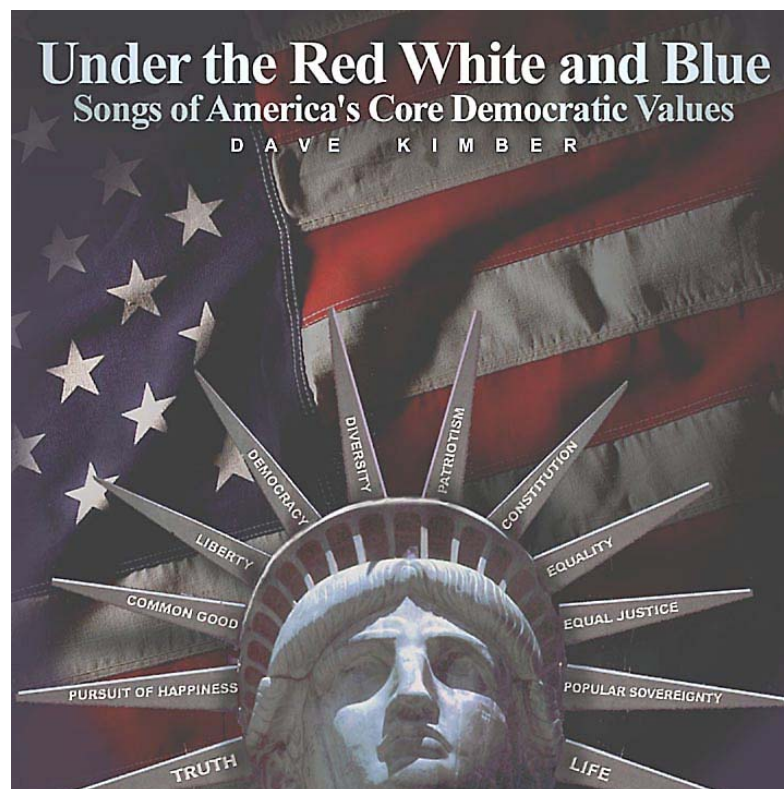


Under the **Red**, White, and **Blue**

# High School & Middle School Lesson Plans

Volume 2



**Under the Red, White, and Blue  
Songs of America's Core Democratic Values**

**Dan Kimber, Dave Kimber**

**HS/MS Lesson Plans**

**Dan Kimber**

**Learning Strategies**

**Gloria Tibbetts**

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## INTRODUCTION

For the better part of a year my brother and I have worked on this compilation of songs and accompanying lesson plans. We both learned early in life the magic of music to inspire, to motivate and to teach. We both teach social studies and over the years we have seen fundamental change come to our profession. While we continue to challenge the assumptions about how children learn, we take comfort in knowing that some things have stayed the same. As educators, we realize the amazing capacity of music to stimulate both sides of the brain and to supplement traditional modes of learning. As music lovers, we recognize the power of music to stir emotion as well as the intellect, and thus educate the whole child.

The songs we've composed bring American values to life that are at the core of every curriculum in all schools in this country. They are about the founding principles and transcendent values-the things that teachers and parents understand are fundamental to every child's education. Beyond that, they are tunes that are fun to sing, over and over again. Kids will remember these songs and the messages they impart long after they have forgotten texts and lectures and homework assignments.

We are living in times that test not only our resolve as a nation but also our basic principles as a people. How well we convey a love of liberty and equality, an appreciation for democracy and diversity, a belief in truth and justice, is a measure of how well we have passed on a treasured heritage to future generations. It is our hope that "Proud to be an American" can be more than just another empty phrase that is drilled into our children. It is a celebration worthy of honored traditions, of sacred pledges, and of joyous music.

Daniel Kimber

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## Diversity

### **Grade Level – HS/MS**

This lesson is intended for high school students, but can be modified for use with middle school/junior high students

### **Materials**

- CD Player with speakers and enough volume for music to be heard by all students
- Overhead transparency of **Diversity Song Lyrics and Discussion Questions**

### **Procedure**

1. "Just can't help but notice you're not the same."

Discuss with students ways in which people can discover and experience the various cultures that are part of the human mosaic of the USA. Discussion might include tasting different foods, seeing movies or plays from other countries, appreciating foreign art, dance, music etc. After the discussion, have each student make a list of proper adjectives that use another country, language etc. to describe something that has been incorporated into life in the USA (i.e. Persian rugs, Spanish rice etc.).

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY - Discuss with students that people come in all sizes, shapes and colors and are as varied as the colors of a patchwork quilt. Outline on the board (or have students do this groundwork) some of the special contributions such as food, clothing, arts, inventions, etc. which were borrowed/imported from other countries or people of different cultural backgrounds. Place somewhere in the classroom a large blank circle. Over a period of \_\_\_\_\_ days/weeks, the students will cut out or create images, photos, words - anything that highlights different cultures here in the USA. The end objective is to create a classroom quilt that reflects and celebrates the variety of people in this country and the contributions to our culture.

To continue this idea, have the students petition the administration to set aside one day a year/semester/quarter as an International Day. Students would be encouraged to decorate the school with posters, emblems, symbols etc. that represent other cultures. On that day, lunch would be extended for at least an hour so that foods from around the world could be sampled, costumes and customs could be admired, and music/dance could be enjoyed by the whole student body.

2. "Like people who never make a fist when they're out there lending a hand."

Have the students list (anonymously) all the cultural, racial, ethnic stereotypes that they know. It's not necessarily a word or a thought that they themselves use, just something with which they are familiar.

One rule: NO ONE IS EXEMPT. Collect the lists and read them back to the class. (The teacher may want to preview the students' prior to sharing them with the class.)

The discussion that follows is the bottom line to this kind of activity. Each student needs to address just where and how these stereotypes came into being. Do they have historical roots; are they based on half-truths, limited observation, personal animosities, family prejudices. If they're based on personal experience or observation, ask whether it is fair to project that limited exposure to an entire group of people (i.e. that they're all "that way")

#### Questions

- What are the positive things people can do for each other even if they can't speak each other's language? (In neighborhoods, in schools, in a community)
  - What things do we ALL have in common because we are human beings?
  - Are those things enough, in the beginning, to forge good relationships?
  - Looking back over your years in school, at what age do you think you became less accepting of differences in others? (Or, are you one the special ones who is still childlike in your embrace of all people?)
3. EXTRA CREDIT – Read, see the play, and watch the video of Romeo and Juliet AND watch the movie "West Side Story".

#### Questions

- Is there something that these two stories have in common?
- Do these stories tell the truth (how we are) or is there a more powerful message? What do you think?
- Do we, the people, celebrate our diversity or do we fight against it?

Give your opinion and give examples, historically or present-day, to strengthen that opinion.

4. The last part of this lesson is extra credit that goes to each of you and has nothing to do with your grade. Here's what you can do.
- a) First of all, SMILE more at each other. It's really OK to smile at a stranger. If you can't, at least try not to scowl or grimace.
  - b) Try learning something about this person, these people, who are different. For the most part, they're knee-deep in learning about our country, our language, our customs, and they are most appreciative when a "native" learns a little (maybe just a phrase or two?) about them.
  - c) Or, INCLUDE THEM - This is recommended only to the brave at heart, those adventurous ones who dare go outside their "people" their "homies", their "bros" and make a connection with someone different.
  - d) The extra credit that comes of this is in the form of self-satisfaction. Some of you have already learned that that is the greatest reward of all.

**Diversity Song Lyrics and Discussion Questions**

<b>Words and music by Dave and Dan Kimber</b>	<b>Questions to ask students</b>
<p>Where are you from?            What is your name?            Just can't help but notice....            That you're not the same.</p> <p>Your words are so different.            But you've got a nice smile.            Okay, so you're different.            I like your style.</p> <p>It doesn't really matter            where you are from            or how you got here.            It doesn't matter at all.</p> <p>But there is one thing            And it's so very clear            It's time to bring down the walls.</p> <p>Where am I from?            Where do I live you ask?            I live in beautiful city            whose borders are vast.</p> <p>It's called diver-city.            It's a wonderful place            Where no one's just like you            In diver-city.            You'll discover new things.            Things you never knew.            Like people who never make a fist            When they're out there lending a hand.            Like a place where no chance is missed,            Helping people to understand.</p> <p>That we are all different            And that's not so bad.            Yet, we're all so much the same.            So no matter when you came here            No matter how...            All that really matters is that we're all            here now.</p>	<p>What are the positive things people can do for each other even if they can't speak each other's language? (In neighborhoods, in schools, in a community)</p> <p>What things do we ALL have in common because we are human beings?</p> <p>Are those things enough, in the beginning, to forge good relationships?</p> <p>Looking back over your years in school, at what age do you think you became less accepting of differences in others? (Or, are you one the special ones who is still childlike in your embrace of all people?)</p> <p>Is there something that these two stories have in common?</p> <p>Do these stories tell the truth (how we are) or is there a more powerful message? What do you think?</p> <p>Do we, the people, celebrate our diversity or do we fight against it?</p>