



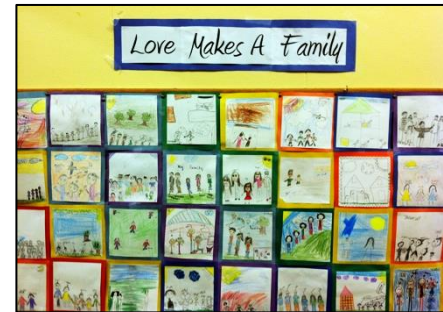
LOVE MAKES A FAMILY DISPLAY

SUGGESTED GRADE LEVEL: K – 3 (K – 5 for a school-wide display)

LENGTH OF TIME: One 25 minute session plus one or two project sessions

GOAL

- To see that the common bond that holds all kinds of families and caring communities together is love and caring.
- To create a unique drawing about their own family and learn about their classmates' families through their drawings.



OBJECTIVES

- Students will be able to define what makes a family and describe a variety of families.
- Students will learn that families have some similarities and some differences.
- Students will create a drawing that celebrates each student's unique family structure and communicates an important aspect of their families.
- Students will learn about each other's unique families through the creation of a class (or school-wide) display.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.7: Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting or plot.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.1.1: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text. (Also K.1 and 2.1)
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.1.1: Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 1 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups. (Also K.1 and 2.1)

EDUCATORS' NOTES

This project centers around the concept that all families are unique and different. This lesson will provide an opportunity to have important, complex conversations about welcoming all families in your school.

Children naturally notice human differences in skin tone, eye color, hair, etc. Talking openly and honestly about how families and humans are different in these ways is very important. Teachers need to openly talk about differences while interrupting bias and stereotypes.

Creating a 'Love Makes a Family Display' as a class can be a way for all children to connect with their own families, share their family experience with others and appreciate the diversity of families in the classroom and the larger community.

Creating a drawing of their family can be a reassuring activity for students as they show how they are connected to the caring people in their world. You will have students in your school with many different family configurations, such as families with two moms or two dads, adoptive parents or foster parents. It is respectful for educators to kindly ask families what terms and descriptions they use to refer to their families. If, for example, you have only one student in your school with same-gender parents, then be mindful not to put that student in the position of teaching other children about their family. That is the job of the educator, not the student.

Graphic depictions of family should be an empowering activity for all children, not an activity that creates comfort and pride for some while creating confusion, shame or isolation for others. Be sensitive to the individual needs of students in your classroom. A helpful phrase may be, “We are going to make beautiful, detailed drawings of the people who love and take care of us.” The goal of the project is for all students in the class to find something they feel positive sharing with the class.

Some adaptations for students might include: giving a student in joint custody two papers to draw their family, giving a child with a large family an extra big paper, or having a student with family in two countries draw on two papers or draw the countries with people on them.

MATERIALS

- A picture book featuring diverse families such as: *Families* by Shelley Rotner and Sheila M. Kelly; *The Family Book* by Todd Parr; *Families, Families, Families!* by Suzanne and Max Lang.
- Chart paper, pencils, black permanent markers, colored pencils, crayons or markers (make sure to have lots of good choices for skin tones and hair tones)
- Pre-printed paper with **LOVE MAKES A FAMILY** at the top (*optional*)

READ AND DISCUSS THE BOOK

- Before reading the book, encourage students to pay attention to the different kinds of families they see in the book.
- As you read the book, pause and take a closer look at some of the two-page spreads that feature different aspects of families and their lives.
- Remind students not to engage in appearance-based stereotypes. For example, you do not know a person’s gender in a picture book until you read the pronouns used in the texts. We also don’t know what languages someone speaks or what cultures they identify with unless the text tells us.
- Engage children with these questions:
 - What do you see in the picture?
 - Do you see a family that looks like yours?
 - Do you see families that are like a friend’s family?
 - Do you see families that are different from yours?
 - Why is it important to learn about families different from yours?

LOVE MAKES A FAMILY ART PROJECT

- Give each of your students a piece of paper that has the words LOVE MAKES A FAMILY at the top (or have your students write it).
- Have students draw a detailed picture of their family with a pencil. Remind students that it is their choice who to include. For example, some students may include large extended families, and some students may include friends who are caring adults in their lives. You might also have children who want to include pets that are part of their family. Encourage them to add lots of details that are special to their particular family—hairstyles, clothing styles, skin tones, different heights, etc.
- After they have drawn their family in pencil with lots of details, have students trace over the pencil lines with a black permanent marker.
- Once students are done outlining, they can color in their drawing of themselves with crayons, colored pencils or markers.

SHARING THEIR ARTWORK

- Give students an opportunity to share their work with each other, in pairs or small groups.
 - Direct students to talk about things that are different and special about their families.
 - Next, ask students to give an appreciation to their partner about their picture.
- Display the students' artwork in your classroom or in a school hallway with the title 'LOVE MAKES A FAMILY'.

EXTENSION

- A 'Love Makes a Family' display is wonderful to have up in your classroom or school for an open house or family night. It gives families a lovely opportunity to learn about each other through their children's artwork.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

- End the lesson with a class discussion about what they learned about families, what are important qualities in families, and why it is important to treat other students' families with understanding and respect.
- Listen to assess student understanding.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED BOOKS

- *Families, Families, Families!* Suzanne and Max Lang.
- *A Family Is a Family Is a Family.* Sara O'Leary.
- *The Great Big Book of Families.* Mary Hoffman.
- *One Family.* George Shannon.

DIVERSE AND UP-TO-DATE RESOURCES FROM WELCOMING SCHOOLS

[Children's Books to Embrace Family Diversity](#)

[Lesson Plans to Embrace Family Diversity](#)

[Embracing Family Diversity School Resources](#)

[Family Diversity Vocabulary](#)

[Professional Development Training](#)



Credit: Adapted from Family Quilt: A Community Art Project developed by Emmy Howe, nationalseedproject.org, and the young people at CampOUT and a lesson by Erica Eide at Shorewood Hills Elementary School, Madison, WI.

Love Makes a Family!

