CREATING AN LGBTQ CURRICULUM THAT IS AUTHENTIC, FOLLOWS POLICIES AND ETHICS, AND TEACHES ACCEPTANCE

by

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The question my project is created for is: How can I create an LGBTQ curriculum that is authentic, follows policies and ethics, and teaches acceptance? I have always wanted to write a children’s book and decided to take this opportunity to write a book as a piece of curriculum to use in a K-5 classroom. The way the book can be used at a variety of grade levels is through the use of the Teacher Resource Guide (TRG) I created to supplement the text. The book is meant to create discussion and the TRG provides developmentally appropriate discussion guides as well as extension activities to allow for critical thinking and a deeper understanding of the text.

The book is meant to be used as a planned piece of curriculum that extends knowledge of LGBTQ topics where students have already learned about the gay and lesbian community, and are ready to learn about the transgender community. The book will also be a resource to use in teachable moments that happen in the classroom. For example; if a boy teases another boy who is wearing a skirt, or for enjoying activities that the stereotypical girl does.

For the teacher resource guide I used UbD (Understanding by Design). The stages provided by this design method provided a guide for me in the creation of the Teacher Resource Guide. The UbD method design teaches students to understand the material
that is presented rather than simply being able to recall the information. I will briefly
discuss each of the stages below and how it impacted the TRG creation.

Stage one guided the path for expanding knowledge and acceptance of the diverse
world the students live in. This is done through the reading of a book about a transgender
child with the TRG guiding the discussion. The key is how the discussion and expansion
activities are presented to provide the opportunity for critical thinking that pushes for
deeper understanding.

Stage two allowed me to focus on how teachers would assess a students knowledge of
the literature and the transgender community as well as making certain the activities were
developmentally appropriate for each grade level.

Stage three guided the methods of instruction that would be helpful in extending
understanding of the text. This stage also helped in deciding the review and new
vocabulary that was necessary to understanding the text.

Stage four focuses on the adaptive dimension aspect. It was important in how I shaped
developmentally appropriate discussions and activities in extension of the text. It guided
the common difficulties transgender people face and how to best discuss these struggles.
This is important in providing authenticity to the curriculum I created.

I plan to implement this piece of curriculum in an urban school district that already
has LGBTQ policies and supports in place. I will be continuing the editing process as
well as looking into how to publish my book. It is important to me that this journey is continued in hopes of providing a resource that is helpful for the LGBTQ community as well as educators.
TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE

SUPPLEMENT FOR THE TEXT: BEING MILA

By Tam Friestad
Hamline University
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PURPOSE OF THE TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE

The purpose of the Teacher Resource Guide is to provide a resource to assist in discussion, activities, and assessment options to supplement the reading of my book *Being Mila*. The idea is to provide teachers with an avenue to include LGBTQ curriculum in the classroom in a way that is developmentally appropriate, and promotes critical thinking skills that provide a deeper understanding of the text being read.
HOW TO USE THE TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE

The most effective way to use the Teacher Resource Guide would be to first read the book *Being Mila* as well as the entire TRG. Ask yourself if your students are prepared to learn about the topic of Transgender people, and if they have already learned previous material to support the topic developmentally. Look over the discussion questions and make note of those that you would like to ask during the reading of the book. If you choose to do a juxtaposing activity choose the activity you would like to use to best prepare. There is a more complete list of vocabulary words at the back of the resource guide, prepare for those your students may need to review, and any new vocabulary.
OBJECTIVES FOR LEARNING  K-2

Objectives: Students will read and discuss a story based on a transgender girl. Students will learn new vocabulary words related to gender. Students will learn about being different and about being an ally.

OBJECTIVES FOR LEARNING 3-5

Objectives: Students will read and discuss a story based on a transgender girl. Students will learn new vocabulary words related to gender. Students will learn about being different and about being an ally.
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS K-2

● What is the problem in the story?

● What should we do to solve the problem?

● What is true for all humans?
  (We all make mistakes, we all love, we all laugh, we all cry, we are all unique….)

● What are stereotypes?

● Can girls like…? Can boys like…?

● What helps Mila feel happier? What kinds of things help you feel better about yourself? How can you make others feel better?

● How does Mila feel when kids make fun of her at school? When she is not able to be in the girls line? When she is not able to be Mila?

● How does it make you feel when others make fun of you?

● What can you do if you see someone making fun of another student?
  (talk to an adult, talk to the bullying student or the student being bullied-in private, cause a distraction so that the teasing stops, help student being teased get out of the situation).

● What do you think Mila is feeling when she is standing outside the bathrooms?

● What do you think Mila is feeling when Mrs. Shepherd has the kids line up?
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS 3-5

- Where can the character be Mila? Where does the character have to be Milo? Why do you think that is?

- Mila says she is sad when she cannot be Mila, why do you think that is?

- In the book, the doctor tells Mila she is transgender. What do you think this means? (help clarify as needed)

- Being Transgender is one part of who Mila is, what are some other pieces of Mila?

- How can we word things to include or keep options open for all people regardless of sexual identity?

- What is gender stereotyping?

- What are some ways we can break gender stereotypes?

- How can you encourage your friends and classmates to express their gender in a way that feels right for them?

- How can we as a class create a classroom that is safe for everyone, where everyone gets to be who they want to be without being teased?
EXTENSION ACTIVITIES K-2

How to be a Friend

1. Chart words that describe a bully/describe a friend/how can we help a friend

Feelings Game

1. Put a variety of basic feelings on post-it notes (happy, sad, excited, scared…)

2. Have students act out the post it note on a student’s back, have that student guess what the feeling is

3. Each student has to guess the feeling that is on their back

- Students have already had a unit on feelings/The Emotion Ocean
- This is a good assessment of how students are understanding the concept of emotions and how to express them

Rainbow Pride Flag

1. Provide a long banner style poster for each table

2. Have students create a pride flag with positive acceptance words included on it
I am Me

1. Have students write a poem about themselves: You can choose the style preference or allow the students to choose.

2. Have students create a self portrait of themselves. Allow them to be as abstract as they desire to be. This is how they see themselves.

   ● You can use the self portrait and the poem as an assessment of how well they can express their own identity. You can also use the poem as a writing assignment.

Petals of Power

1. Each student has pieces of a flower to glue on paper

2. The center of the flower will be a self portrait

3. Each petal will be something that describes them

   ● Serves as a focus of self reflection and identity
   ● This is a good assessment of how well students can describe their identity

What is a Stereotype

1. Have a power point with different photos of kids playing with different toys, wearing different clothes, ask them if it is ok that they play with or wear that?

Videos to Watch
Watch “I am Me” video by Willow Smith
https://youtu.be/VUMK4Da9Avg

Watch “Expressing Myself My way” on youtube
https://youtu.be/TRdvGnplLU
EXTENSION ACTIVITIES 3-5

LGBTQ People in History

1. List some of the impactful LGBTQ people in history (below are some ideas):
   Alexander the Great, Hatsheptut, Leonardo da Vinci, Alan Turing, Michelangelo,
   Barbara Gittings, Christine Jorgensen, Sally Ride, Harvey Milk, Tammy Baldwin, Lily
   and Lana Wachowski, Ellen DeGeneres, Barney Frank, James Baldwin, Bayard Rustin,
   Troy Perry, Harry Hay, Laurence Michael Dillon, Oscar Wilde, Deborah Sampson

   ● Resource: 20 LGBT People who changed The World:

2. Use 8.5 x 11 paper or cardstock, have students get in groups of 2-4, give each group a
   key historical person in LGBTQ history. Have them write information about them on
   their paper. They can gather this information from library books you check out or the
   internet.

3. Have everyone come together as a class and have the groups introduce their person

4. Once everyone has introduced their person, as a class place the people in order by year
   of accomplishment. Tape or string up to create a timeline of historical people. Leave
   space so that others may be added.

5. To extend on this activity you can have each student choose an LGBTQ person
   historical or current. Have them write a biography of the person. Who they are, what
   they contributed to the LGBTQ community.

2. Ask your students to look up more information about one of the top 20 people listed
   above, or provide an extension question: Can you find another LGBTQ person that is
   impactful in our world today?

   ● Assessments: You can use the biography of LGBTQ in history as a writing
     assignment assessment
I am Me

1. Have students write a poem about themselves: You can choose the style preference or allow the students to choose.

2. Have students create a self portrait of themselves. Allow them to be as abstract as they desire to be. This is how they see themselves.

- This can serve as an assessment for writing as well as how students are able to express their identity.

Game of Stereotypes

1. Have different toys, clothes, short scenarios on post it notes. Have some stated as a stereotype and others gender neutral.

2. Place a post it note on each child’s back

- This can assess how well students are understanding what a stereotype is

Poster of Stereotypes

1. Have students work in table groups. Each table has a large sheet of paper or a poster board.

2. Each child will choose a color marker that they will use on the poster

3. Each table will have a stack of magazines.

4. Students will tear out photos that demonstrate advertisements of gender stereotypes. Each student will have to choose advertisements to glue on the poster. They will then write why it is a stereotype with the marker color they chose.

- This project can serve as an assessment for how students are understanding what a stereotype is.
**LGBTQ Gallery Walk**

1. Have students work in table groups

2. Have students choose an LGBTQ person that was important in LGBTQ Civil Rights. Each student chooses a color marker to use on the poster. Write important facts about this person on the poster, once finished they can draw the person in the center.

3. The posters will be placed on the walls around the room. Table groups will take their writing notebooks and go around the room to each poster, writing down facts in their notebook.

4. There will be a timer for each poster to keep students focused and pacing correctly.
   - This can serve as an assessment of how well students are understanding LGBTQ people in Civil Rights

**Acts of Acceptance**

1. Create index cards with different scenarios of stereotyping, bullying

2. Have students get in groups of 2-4 and act out the different scenarios

3. Students should work to come up with their own solution to the problem that is presented on the card. Make sure each student has the opportunity to act out both the problem and the solution

4. You can choose to have groups volunteer to demonstrate once they have practiced a bit.
   - This activity can serve as an assessment of how well students are understanding how to handle bullying, how to be a good friend, how to demonstrate acceptance and what to do if they see another student teasing someone.
Video Extensions

“I am Jazz”
https://youtu.be/BFSD2lsPfsU

“Raising Owen”
https://youtu.be/wGrBB9xfYAM

“Expressing Myself, My Way”
https://youtu.be/ITRdyGnpILU
ASSESSMENT OPTIONS K-2

**Feelings Game:** Assess how students understand how to express feelings

**I am Me:** Assess writing and how students are understanding self identity

**Petals of Power:** Assess how students are understanding self identity

**Exit Cards:** Stating 1 thing they learned from Mila, What are some other wonderings? For younger students you can have a class discussion to monitor for understanding.

**Journal Reflection for older students:** This can assess for understanding as well as writing.
**Assessment Options 3-5**

**LGBTQ History:** Assesses understanding of LGBTQ in history as well as writing

**I Am Me:** Assesses writing, expression of self identity

**Game of Stereotypes:** Assess how well students understand what a stereotype is

**Poster of Stereotypes:** Assess stereotypes, can provide a rubric that gives points for the amount of contribution. Each student has a different color per poster so you can count how much they contributed on their poster

**LGBTQ Gallery Walk:** Assess contribution similar to above. Assess students understanding of LGBTQ people in Civil Rights

**Acts of Acceptance:** Assess how well students are understanding acceptance, how to handle bullying and other behaviors demonstrated on the index cards

**Exit Cards:** Stating 1 thing they learned from Mila, What are some other wonderings?

**Journal Reflection:** Assess writing as well as deeper understanding of material
VOCABULARY REVIEW

LGBTQ: Acronyms that are used to refer to a particular group or the entire queer community. They include the terms Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning. There are also others that are included but for the purpose of this piece of curriculum this is how we will address it.

Ally: A person that actively combats homophobia, queerphobia, transphobia, heterosexism, and cissexism in their day-to-day life.

Gay: An identity label sometimes claimed by man-identified people who form their primary romantic and sexual relationships with other man-identified people.

Heterosexual: A person who is emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted and committed to the members or gender or sex that is seen to be the “opposite” or other than the one with whom they identify or are identified.

Homophobia: Thoughts, feelings, or actions based on dislike, judgement, or hatred of lesbian, gays, and bisexuals.
VOCABULARY TO INTRODUCE

**Gender Expression:** The way we talk, how we interact with others, our clothing, accessories, hairstyles, activities, we enjoy, and much more!

**Gender Identity:** How you identify and see yourself. Everyone gets to decide their gender identity for themselves.

**Gender Stereotypes:** Try to tell us that people who identify as girls or boys should act and dress a certain way. For example; “girls like pink” or “boys don’t cry.” These stereotypes can make people feel bad for the things they like to do and for being who they are.

**Transgender:** (Trans): An identity label used to describe a person whose gender identity does not align with the socially expected one according to their sex assigned at birth. Often used as an umbrella term to include people who transgress gender norms, including crossdressers, genderqueer people, trans women, trans men, bigender or polygender people, etc.

**Transgender woman/girl:** A person who has transitioned their identity from man to woman, and sometimes their body from male to female.

**Transgender man/boy:** A person who has transitioned their identity from woman to man, and sometimes their body from female to male.
COMMON LGBTQ TERMINOLOGY

**LGBTQ:** Acronyms that are used to refer to a particular group or the entire queer community. They include the terms Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning. There are also others that are included but for the purpose of this piece of curriculum this is how we will address it.

**Ally:** A person that actively combats homophobia, queerphobia, transphobia, heterosexism, and cissexism in their day-to-day life.

**Binary:** Term to describe an assumed duality. Usually in reference to the socially constructed gender binary of man/woman and sex binary of male/female.

**Bisexual:** An identity label sometimes claimed by people who are sexually attracted to two (or more) sexes or genders, not necessarily equally or simultaneously.

**Cisgender:** A person whose gender identity and expression matches gender typically associated with their biological sex.

**Coming Out:** To declare and affirm both to oneself and to others ones identity.

**Gay:** An identity label sometimes claimed by man-identified people who form their primary romantic and sexual relationships with other man-identified people.

**Gender Expression:** The way we talk, how we interact with others, our clothing, accessories, hairstyles, activities, we enjoy, and much more!

**Gender Identity:** How you identify and see yourself. Everyone gets to decide their gender identity for themselves.

**Genderqueer:** An identity label sometimes claimed by people whose gender identity does not fit into the culturally accepted man/woman binary. May be characterized by the desire to challenge norms of gender roles and expression, to “play” with gender and/or to express a fluid gender identity.
Gender Spectrum: Idea that there are many genders and gender identities beyond the categories of boy and girl. There are many ways to be a person in terms of how you feel and your gender expression.

Gender Stereotypes: Try to tell us that people who identify as girls or boys should act and dress a certain way. For example; “girls like pink” or “boys don’t cry.” These stereotypes can make people feel bad for the things they like to do and for being who they are.

Heterosexual: A person who is emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted and committed to the members or gender or sex that is seen to be the “opposite” or other than the one with which they identify or are identified.

Heterosexism: Discrimination or prejudice by heterosexuals against homosexuals.

Homophobia: Thoughts, feelings, or actions based on dislike, judgement, or hatred of lesbian, gays, and bisexuels.

Homosexual: Negative attitudes and feelings, ranging from aversion to hatred, toward people who identify as or are perceived to be LGBTQ. Can be present in institutions such as religion, the education system and the law, and also internally in individuals that may or may not identify within the trans community.

Lesbian: An identity label sometimes claimed by woman-identified people who form their primary romantic and sexual relationships with other woman-identified people.

Queer: An umbrella identity term used by people who do not conform to norms of heterosexuality and/or the gender binary. A reclaimed slur, often used with a political connotation.

Sexual Orientation: Aspect of an individual’s identity that determines who they focus their sexual/erotic drives, desires and fantasies toward.

Transgender: An identity label used to describe a person whose gender identity does not align with the socially expected one according to their sex assigned at birth. Often used as an umbrella term to include people who transgress gender norms,
including crossdressers, genderqueer people, trans women, trans men, bigender or polygender people, etc.

**Transgender woman/girl:** A person who has transitioned their identity from man to woman, and sometimes their body from male to female.

**Transgender man/boy:** A person who has transitioned their identity from woman to man, and sometimes their body from female to male.

**Transition:** the process of changing one’s sex or gender, socially (example; changing one’s name, clothing, makeup, hair, pronouns) and/or medically (example; hormones and/or surger).

**Transphobia:** Fear or hatred of transgender people or gender non-conforming behavior.
PROJECT REFERENCES


Being Mila

Written by Tam Friestad
Illustrated by Fiona Hansen
This book is for my daughter Fiona.
My inspiration and my heart.

- T.F.
Tonight, I am Mila, I can wear pretty dresses,

Boas,

Fancy shoes,

And pink sparkly glitter!
Tonight, my best friend Buddy and I will dance all over my room.

Twirling,

Leaping,

Posing.
I am free! I am me!
This is who I want to be!
Buddy and I talk about **everything**, he is an **AWESOME** listener!

He accepts me as Mila, but not everyone does.

Buddy - You are my best friend. Thank you for accepting me as Mila. I love you!
You see, I was born Milo.
I was born a boy.
Milo!
My moms voice

Bounces....
Tumbles....
And rolls....
Down....
The....
Stairs....

It is time for bed!
Please put away your costumes!
I wish they would get it,
I wish they would see.
I wish they would accept
That when I’m Mila
I’m me!
At school kids can be meanies.

They whisper,

giggle,

point,

or call me names like........
Girlie Girl!

Sissy!

Wimp!

All because I like doing things they think only girls should do.
This hurts my feelings.
Then I remember the friends that I have. Fiona and Gabriella hang out with me, and we have a **BLAST** together.

We have tea parties,

Jump rope,

And do our nails in shimmery, shiny **Pink**, **Green**, and **Purple**. My favorite colors.
Sometimes I get confused.
At school I need to be Milo,
but inside I feel like Mila.
Mrs. Shephard signals us to get ready for lunch.

"I would like the boys to line up on this side of the room......

And the girls over on this side."

I wish I could line up with Fiona and Gabriella.
Afterschool today my Mom and Dad picked me up, which is unusual. Dad said we were all going to a special doctor. Are we sick? I ask. I wish Buddy were here. I want to tell him I'm scared.
The special doctor talked to us about why being Milo felt uncomfortable, but being Mila felt like me. She told me that I am transgender.

This means that I was born with a boy body, but my brain wants me to be a girl.

The doctor told me that I am not alone, that there are many of other kids born this way too.
This helped my heart not to thump so fast, but I still felt a little nervous.

I was wondering how my Mom and Dad were taking the news. I sure hoped they weren't mad at me.
As we were walking to the car Mom and Dad both took my hands. My Dad said, "Mila, I am proud of how brave you are. It takes courage to stand up for what feels right. I want you to know that being different is a blessing."

And Mila, said Mom, "We loved you as Milo and we will love you just as much now that you are Mila."

My heart filled with joy and love.
We decided that being Mila is something to celebrate. Tonight, we ordered pizza with **DOUBLE EXTRA** cheese!

After dinner we had chocolate ice-cream with rainbow sprinkles. It was Delish!
It was a special night, because the whole family dressed up fancy and we all danced together!
My mom said I could be Mila everywhere from now on. She said that not everyone will understand, not everyone will see, that being Milo isn’t who I am, that being Mila is who I am supposed to be. What matters most is to be myself, that I am loved for being me.
Buddy, I am excited that I can be Mila from now on, but I am a little scared of being teased for who I am.

I hope others will learn to accept me.
At breakfast the next morning Mom said
She was going to call my teacher. Mom thought that it was important Mrs. Shephard understood that from now on I would be Mila. Then she could help the class understand me better too.
I flit floated with Buddy as I got dressed for my first day at school as Mila.
That morning for read aloud, Mrs. Shephard read us an awesome book.
While we read the book she asked us questions like, "How do you think it made Mila feel when she had to be Milo? Why do you think she felt this way? I thought the kids were learning and once they understood more about what it meant to be transgender it would get easier. I know it won't be perfect.....
There are still things I will be unsure of.
There will still be meanies around.
What is most important is, that I will no longer have to hide who I am. I have friends and family who love me for being myself.
And I love me too.
I am free! I am me!
I am Mila! I am who I am
Meant to be!