
Begin to develop value judgments about the merits of their work.

Working with others

Become more independent in social and interpersonal skills;
Work in different roles in a group and take responsibility for appropriate tasks;
Be willing to help others with their learning;
Understand and learn to respond to feedback; and
Work with peers to reach agreements and begin to manage disagreements.

Self-management

Evaluate what has been learnt and compare approaches with others;
Make links between learning in different contexts;
Become more self-directed by working independently or with a group;
Learn ways to manage own time;
Seek help from a variety of sources;
Work towards personal targets identified individually or jointly with the teachers; and
Be more confident in the knowledge of personal strengths and weaknesses.
Across the Curriculum: Connecting the learning

The World Around Us

Experimenting with different designs.

Learning from and building on their own and others’ experiences.

The Arts

Adapting behaviour and language to suit different people and situations.

Language and Literacy

Words and phrases I will hear and use

Tradition

Racism

Acceptance

Respect

Colour

Sectarianism
Learning activities

Activity 1
William’s family
William’s Dad was a Protestant and his Mum is a Catholic.

Activity 2
William’s T-shirt
Exploring identity in the classroom.

Activity 3
William’s visit to Granny Quinn’s
Loneliness and the problems of difference.

Activity 4
William and his dad
William remembers his dad.

Activity 5
Gender issues
Exploring stereotypes.
Learning activity 1: William’s family

CORE CONCEPT
Our identity is our personal and cultural history.

SUGGESTED SUCCESS CRITERION
We will recognise and present elements that contribute to our own identity.

POINTS TO NOTE
It is important that parents are aware of the issues in this unit. Send parent(s) or carer(s) a letter to introduce them to this unit (Resource A). You also need to explore and be comfortable with your own identity before discussing identity with the class. It is our identity that makes us different, and it is important that others accept us for the ways in which we are different as well as for our similarities. There could be opportunities for work in The World Around Us.

Activities 1-4 in this unit are adapted from ‘Stepping Out’, written by Yvonne Naylor as part of Transforming Sectarianism - SEED Project, Irish School of Ecumenics at Trinity College, Dublin.

WHAT YOU NEED
- Parent(s)/Carer(s) Letter (Resource A)
- ‘William’s Family’ (Resource B)

WHAT TO DO
- Labels
- William’s Family
- My Name
- Exploring My Identities

Labels

Place the children into pairs and ask them to write words or phrases that they associate with the word ‘Protestant’. Do the same for the words ‘Catholic’ and ‘Jewish’. (It doesn’t matter what order you use). As a class, discuss the terms and use facts to challenge any prejudices or stereotypes (see also the Blue Unit’s Activity 4 and ‘Joined Up’ which appears in this unit’s Further Reading list).
William’s Family

Ask the children to sit in a circle. Read the story ‘William’s Family’ (Resource B) aloud. Then, ask the children the following questions to prompt conversation:

- What did you like about the story?
- What didn’t you like about the story?
- What did you find interesting?
- What would you like to find out more about?
- What does everyone else think?
- Does anyone agree with... Why?
- Who has a different idea?
- Can you give me an example of that?
- Why do you believe that?
- How could we find out more about...?
- Has anyone changed their mind about some part of the story as result of our discussion?
- What made you change your mind?

Exploring My Identities

Ask each child to draw themselves on a large sheet of paper. Then have them draw six lines around their picture and place words on these that describe their identity, for example: ‘sister’, ‘daughter’, ‘granddaughter’, ‘niece’, ‘member of school football team’, and ‘I was born in (town)’.

Explain that many identities form who we are. We react in different ways according to the identity we have at the time. For example, compare the differing ways we react as granddaughter and member of the school football team, or compare the difference between an adult being a son and a parent.

The children could also do this activity in PowerPoint using photographs and other resources:

Slide 1 - This is Me.
Slide 2 - I am a sister. These are my brothers.
Slide 3 - I am a daughter. This is my Mum (and my Dad).
Slide 4 - I am a niece. These are my aunts and uncles.
Slide 5 - I am a granddaughter. This is my Gran.
Slide 6 - I play centre forward in the school football team.
Slide 7 - This is a map of where I was born.

The initial work started in school could be completed at home, with parents adding information. For example, parents could provide the children with details about relatives, religion, culture, or ethnicity.

‘Something Else’ and ‘Primary Values’ (p 21-55) also explore diversity issues. Author and publishing details for these can be found in this unit’s Further Reading list.

My Name

Provide dictionaries of names and ask each child to find out what their name means. Then, as part of home learning, have the children ask their parents to explain how their name was chosen.
Learning activity 2: William’s T-shirt

CORE CONCEPT
It is as important to recognise and value the differences within and between the groups as it is their similarities.

SUGGESTED SUCCESS CRITERION
Our groups will recognise similarities and differences between groups.

POINTS TO NOTE
The groups in which the children work for this activity could continue to be the main groups in which they work for the rest of the term. This activity builds a sense of team.

WHAT YOU NEED
- ‘William’s T-Shirt’ (Resource C)
- One white T-shirt for each group (4-6)
- Paper and pens
- Fabric crayons or paints

WHAT TO DO
- Discussion
- William’s T-Shirt
- Diversity Quilt

Discussion
Review the previous lesson and the discussion about ‘Catholic’ and ‘Protestant’ words. Then discuss the word ‘Christian’, challenging prejudice and stereotype as before.
William’s T-Shirt

Read the story ‘William’s T-Shirt’ (Resource C). Then, group the children into five small groups of about 4-6 in number. Acknowledge the multiple identities within each person, the class and within the small groups. Then reflect on how William’s group formed their picture for the T-shirt.

Tell the children that each small group is going to find an identity for their individual group. Ask each group to use paper and pens to design an initial pattern/logo/collage to depict the identity that describes their group. They should keep it simple.

Next, have them transfer their design onto the blank T-shirt using fabric crayons. Ask the groups to 1. select a representative to model their shirt, and 2. write a suitable commentary to read aloud as the model walks down the catwalk.

Then have the class look and listen as each group displays and explains its identity T-shirt in a fashion parade.

Diversity Quilt

Give each child a square of plain fabric that is 12cm x 12cm and fabric crayons or paints.

Ask each child to draw one thing (or a number of things) that represents their identity. This could be a Cub Scout badge, church, guitar, ballet shoe, etc.

Ask for volunteers to sew the patches together (volunteers could be children, parents, someone from the local community, etc.). They could, for example, form four long strips each of seven squares, sew the strips together and then sew on a backing and two loops.

Mount the Diversity Quilt by placing an old brush shaft through the loops, and hang it in a safe and convenient place.

If fabric crayons or paints are not available, have the children work together to construct a poster instead.
Learning activity 3: William’s visit to Granny Quinn’s

CORE CONCEPT
Our personal and cultural backgrounds and experiences give us our identity.

SUGGESTED SUCCESS CRITERION
We will show respect for and value each other’s identity.

POINTS TO NOTE
This is an opportunity for children to explore difference and to learn more about the culture and traditions of another group that shares their community. ‘Something Else’ by Kathryn Cave and Chris Riddell, and follow up activities in CCEA’s ‘Primary Values’, are also useful in exploring difference.

William’s Visit to Granny Quinn’s

Read ‘William’s Visit to Granny Quinn’s’ (Resource D). This story provides an opportunity to explore times when we have felt different from those around us. After reading the story aloud, ask the children the following questions to prompt conversation:

WHAT YOU NEED
- ‘William’s Visit to Granny Quinn’s’ (Resource D)

WHAT TO DO
- William’s Visit to Granny Quinn’s
- Feeling Different
- Learning About Someone or Something Different
William’s Visit to Granny Quinn’s

- What did you like about the story?
- What didn’t you like about the story?
- What did you find interesting?
- What would you like to find out more about?
- What does everyone else think?
- Does anyone agree with … Why?
- Who has a different idea?
- Can you give me an example of that?
- Why do you believe that?
- How could we find out more about …?
- Has anyone changed their mind about some part of the story as a result of our discussion?
- What made you change your mind?

Feeling Different

Instruct the children to discuss or write about a time when they visited someone and gender, age, ability, race, religion or culture created differences in what they would normally do or talk about. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the visits. For example, visiting a grandparent who uses a wheelchair may mean that they can take responsibility for wheeling their grandparent for a ‘walk’ in the garden, but they may miss the grandparent being able to take them to the park or play tennis. Use the following questions to prompt conversation:

- What made the visit enjoyable and fun?
- What made it less enjoyable?

Learning About Someone or Something Different

Ask the children to think about someone they know who is interested in or plays a different game than they normally do, celebrates a different festival than they do or belongs to a different club or organisation.

Once they’ve selected a person who is different than they are, ask them to discuss how they could understand their person better. Use the following questions to stimulate ideas:

- Where could you find out more information?
- Who would you ask?
- What would you like to know? How would you need to do?
- How could you show what you had learned? Poster? Booklet? Project work?

Fair pair or group the children and ask them to decide on a topic that is unfamiliar to them, for example Gaelic football or Mini-rugby. Then, instruct the pairs/groups to find out more about their topic.

- What questions might they need to answer?
- How many players are there in a team?
- What are the rules?
- Which is the best team?
- What are their jerseys like?

Alternatively the children might decide to find out more about the culture and traditions of another group in the community. Have each pair/group prepare a presentation on their topic (digital or written) and present it to the class.

Finally, emphasise that finding out and learning about something new doesn’t mean that you need to start to do it or like it yourself. It just means you understand it better and can talk about it to others if you want to.
Learning activity 4: William and his dad

CORE CONCEPT
Feelings of separation and loss are difficult and can be helped by remembrance.

SUGGESTED SUCCESS CRITERIA
We will think about and understand the importance of acknowledging loss. We will recognise the feelings associated with loss.

POINTS TO NOTE
These activities are of a sensitive nature. Adapt them according to your needs and those of the class. Also consider your own feelings about death as well as the particular needs and sensitivities of the class. It is important to inform parents if this activity is used (see ‘Parent(s)/Carer(s) Letter’ (Resource A)).

WHAT YOU NEED
- ‘William and His Dad’ (Resource E)
- A selection of stiff card in a variety of sizes
- Glue
- Decorative trimmings
- Fabric remnants

Another useful book is ‘Fred’ by Posy Simmonds. You can also conduct follow-up work in CCEA’s ‘Primary Values’ p57 - 69. More details on these are available in this unit’s Further Reading list.

WHAT TO DO
- William and His Dad
- Memory Collage
- Remembrance Box

William and his Dad

Read the story ‘William and His Dad’ (Resource E), and then ask the children the following questions to prompt conversation:
William and His Dad

- What did you like about the story?
- What didn’t you like about the story?
- What did you find interesting?
- What would you like to find out more about?
- What does everyone else think?
- Does anyone agree with … Why?
- Who has a different idea?
- Can you give me an example of that?
- Why do you believe that?
- How could we find out more about …?
- Has anyone changed their mind about some part of the story as a result of our discussion?
- What made you change your mind?

Ask the children, should they always ‘respect their elders’?

Children often experience feelings of loss when a pet dies or a favourite toy is lost. Loss of a close relative is even more significant, and it is very difficult for a child to have these feelings recognised when they are never discussed. It is important for a child to know that these feelings are normal and that others understand them.

Memory Collage

Ask the children to collect as many photographs, pictures, and other memorabilia as possible of the person, pet, toy, etc. that they have lost.

Have each child arrange their pieces before fitting them onto a piece of chosen card. Then, have them stick the pieces in place with glue. Finally, allow the children to decorate and frame their collages with selected trimmings.

Some children may want to hang their collage, while others may want to put it at the bottom of a drawer. It is the process of collecting the materials and making the collage that is important. Allow the children to choose the content and format themselves, but be available if they choose to tell you about why the chosen pieces and design are special.

Treasure Box

If the children already keep items that are important or significant to them, then they may already have a supply of memorabilia that they can use to remember a special person, pet, toy or time that has been lost. The shape or size of the Treasure Box does not matter as long as the child thinks it is suitable for what they were once close to and once treasured. For instance, a tiny ring box could hold a piece of an old blanket that a child held dear when younger.

It gives the child an opportunity to show that he/she valued it at one time. At a later time he/she may decide to throw it out when it no longer has any significance. Allow the children to design and make their own container.
Learning activity 5: Gender issues

CORE CONCEPT
We need to recognise and challenge stereotypes.

SUGGESTED SUCCESS CRITERIA
We will understand the term ‘stereotype’. We will recognise how stereotypes may influence our opinions.

WHAT YOU NEED
- Large sheets of paper
- Small self-adhesive pieces of paper

WHAT TO DO
- Our Stereotypes
- People
- Pictures
- Walking Debate

POINTS TO NOTE
Stereotypical remarks should be challenged. It is important that we realise when we make stereotypical remarks and assumptions. Have the adults in the class do this activity alongside the children, so the children can see that we all sometimes make stereotypical remarks without thinking. Sometimes we don’t realise we’ve done so until someone challenges us.

This unit is linked to Activity 5 in the Blue Unit.

Our Stereotypes

Take four sheets of large paper and put one of the following words at the top: ‘women’, ‘men’, ‘old people’, ‘farmers’ (or make up your own list). Then attach each sheet to a wall within easy reach of all the children. Next, give everyone in the room four pieces of self-adhesive paper (one for each sheet on the wall). Then ask everyone to choose one of the sheets on the wall and to think of four or five words or phrases that they associate with that word at the top of the large sheet.
Ask them to write their words or phrases on one piece of their self-adhesive paper. Instruct them not to discuss their responses with one another. Then ask them to do the same for the remaining three terms on the wall.

When everyone has finished, have each child adhere their list to its corresponding sheet on the wall. Then, review one sheet at a time, calling out the words and phrases written by the children. (Be sure to use the same tone of voice and body language for each contribution).

As a group, consider the array of words. Are they mainly positive or negative? Are they true for every person named in the title word?

Call out a word or phrase from a self-adhesive piece of paper - do the children know anyone from the category for whom this word would not apply? Can they explain? Repeat this with the words on the other three sheets.

To link with The World Around Us, you could use the names of inhabitants of other countries: French, Germans, etc. Finally, introduce the word ‘stereotype’ and discuss it in the context of the activity. A definition of ‘stereotype’ can be found in ‘Joined Up: Developing Good Relations in the School Community’ p91. Publishing details for this work can be found in this unit’s Further Reading list.

**People**

Before you begin this activity, create six cards. On each, write a different occupation title (for example, ‘doctor’, ‘scientist’, ‘builder’, ‘judge’, ‘drug dealer’, and ‘nurse’).

Place the children into groups of four or five. Then turn the cards name side down and ask each group to pick one.

Ask each group to illustrate their person without using the given word (for example by drawing, using words, cutting out magazine pictures, or painting).

When the children have finished, put all the illustrations on the wall and ask the other groups to guess the person depicted in each illustration. Then, discuss how each person was depicted:
- Were they mainly male or female?
- Why do you think this is so?
- Should it be?

**Pictures**

Collect a range of pictures of people whose background you know, ensuring that there is a fair representation of age, gender, ability and race. Fair group the children and give each group a picture. Then, ask each group to write a short biography of the person they have been given. To finish, compare how accurate they have been.

**Walking Debate**

Write agree, disagree and not sure, each on a separate piece of paper. Put agree at one end of the room, disagree at the other and not sure in between.

Read out a statement, for example: ‘Women are better at looking after children than men’. Then, ask the children to go and stand beside or near the statement that represents how they feel about the statement.

Ask those who ‘agree’ to explain why. Ask those who ‘disagree’ to explain why. Ask if anyone wants to change their position based on what they have heard others say. Where would they move to? Why?

Other suggested statements:
- ‘Men should be the breadwinner.’
- ‘Boys shouldn’t cry.’
- ‘Men should make the main decisions in the house.’
- ‘Women make the best housekeepers.’

Finally, review the activity with the class. You can use the following questions to prompt conversation:
- What have we learned about stereotypes?
- How can using stereotypes lead to discrimination?
- Is using stereotypes ever right?
Resource A

Personal Development and Mutual Understanding Indigo Unit

Learning activity 1: William’s family

Parent(s)/Carer(s) Letter

Available to download from www.ccea.org.uk
Dear Parent(s) / Carer(s),

We are beginning a new unit of work, which will be looking at issues concerning our personal and cultural history and our identity. We will be discussing personal issues such as our name (What does it mean? Why was it chosen? Has anyone else in the family the same name? etc.). You can help us by talking about these topics and issues to your son or daughter.

We will also be looking at the many identities we each have (for example as daughter, sister, niece and granddaughter). Again, you can help your child by talking to him/her about these relationships and by supplying him/her with names or photographs.

We will also be talking about our cultural backgrounds, where we were born and how we have lived our lives so far. We will be using words such as ‘Protestant’, ‘Catholic’ and ‘Jewish’, as these appear in one of the stories we will use. As your child begins creating a picture of his/her own identity, he/she may ask you questions regarding his/her own religion and that of others. You may not consider yourself to be of any particular religion, and that is perfectly acceptable, too.

We will be reading a number of stories written specially to explore these issues and will involve the children in a number of identity-building activities, both as individuals and as groups. We will discuss what it is like to feel different and will be asking the children to find out about someone, something or some organisation that is different from them or what they are familiar with. Finding out and learning about something new does not mean that we need to start doing it or liking it ourselves. It just means that we try to understand it better and can talk about it to others if we want to.

One of the stories involves discussion about bereavement. As this is a sensitive subject, we will inform you nearer the time if we decide to use it. This is so that you can let us know of any personal concerns you may have.

We will complete this unit with a session on gender issues. During this unit, we will explore the ways in which men and women are regarded in society and the roles they play.

We are happy to talk to you more about the unit if you wish.

Best wishes,

Class Teacher
William Beattie is 8 years old. He lives off the Lisburn Road in Belfast with his mum, Rosie. William’s dad Albert, who died a year ago, was a Protestant. His mum is a Catholic.
Rosie and Albert met at Corrymeela in their teens when they were both voluntary youth workers. It was love at first sight, Albert used to say. When they got married in Rosie’s church in West Belfast, Albert’s parents chose not to go. Albert and Rosie kept in touch with both of their families because they wanted any children they might have to learn about all the different faiths and cultures living in Northern Ireland.

When William went to visit his mother’s family, the Quinn’s, he was called ‘Liam’, he went to mass with his mum and passed lampposts and pavement curbs painted green, white and orange. When he went to visit his father’s family, the Beatties, he was called ‘Billy’; he went to play football in the park with his cousins and passed lampposts and pavement curbs painted red, white and blue. He didn’t know if he ‘belonged’ in either of these families, especially when his cousins on his father’s side told him he wasn’t a ‘proper’ Protestant and his cousins on his mother’s side told him he wasn’t a ‘proper’ Catholic.

‘Mum,’ he said one day, ‘am I a Protestant or a Catholic?’

Rosie told William that she had been brought up a Catholic and that his dad had been brought up a Protestant. They had decided that William would go to an integrated primary school and learn about all the denominations and faiths, so that when he was older he could make up his own mind about what he wanted to be. David, his best friend at school, was Jewish. Like William, he enjoyed football and playing games on the computer.

‘David, do you mind being different from everyone else in your street?’ William asked him. David told him he didn’t mind that much. It was just a bit embarrassing when he was asked to a birthday party and couldn’t eat some of the food he was offered, like pork sausages. William told David he didn’t like pork sausages either. Then David explained to William that it was a religious thing for him and his family.

‘Anyway,’ said David, ‘we’re all different from everyone else in our street. We’re all individuals, no two alike. There are also many ways in which we are similar. We’re both lads, we like football, we support Linfield, we go to the same school, we’re in the same class, we like the same music… I could go on. We also look different and belong to different families who worship God in different ways in different buildings on different days.’

‘Identity is very complicated,’ said William.

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William was very happy. The teacher had been talking to them in circle time about identity and all the ways they are both alike and different from one another.
'Identity is very complicated, Miss,' he had been saying, ‘Take me and my friend David, we’re both lads, we both like football and go to the same school, but we’re different too, Miss.’ Sarah talked about how everyone in her family was different and how she sometimes felt like the odd one out. The teacher asked if anyone else in the circle ever felt like that. William was amazed to see all the heads nodding and he joined in. The teacher read them a story about someone who was ‘different’ and always felt like the odd one out, but it had a happy ending and he realised he wasn’t as ‘different’ as he thought he was.

Then the teacher asked them to get into four small groups. She asked them all to make a list of all the things about them that were different and all the things about them that were similar. They had to design a t-shirt that represented their group. It had to say something about the things they had in common as well as the range of different interests in the group.

William thought it was great fun. Of course they had the school crest and a map of Northern Ireland (because they were all either born or living there or both).

But he also discovered that everyone in his group had a pet and liked reading. There were also differences. There were boys and girls; Farah was Muslim, the rest were Christian; Andrew was Chinese; Lindsay used a wheelchair; some liked taking part in sports; some liked watching and some were more interested in drawing and painting or practising on their drum kit. It was a very interesting picture! The best fun came when they took turns to transfer their design from the paper to the T-shirt using the fabric crayons.

The group decided that Collette would wear and show off the T-shirt and William could read out the special design features. The group decided what he would say and he wrote it out. When everyone had finished, the teacher played some music and encouraged the T-shirt models from each group to walk around the class whilst the commentator talked about the various features. It was a real celebration of diversity and William was delighted.

© ‘William’s T-Shirt’ is sourced from ‘Stepping Out’, written by Yvonne Naylor as part of the Transforming Sectarianism - SEED Project, Irish School of Ecumenics at Trinity College, Dublin. This publication can be accessed on both the www.creni.org and www.ccea.org.uk sites.
Learning activity 3: William’s visit to Granny Quinn’s
Rosie, William’s mum, sometimes takes him to visit his grandparents off the Falls Road in West Belfast. Granny and Granda Quinn were not very happy about their daughter Rosie, a Catholic, marrying Albert Beattie, a Protestant. Albert, William’s dad, had died in a road traffic accident and now Rosie’s parents are wondering if Rosie and William might consider moving house to be nearer to them in West Belfast.

‘Sure, all the family lives here Rosie,’ said Granny Quinn. ‘You’d have everybody round you. You’d like that wouldn’t you Liam?’

William was not sure. ‘All the family’ didn’t include the Beatties, and he wasn’t sure he liked being called ‘Liam’.

He just said, ‘No, Granny I wouldn’t. I like living where I am.’

William was sulking and feeling sorry for himself because he had wanted to stay at home that afternoon. ‘Well Liam, I have asked your cousins Kevin and Aidan over this afternoon, and you can play with them out in the park. I got your favourite ice cream in, too,’ said Granny Quinn. ‘What do you think of that?’

Granny had gone to a lot of trouble to make everything welcoming for William. He knew well enough that she was a very kind woman and a generous neighbour. ‘Thanks Granny.’ He decided that he would make an effort to be more grateful.

He was taking his football outside just as his cousins arrived. They said hello and then rushed past him to talk to Grandpa about the Gaelic match that they were hoping to watch that afternoon on T.V. William didn’t know anything about Gaelic and felt left out.

He felt the same when he went to the Beattie’s, his Dad’s family. He was very fond of Granda Beattie and loved to go for a walk with him and the dog and talk to him about when his dad was a wee boy. But one day his cousins Britney and Curtis were over visiting and collecting wood for the bonie (bonfire), and William wanted to help.

‘No way,’ Curtis had told him, ‘You’re not a proper Protestant. An’ you’re not even a proper Catholic. In fact, you’re nothing.’

‘That’s not true’, thought William, ‘I’m something. I’m William. I go to church with my mum and to the Sunday school that dad used to take me to as well. After dad died, Mum arranged for my friends to call for me. I go to the cubs and have loads of badges. Akela says I’m clever and she made me a sixer. I have lots of friends at school, too.’ He remembered his conversation with his friend, David, in school about identity.

‘My cousins Britney and Curtis are not the same and neither are Kevin and Aidan. We all have different identities and we all belong to one another.’

Suddenly William didn’t feel ‘left out’ anymore. He decided he was going to find out all about Gaelic and share his favourite ice-cream that Granny got in for him with his cousins.

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William Beattie is nine years old. When he was eight, his father died. William lives off the Lisburn Road in Belfast with his mum, Rosie. He has very happy memories of his dad and also some sad ones. He remembers the day his dad died. William’s dad, Albert, was a lorry driver and a keen football supporter. He had been taking William with him to various matches to support his team, Linfield, in the nearby Windsor Park, and William really looked forward to them. One week, however, his Dad told him that he would not be taking William this time because he had been very cheeky to his Granny Quinn. William was angry.

‘Dad, please, it’s not fair.’

‘You have to learn to respect your elders, William,’ said his dad. ‘Calling your Granny names is just not on! Granny Quinn and your mother were very upset. I had to do something. You’re not going to the match this week and that’s final. There’ll be other matches, son.’

‘I hate you and I won’t go to another match with you ever again,’ William replied.

William sat in his room that Saturday afternoon watching television and wondering how the match was going. He so wanted to be there. He was also feeling bad because he knew that he had been wrong to call his granny a ‘Fenian’*. He decided to make a card for Granny saying he was sorry, and he would apologise to his Mum and Dad as well. He felt a bit better after he made the card and went downstairs to wait for his Dad. But his dad never came home. There had been an accident and his dad had been hit by a car on a pedestrian crossing. The young man driving the car had been travelling too fast and didn’t stop in time. His dad never regained consciousness and died in hospital.
William felt terrible. He couldn’t talk about the awful day. He couldn’t talk to either his Mum’s family or his Dad’s. How could he tell his mum about the last words he ever said to his Dad? He felt guilty and wondered if it had been his fault his Dad had died. After all, what he had said had come true, he would never go to another football match with his dad.

‘Why did I say that? I didn’t mean it Daddy,’ he would say to himself over and over again.

He didn’t go to the funeral, and he didn’t think he would be able to go to a football match ever again. He couldn’t concentrate in class and his schoolwork was very poor. His teacher had been speaking to his mum about it. His mum was worried about him.

‘William, do you remember going to Corrymeela last summer on the family week?’ asked William’s mum.

‘Yes… why?’ replied William.

‘Well they have a group called Treetops that works with children, and families like ours, that have lost someone very dear to them,’ said William’s mum. ‘Would you come with me to the meetings? There is one a week for six weeks, and they last for about an hour and a half. You would be meeting with other children who have lost someone very special, like your Dad, and I would meet the other grown-ups. Look, here’s one of the magazines they produce with pictures and stories and poems written by the children.’

William went with his mum. There were eight in his group in addition to the leaders: three grown-ups and four other children. Like ‘circle time’ in school, they sat in a circle, only on big floor cushions, and made ground rules. William loved the session about anger. He and the others tore up old newspapers, scrunched the paper pieces into a ball and threw them at the wall. It was great. He wasn’t so happy with the session about guilt, and the horrible memory of the last thing he ever said to his dad came back to him. One of the tasks they had that week was to draw a picture of themselves doing something they used to enjoy with the person who had died and to write a message telling that person something they wanted them to hear. William drew a picture of himself and his dad at a football match and wrote, ‘Dear Dad, I love you very much and going with you to watch Linfield was very special.’ That helped him tell his story to the other children between his tears. He was very brave and everyone gave him a smile or a hug and told him that it wasn’t his fault that his daddy died. Seamus told William that his Dad would want him to continue to support Linfield, even though Seamus supported Cliftonville! That made William smile. Lisa, one of the leaders, thanked him for being brave and telling his story, for it had helped her to tell hers. Although it was a hard session, it really helped William and he left the group that week feeling a lot less worried. At the last meeting, he announced to everyone that he was going to support Linfield at a football match the following week with his uncle David and his cousin Thomas. They all cheered!

Treetops finished its work in 2005, after 10 pioneering years in this area. Other groups exist, however, to support children, families, schools, etc. See www.childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk or www.winstonswish.org.uk or contact Cruse Bereavement Care at Knockbracken Healthcare Park, Saintfield Road, Belfast BT8 8BH, Tel (028) 90-792419, or on the web at www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk A youth bereavement support website is also available at www.rd4u.org.uk.

Fenian - Originally ‘Fenians’ were members of an Irish Republican Brotherhood active in 19th century fighting British rule in Ireland. It has become a derogatory label that William has heard some Protestant friends attach to Catholics.

‘William’s Dad’ is sourced from ‘Stepping Out’, written by Yvonne Naylor as part of the Transforming Sectarianism - SEED Project, Irish School of Ecumenics at Trinity College, Dublin. This publication can be accessed on both the www.creni.org and www.ccea.org.uk sites.

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Learning intention

Recognise and value diversity in people’s lives.

Planning together

Actively involving children from the beginning to establish a context that matters to them is vital in providing not only a stimulus for the learning but also a reason for future work.

This is how one teacher planned to explore the topic and how one child represented his multiple identities.

Who will Identity show it to? How will I display my work? Who will I ask?

Who will I ask?

Where can I show it to?

I display my work?

Who will I ask?

Where can I show it to?

I show it to?

Where can I show it to?

I show it to?

Where can I show it to?

I show it to?

Where can I show it to?

I show it to?

Where can I show it to?

I show it to?

Where can I show it to?

I show it to?

Where can I show it to?

I show it to?
About Others

The theme of this unit is exploring our own multiple identities through the William stories. It acknowledges the many diverse factors that contribute to our identity and contrasts with the stereotypical attitudes explored in Activity 5.

Personal Development and Mutual Understanding: Key Stage 2, Year 5
Strand 2: Mutual Understanding in the Local and Wider Community
Unit 6: Learning More About Others

Complementary Units: Ups and Downs           Valuing Self and Others            Making Good Choices

Valuing and Celebrating Cultural Difference and Diversity

Learning More

Dr Seuss. Oh the Places You’ll Go
(Random House: 1990) 0 67980527 3

King-Smith, D.
Lady Daisy
(Puffin Books: 1993) 0 14034416 0

Gavin, J.
Grandpa Chatterji
(Methuen Young Books: 1993) 0 41619021 9

Brett, J.
Town Mouse and Country Mouse
(Putnam Publishing: 1994) 0 39922622 2

Cave, K. and Riddell, C.
Something Else
(Puffin Books: 1995) 0 14054907 2

Romulo, L. E. Filipino
Children’s Favorite Stories
(Periplus Editions: 2000) 9 62593765 X

Joseph, L.
Fly, Bessie, Fly
(Simon & Schuster Inc.: 1998) 0 68981339 2

Mayer, M.
Just Me and My Dad
(Golden Press: 1982) 0 30711839 8

Anti-Defamation League, Stern-LaRosa, C.
and Hofheimer Bettmann, E.
Hate Hurts: How Children Learn
and Unlearn Prejudice
(Scholastic Paperbacks: 2000) 0 43921121 2

CCEA Primary Values
(CCEA: 2005) 1 85885337 0

Goldthorpe, M.
Poems for Circle Time and Literacy Hour
(LDA: 1998) 1 8 5503269 4
See also www.circle-time.co.uk.

Naylor, Y.
Stepping Out
(Transforming Sectarianism - SEED Project
by the Irish School of Ecumenics at Trinity
College, Dublin) www.creni.org

Naylor, Y.
Who We Are - Dealing With Difference
(Transforming Sectarianism - SEED Project
by the Irish School of Ecumenics at Trinity
College, Dublin) www.creni.org

The Anti-Bias Curriculum (NICIE: 1998)
www.nicie.org/publications

Suggested stories

Suggested further reading

Suggested additional resources

Challenge Prejudice and Discrimination

Noticing difference is biological, but the formation of attitudes to prejudice and discrimination is social. It is learned from watching and listening to others. If no one addresses instances of exclusion, for example in comment or joke, then children will think this is how it is meant to be.

Partner Voice

This is when two people talk together loudly enough to hear each other but not so loudly as to disturb others from working or talking together. Use it when everyone is discussing something at the same time.

Teaching approaches

Celebrate Difference

When children value difference and are comfortable with their own and others’ individuality they are less likely to be prejudiced. Use opportunities to help children understand other points of view.

Worry Box

When placed discreetly in the room, a Worry Box gives children an outlet for expressing their concerns. These could be about, for example, a problem with understanding work, feeling left out in the playground or being called sectarian names. A child might be too embarrassed to speak openly to someone but may be willing to place a note in the box. This is another way of creating a ‘safe’ environment, but there must be agreed procedures for its use.