



FLAUNTING YOUR DIFFERENCES

Empower students to embrace their unique qualities and build empathy with this transformative class activity.

Perfect project
for getting
to know your
students!

Objective

Students will boost self-esteem and empathy by brainstorming positive ways to describe, appreciate, and flaunt their differences. Then they'll brainstorm, organize, and write an essay or create artwork.

Time

45 minutes (plus additional time for creating an essay or artwork in class or at home)

Materials

- Activity sheet: It's Time to Flaunt!
- Planning sheets (essay and/or artwork versions)
- Art supplies for the artwork option

Standards

ELA: CCSS, Grs. 3–5

- W.3 Write narratives to develop real experiences
- SL.1 Engage effectively in collaborative discussions with diverse partners

SEL: CASEL Competencies

- **Self-awareness:** Assessing one's own strengths [...] and possessing confidence and growth mind-set.
- **Social awareness:** Taking the perspective of and empathizing with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures.
- **Relationship skills:** Establishing healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals.

Remote Options

Visit [scholastic.com/flauntit](https://www.scholastic.com/flauntit) for a step-by-step version of this learning experience in Google Docs for independent student work.

Instructions

1 Explain that today the class is going to talk about their unique differences. Ask students to answer silently: *Who thinks they are different?* Share that sometimes it can be difficult or uncomfortable to talk about our differences. Ask the follow-up question: *Why might that be?*

2 Tell students that this class is a “safe space.” That means *everyone* belongs and can show their true selves. Inform students that each one of them is responsible for making all their classmates feel welcome. Call on students to provide ideas for safe-space ground rules about how to show respect for all. (For example: *Listen to what others have to say; be kind to one another.*) Ask students to explain why these rules might be needed. Write the rules on chart paper to display in a prominent spot, or share your screen.

3 Pair up students (or give them the option to respond to the upcoming prompts in a journal entry). Explain that they are going to interview their partners. Remind them this is a safe space with ground rules. Pairs should ask:

- *What do you like about yourself? Why?*
- *What don't you like about yourself? Why?*
- *Do any of the things you like about yourself set you apart from others? Do any make you similar to others?*
- *Do any of the things you dislike about yourself set you apart from others? Do any make you similar to others?*

4 Write the following on the board or screen: “We all have differences.” “What makes me different is what makes me, me.” Underneath, write two categories: “Visible Differences” and “Invisible Differences.” Share and discuss the **reading passage**, then fill out the chart together. (Visible differences include: glasses, braces, height, limb difference, weight, and wheelchair use. Invisible differences include: accent,

stuttering, learning challenges, dyslexia, autism, and unique family structure.) Ask students how their own visible and invisible differences define them. Remind students that even if they can't see someone else's differences, everyone has something that makes them unique.

5 Have students work in groups to explore words people use when speaking about visible and invisible differences. Ask students to choose one of the following to describe each word: “positive,” “negative,” or “neutral.” Discuss why they attached these feelings to their words.

6 Ask students what they think “flaunt” means. (“Flaunt” means to confidently display something.) Once the class has a working definition, start a discussion by asking: *What do you think would happen if you flaunted your differences?* Make sure to include the following points in the conversation: Flaunting your differences will make you stronger, help you to have a better attitude about yourself, help other people be brave about their own differences, and show people that differences can be a positive part of life. Share the Kids Flaunt winning essays and artwork from [scholastic.com/flauntit](https://www.scholastic.com/flauntit).

7 Have students identify their unique qualities using the peacock feathers on the It's Time to Flaunt **activity sheet** (or have students draw their own peacock—or simply make a list). Then, hand out the **planning sheets** (versions for essay or art) and **rubric**.

8 Ask whether anyone wants to read their essay to the class or share their artwork. Validate students as they volunteer to flaunt their differences. Explain that it is equally important to respect and celebrate other people's differences. Make a class commitment to value one another's differences. *Tip: Use this work as a foundation for future conversations about inclusion/diversity.*

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CELEBRATING OUR DIFFERENCES

Read about the kinds of things that make every kid unique, then answer the questions.

Did you know there are more than 7 billion people on Earth? Even though there are so many of us, no two people are exactly the same. We all have differences that make us who we are.

Some differences are visible and easy to notice. For example, some kids in your class are tall and some are short. Some may wear glasses to see, or use a wheelchair to get around. Other differences are invisible. A child may speak two languages at home or have a less common family structure, for instance. Some kids have learning differences like dyslexia or psychological differences like anxiety—you can't see them from the outside, but they are there.

Differences can be tough for a kid to handle, especially when other people don't take the time to understand them. "If other kids notice what I am doing, they might think it is weird," explains Roman Hathaway, a

9-year-old who has an invisible difference called obsessive-compulsive disorder (or OCD). "My OCD makes my body feel like something is always wrong, out of balance, needs to be fixed. If someone touches me, I have to touch them back."

Our differences can also make us strong. Shona Karp, who is 10 years old, was born with one eye. "Having one eye has made me tough!" she says. "It means having many surgeries. But I don't get down on myself. I still go to field hockey practice! I love being unique!" Being different can also help you learn how to speak up for yourself and teach you creative ways to solve problems.

No matter what your differences are, you never need to hide them from other people. Instead, you can flaunt them proudly! And you can help your friends and classmates celebrate the things that make them unique too! ■

Reflection Questions

Write your answers on a separate sheet.

1. How have your visible and invisible differences shaped who you are?
2. What advice would you give to a friend who is worried about a visible or invisible difference?



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Name _____

Flaunt Your Differences in Writing

Now that you've brainstormed things that make you different, it's time to plan your essay. Your essay should express the theme: "The things that make me different make me, me!"



Introduction: Get to Know Me

Catch your reader's attention and introduce your big idea.

- Describe yourself. _____
- What personal difference do you want to highlight? How does this make you unique?

Body: How My Difference Affects My Life

Write lots of specific details to make your essay stronger.

List ways that your difference impacts your daily life. Then add specific examples you could include. (How do you know you're being specific? Try starting with a specific time, like "Every day..." or "One time last year..." or "At lunch...")

Effect on My Life	Specific Example

Conclusion: Flaunt It!

Sum up your ideas and make your reader think.

- How do you celebrate your difference and how are you learning to flaunt it?

- What message do you want your readers to remember? _____

You're Ready! Use this outline to write your essay on a separate sheet!

Name _____

Flaunt Your Differences Through Art

Now that you've brainstormed things that make you different, it's time to plan your artwork. Your artwork should express the contest theme: **"The things that make me different make me, me!"**



Part A: Plan

1. What personal difference did you choose? _____
2. How does this make you unique? _____
3. How does your difference impact your daily life? _____
4. How do you flaunt and celebrate your difference? _____
5. What type of art will you create?
 drawing painting collage comic strip other: _____
6. What images will you include in your artwork? Why? (Think about your answers above.)

Image	Reason

7. What colors will you include in your artwork? Why? (Think about how colors will change the feeling of your piece.)

Color	Reason

Part B: Create

1. Create your work of art on a single sheet of 8.5 x 11-inch paper.
2. Write your artist statement—several sentences to describe the difference you are illustrating and how you flaunt it. What do you want the person looking at your art to understand?

Name _____

RUBRIC

Kids Flaunt Student Contest

Create either a **3-paragraph essay** OR a piece of 2D (flat) **artwork**.

→The contest judges will use the following criteria to pick the winning essays and artwork. Your teacher may also use this sheet to grade your assignment.

→ **Plan for Success:** Prepare for your entry to meet these criteria *before* you begin creating.

ESSAY

Criteria: What Does a Winning Entry Look Like?	Possible Points	Points Earned
1. Paragraph 1: Concept The essay clearly expresses the contest theme: “The things that make me different, make me, me!” The essay makes it clear: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• what the student’s personal difference (or that of a close family member) is• how this difference makes the student unique	5	
2. Paragraph 2: Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The essay shows specific examples of how the student’s unique qualities (or that of a close family member) influences the student’s daily life.	5	
3. Paragraph 3: Flaunt <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The essay clearly describes how the student is able to flaunt what makes them unique (or that of a close family member).	5	
4. Overall Originality and Creativity <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The essay clearly shows creativity and originality while expressing how the student’s (or close family member’s) difference makes them unique.	5	
5. Overall Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The entry<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ is written in an engaging way○ is written or typed neatly and clearly○ is laid out clearly in three paragraphs	5	
Total Points	25	

ARTWORK

Criteria: What Does a Winning Entry Look Like?	Possible Points	Points Earned
<p>1. Concept: The artwork clearly expresses the contest theme: “The things that make me different, make me, me!” The artwork makes it clear:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● what the student’s personal difference (or that of a close family member) is ● how this difference makes the student (or close family member) unique 	5	
<p>2. Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The artwork shows specific examples of how the student’s unique qualities (or that of a close family member) influences the student’s daily life. 	5	
<p>3. Flaunt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The artwork clearly illustrates how the student is able to flaunt what makes them unique (or that of a close family member). 	5	
<p>4. Overall Originality and Creativity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The artwork clearly shows creativity and originality while expressing how the student’s (or close family member’s) difference makes them unique. 	5	
<p>5. Overall Presentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The entry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ is a 2–D piece of visual art that fits on a single piece of paper ○ includes 1–3 sentences describing the artwork ○ creates visual interest by applying art skills/techniques 	5	
Total Points	25	