

Lesson Plan: We Are Family - A Four-Week Exploration

Materials Needed:

- Book: "We Are Family" by Patricia Hegarty
 - Large paper or poster board
 - Construction paper in various colors
 - Crayons, markers, and washable paint
 - Child-safe scissors and glue stick
 - Recycled materials: fabric scraps, yarn, buttons, bottle caps, old magazines
 - Building materials: building blocks (like LEGOs or wooden blocks), a medium-sized cardboard box, natural items (twigs, leaves, stones)
 - Household "instruments": pots, wooden spoons, plastic containers with rice or beans (for shakers), rubber bands
 - Family photographs (optional)
-

Week 1: Our Unique Family Portrait

Learning Focus:

To understand that families come in many forms and to identify and celebrate the members of their own family.

Lesson Activities:

1. **Read Aloud:** Snuggle up and read "We Are Family" together. As you read, point to the different families in the illustrations. Use phrases like, "Look at this family playing together! They look so happy," or "This family has a grandma living with them, just like..."
 2. **Family Chat:** After reading, talk about your own family. Ask gentle questions like:
 - "Who is in our family?"
 - "What is your favorite thing to do with Mommy/Daddy/Brother/etc.?"
 - "What makes our family special?"If you have family photos, look through them together while you talk.
 3. **Creative Project: My Family Collage:**
 - Take a large piece of paper. At the top, write "Our Family is Full of Love."
 - Set out the craft supplies: construction paper, fabric scraps, yarn, buttons, and markers.
 - Encourage your child to create a portrait of your family. They can draw people, or use the materials to represent them. For example, yarn for hair, button eyes, or a scrap of a favorite colored shirt. The goal is expression, not realism!
 - Talk about each family member as they are created. "You gave Daddy curly hair with the brown yarn! That's so creative."
-

Week 2: Building Our Family Home

Learning Focus:

To explore the idea that families live in different kinds of homes and to creatively construct a representation of their own home.

Lesson Activities:

1. **Read Aloud:** Reread "We Are Family," but this time, focus on the different houses and homes shown in the background. Point them out: "This family lives in a tall building in the city," and "This family has a little house in the countryside."
2. **Home Tour & Chat:** Take a walk through your own home or around the outside of your house/apartment building. Talk about the different rooms and what you do in each one. Ask questions like:
 - "What is your favorite room in our house? Why?"
 - "What makes our house a home?" (Guide toward answers like love, safety, being together).
3. **Creative Project: Build a Home:**
 - Offer a choice of building materials: building blocks, a cardboard box with craft supplies, or a collection of natural items from a walk outside (twigs, large leaves, pebbles).
 - The challenge: "Let's build a home for our family!"
 - Let your child lead the construction. If they use a box, they can cut out windows and a door, and paint or color the outside. If they use blocks, they can design the layout. This is a great activity for problem-solving and fine motor skills.
 - Once finished, you can use small toys or the family collage from Week 1 to "play" in the newly built home.

Week 3: The Sound of Our Family

Learning Focus:

To identify the activities and routines that families share, and to express family identity through music and rhythm.

Lesson Activities:

1. **Read Aloud:** Read "We Are Family" again, this time focusing on the *actions*. Ask, "What are the families *doing* in this picture?" (e.g., eating, playing, reading, hugging).
2. **Activity Chat:** Talk about the things your family does together every day or on special occasions.
 - "What do we do in the morning to get ready?"
 - "What is a special game we love to play together?"
 - "What sounds do we hear when our family is cooking dinner?"
3. **Creative Project: The Family Band:**
 - Gather your household "instruments": pots and pans, wooden spoons, plastic containers filled with rice to make shakers, etc.
 - Assign an instrument to each family member (real or imaginary).
 - Make up a simple family song. It can be a chant like: "We are the [Last Name]s, strong and true! We love to cook and play with you! Clap, clap, bang, bang, shake, shake, woo!"
 - Perform your family song together with lots of energy. This is about having fun and connecting through a shared, noisy, joyful experience.

Week 4: Our Family in the World

Learning Focus:

To understand that their family is part of a larger community of other families and to map their place

within that community.

Lesson Activities:

1. **Read Aloud:** For the final reading, look at the big picture in "We Are Family." Notice how all the different families and homes create a neighborhood or a town. Emphasize the last pages that show everyone together.
2. **Community Chat:** Talk about the places you go as a family in your neighborhood.
 - "Where do we go to get our food?" (Grocery store)
 - "Where is your favorite place to play outside?" (The park)
 - "Who are some other families we know?" (Friends, neighbors)
3. **Creative Project: Our Neighborhood Map:**
 - On a large piece of poster board, draw a simple square in the middle and say, "This is our home!"
 - Ask your child, "What is near our home?" Help them draw or glue pictures of other important places: the playground, the library, a friend's house, the grocery store.
 - You can draw simple roads connecting them. It doesn't need to be accurate! The goal is to visually represent the connection between home and the wider world.
 - Title the map "[Child's Name]'s World." This project helps them see that their special family has a special place in a bigger community.