

EVERY BODY IS SPECIAL

Theme: Me and My Choices

Overview: This series of activities combines movement with self-esteem building and appreciation of diversity. The first activity asks students to trace a number one and repeat that there is only one of them! They learn a song about how special they are and listen to a read-aloud and answer questions about the book, I Like Me by Nancy Carlson.** Finally, they draw a picture of something special about themselves. In the second activity, students' bodies are traced onto paper. They make observations about how each of their shapes is different. They use hands to measure the heights of their shapes. Finally, they use movement to do a series of activities around their paper shapes.

** If this book is not part of your classroom library or available at the public library, you can easily modify the lesson using one of the books below:

- ABC I Like Me by Nancy Carlson
- I Like Being Me by Todd Par
- I Like Myself by Karen Beaumont
- I'm Gonna Like Me: Letting Off a Little Self Esteem by Jamie Lee Curtis and Laura Cornell
- What I Like About Me by Allia Zobel Nolan

Vocabulary:

- Energy: What we need to move, work and play. Some activities require more energy than others.

Activity 1: There is Only 1 Me

Type of Activity: Energy to Read, Energy to Perform

Domain: Cognitive, Language, Social Emotional

Students will:

- Learn a song about how special each person is.
- Listen to a read-aloud story about liking themselves.
- Draw a picture of something they like about themselves.

Materials:

- I Like Me by Nancy Carlson– *The story helps children feel good about themselves as they meet a cheerful pig who likes who she is, what she looks like, and what she can and cannot do.*
- Song: “No One Else is Just Like Me” [Note: song is included at the end of this activity]
- Art materials such as paper, crayons, and markers

Time Frame: 20-30 minutes

Directions:

1. Ask students to hold up one finger and ask them what number they are showing. Then, ask students to repeat after you: *“No one else is just like me!”* Tell students that it is true. There is only one person just like them!
2. Teach the students the song “No One Else is Just Like Me.”
3. Instruct them to sing along and to point to themselves when they say the words, “I am special!” Sing the song several times until students can sing on their own.
4. Tell students they are now going to read about a pig who knows just how special she is! Show students the cover of the book and read its title. Ask student volunteers to predict what the book might be about.
5. Read the story. As you read, point out things that the pig (main character) likes about herself. Encourage students to make connections between the things the main character liked about herself and the things that they like about themselves.
6. After you are finished, ask: Does the pig (or main character) like herself? What is something she likes about herself? Do you think it’s important to like yourself? Remind students that the pig wasn’t perfect but she liked herself anyway.
7. Go around the room and ask each student to finish this sentence, “I like Me because _____.” You may want to model an answer first.

Activity 2: There’s No Body Like My Body

Type of Activity: Energy to Create, Energy to Move

Domain: Cognitive, Physical, Social Emotional

Students will:

- Help you trace their body shapes onto paper.
- Measure their paper body shapes using their hands.
- Do a series of movement activities around their paper body shapes.
- Describe one special trait about themselves.

Materials:

- Large roll of butcher paper or large sheets of paper
- Pencils, crayons, or markers
- Masking tape (optional)

Time Frame: 30-40 minutes

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Directions:

Note: Before class, ask a colleague to trace a picture of your body on large butcher paper and cut it out. You can decorate it to look like you if you want! Ex: Your hair color, eye color, etc.

1. Hold up the traced version of your body and pretend it is talking. Say, "Hello class. Let me introduce myself. I am your teacher! Nice to meet you!" Ask them to share some ways that the traced version looks like you. Tell students that they are going to also get the chance to make themselves.
2. Lay out the butcher paper and invite each student to lay down on it. You can encourage them to make any shape with their body that they want to. Using a pencil, trace their bodies all the way around.
Optional enrichment: If students are able to trace each other's bodies, allow them to trace a partner.
3. Cut out each person's body shape and write their name on the back.
Optional enrichment: If students are able to comfortably use scissors, allow them to cut out their own body shapes.
4. Distribute art materials and invite students to color their shape's hair, eyes, mouth and clothing.
5. Ask students to sit beside their own body shape. Ask them to look around and notice that some body shapes are longer than others. That's because we are all growing in our own special way!
6. Using your body shape, model for students how to use your hands to measure the shape. Place your hand, palm side down, at one end of the shape. Without moving the first hand, place your other hand above it so that the bottom of one hand is touching the top of the other. Then, pick up the bottom hand and place it on top of the other hand. Continue doing this until you have reached the other end of your shape. Count as you do it to show how many "hands tall" you are! If this is difficult for students, you could also show them how to walk one foot in front of the other and count the number of footsteps.
7. Ask students to predict how many hands tall they think they are. Do they think they are fewer hands tall or more hands tall than you are? Give students time to measure their body shapes using their hands. If students do not have the gross motor skills to measure themselves with their hands, they could also use an object like blocks or Legos or you could measure with their help.
8. Then, direct students to stand at the head of their body shape (or their arm or leg). Make sure each student has enough room to move around his or her shape without bumping into one another. Tell students that they are going to have a little fun moving around their body shapes!
9. If possible, tape the body shapes to the floor. Ask students to do several movements around their body shapes. Ex: hopping, jumping, running, walking, galloping, leaping over. They can even jump from one hand to the other or from the top of their body to the bottom.

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10. Encourage students to come up with their own movements to do around or over their body shapes.
11. Finally, ask everyone to share one special thing about their body shape. Close out the lesson by asking students to hold up the number one and to repeat, “There is only one me!”

Modifications:

Pump It Up for Older Students

- Older students can decorate their body shapes with clothing and materials.
- Older students can make predictions about how their body shapes will change as they get older.
- Older students can draw or glue pictures of the foods they like to eat and glue the foods that give their body energy to move on their body shapes.

Cool It Down for Younger Students

- With younger students, you can limit the number and types of movement they do around their body shapes.

NAEYC Standards Alignment

- **2.A.10** The curriculum guides teachers to incorporate content, concepts, and activities that foster social, emotional, physical, language, and cognitive development and integrate key areas of content including literacy, mathematics, science, technology, creative expression and the arts, health and safety, and social studies.
- **2.K.01** Children are provided varied opportunities and materials that encourage good health practices such as serving and feeding themselves, rest, good nutrition, exercise, hand washing, and tooth brushing.
- **2.C.04** Children have varied opportunities and are provided equipment to engage in large motor experiences that stimulate a variety of skills; enhance sensory-motor integration; develop controlled movement; enable children with varying abilities to have large-motor experiences similar to those of their peers; range from familiar to new and challenging; help them learn physical games with rules and structure.
- **2.E.04** Children have varied opportunities to (a) be read books in an engaging manner in group or individualized settings at least twice a day in full-day programs and at least once daily in half day programs; (g) engage in conversations that help them understand the content of the book.
- **2.F.05** Children are provided varied opportunities and materials that help them understand the concept of measurement by using standard and non-standard units of measurement.
- **2.J.06** Children are provided many and varied open-ended opportunities and materials to express themselves creatively through (a) music and (d) two- and three-dimensional art.

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- **2.L.01** Children are provided varied learning opportunities that foster positive identity and an emerging sense of self and others.

Be Smart from the Start at Home!

Preschool-aged children are not expected to understand calories or how their bodies use energy, but they can begin to learn foundational information to help them make healthy decisions around diet and exercise. The Smart from the Start lessons are a set of flexible activities designed to introduce and reinforce these concepts, and we encourage you to integrate the rest of the activities in Me and My Choices and Give it a Try! into your existing curriculum. Throughout these activities, children will learn about energy they need to work and play; to make healthy choices about what they eat and drink from a variety of food groups; and how to move throughout the day with fun activities that help keep their hearts strong and healthy.

As your students progress to elementary school, the [Healthy Decisions, Healthy Habits Together Counts™ curriculum](#) can help them focus on more rigorous concepts related to self-esteem, decision-making, healthy nutrition and regular physical activity.

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No One Else is Just Like Me

(Sung to the tune of London Bridge is Falling Down)

No one else is just like me
Just like me
Just like me

No one else is just like me
I AM SPECIAL!

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HEALTHY DECISIONS. HEALTHY HABITS.

Energy at Home

This week, we read a story called I Like Me by Nancy Carlson. It is about a cheerful pig who likes what she looks like and what she can and cannot do. The book helps young children see how special they are. Children who feel good about themselves are more likely to make good decisions about their bodies.

Your child named something he or she likes about himself or herself. Ask your child what he or she likes about him or herself. Then invite every family member to share something special about themselves.

Your child also learned a song called “No One Else is Just Like Me.” Ask him or her to sing it for you!