

Things in Common



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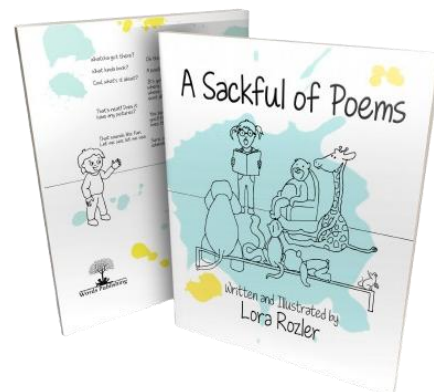
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Things in Common

Lora Rozler

I have a story,
And so do you.
We're one of a kind,
Yet share things too.

We may like soccer,
Books, or art.
We may love music,
Right from the start.



Some things are different,
Some are the same.
Every new friend
Has a story and a name.

As we learn together,
We'll laugh and grow.
The more we discover,
The more we'll know.

So let's look around
With smiles that shine.
Find things in common -
Your story next to mine.

Our Stories, Ourselves: Celebrating Similarities & Differences

Teacher Introduction

Every person in our classroom is special. We all have things that make us unique, and we all have things in common with others. Today we're going to discover how our similarities can help us make new friends while celebrating the distinct qualities that make each of us who we are. Let's see how connected our classroom really is!

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- **Build Classroom Community:** Foster a safe, welcoming, and inclusive classroom environment.
- **Celebrate Similarities & Differences:** Recognize personal identity while honoring diverse backgrounds and interests.
- **Develop Empathy & Belonging:** Practice active listening, perspective-taking, and mutual respect.
- **Enhance Literacy & Speaking Skills:** Engage in choral reading, pair discussions, and reflective writing.

Lesson Plan & Activities

1. Warm-Up & Read-Aloud

Read the poem using an expressive, inviting tone, incorporating kinesthetic participation:

- **First Read:** Read aloud to the whole class, setting a warm, conversational rhythm.
- **Echo & Gesture Read:** Read line-by-line and have students echo back with simple hand gestures:
 - 'I have a story' → Point to self
 - 'And so do you' → Point outward to a classmate
 - 'Your story next to mine' → Cross hands over heart or hold hands with a neighbor

2. Before Reading Discussion

Gather students on the carpet and ask:

- **What makes you special?** What is a talent, interest, or trait unique to you?
- **What does 'things in common' mean?** How do shared interests help us connect?
- **Can friends be different?** Why is it wonderful that we aren't all exactly the same?

3. Core Activity: 'Things in Common' Discovery Walk

Distribute the enclosed **Things in Common Recording Sheet**. Have students complete the first part of the form, then move around the room to interview classmates, finding peers who share specific hobbies, favorite foods, or experiences.

4. Class Reflection

Re-convene as a whole group to debrief:

- **Surprise Findings:** What surprised you during your interviews today?
- **New Connections:** Did you discover a shared interest with someone new?
- **Classroom Trends:** Which item did the most classmates have in common?
- **Celebrating Differences:** Why would our classroom be boring if we were all identical?

Cross-Curricular Extensions

Writing: My New Friend

Have students draw a self-portrait alongside a classmate with whom they discovered something in common. Complete the sentence prompts:

- **We both** _____.
- **I learned that** _____.

Math: Classroom Data Graphing

Create an anchor-chart graph as a class exploring shared student traits:

- **Data Points to Collect:** How many students have brothers? Have sisters? Like chocolate ice cream? Walked to school? Wore striped socks?
- **Math Talk:** Analyze the graph together ('Which category has the most/least? What patterns do we notice?').

Art: My Piece of the Puzzle

Give every student a Puzzle Template (enclosed) to draw a self-portrait highlighting their personal story (hobby, talent, family, smile). Arrange the puzzle pieces on a bulletin board under one of these headers:

- Your Story Next to Mine | • We All Fit Together | • Unique Pieces, One Amazing Class

Movement: Human Web of Connections

Sit in a large circle with a ball of yarn. Pass the ball across the circle to anyone who shares a stated trait or interest, creating an interconnected web demonstrating how individual stories weave our community together.

Closing Reflection

Our classroom is like a puzzle—and just like our poem says, every piece brings its own story.

Every piece is different. Every piece belongs.

And when we put your story next to mine, we make something wonderful.

Name: _____

Things in Common

Directions: Read each statement and find a classmate who shares something in common with you. Write their name in the space provided.

My eyes are _____. Same as _____.

One thing I'm good at is _____. Same as _____.

I have _____ sisters. Same as _____.

I have _____ brothers. Same as _____.

I can speak _____. Same as _____.

This summer I _____. Same as _____.

My favorite ice-cream flavour is _____. Same as _____.

One thing I don't enjoy is _____. Same as _____.

I came to school by _____. Same as _____.

If I could have a pet, I'd want a _____. Same as _____.

Today I feel _____. Same as _____.

My favorite colour is _____. Same as _____.

Name: _____

