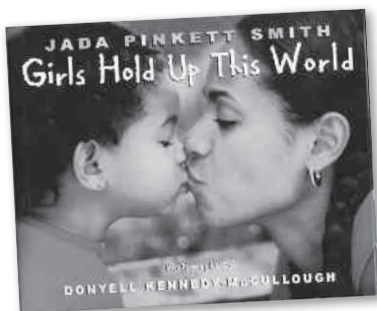


Lessons for a Social Justice Curriculum

Connections was prepared for ETFO by: Arlene Campbell, Mini Dawar, Alice Hepworth, Leona Laird, Linda-Beth Marr, Nilmini Ratwatte, Deb St. Amant, and Sherry Ramrattan Smith.

GRADE ONE

Focus: Self-Esteem



Title: ***Girls Hold Up This World***
 Author: **Jada Pinkett Smith**
 ISBN: **043987937**

RELATED RESOURCES

- *The Best Part of Me*, Wendy Ewald
- *All the Colors of the Earth*, Sheila Hamanaka
- *Just Because I Am: A Child's Book of Affirmation*, Lauren Murphy Payne

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

- Oral Communication: 2.2
- Reading: 1.3, 1.7
- Writing: 1.1
- Media Literacy: 1.2
- The Arts
- Visual Art

MATERIALS

- permission form for photographs
- camera
- construction paper

Suggested Activities

Pre-reading

- Brainstorm: What would it be like to rule the world?
- Read the story. Pause to observe the photographs. Discuss the title of the book *Girls Hold Up This World*.

Post-reading

- Ask the following questions:
 Why do you think the author used that title?
 Have you read similar books about boys? What are some titles?
 Could you use the title *Boys Hold Up This World* for a similar story? What photographs would you use? Discuss.
- Make a class book called *Girls and Boys Hold Up This World*. With permission from parent/caregiver, use photographs of students doing various activities they like. Put the book in the library so other students can enjoy it.
- Discuss types of strengths (e.g., physical, will power, creativity, musical, artistic, quiet determination).

Extensions

- Make a class painting of the world being held up by the students. Use the caption: Grade One Holds Up the World.
- Sing and listen to songs about the world (e.g., "We Are the World," "Wonderful World," etc.).

 The lesson plans in this section are excerpts from *Connections*. The resource is available from shopETFO. Please visit shopetfo.etfo.ca.

Creative Pieces, K to 8

INTERMEDIATE DIVISION

Focus: Politics and Leadership

Suggested Activities

- A colleague once told Mary Anne Chambers that she would not go far, citing prejudiced reasons for this. List her colleague's biases and/or prejudices. How did Mary Anne react to the comment? List some of the skills and character traits that made it possible for Mary Anne Chambers's to be successful.
- What are some of Mary Anne Chambers's core values and beliefs? How would these core values and beliefs help her to become successful?
- Explain your interpretation of Mary Anne Chamber's comment: "We shouldn't take ourselves too seriously, but we need to take our responsibilities seriously."
- Create a word search or crossword puzzle (reproducibles available) with the following words:

minister	party	elected	honourable
door-to-door	liberal	supporters	commitment
canvass	politics	rallied	schedule
campaign	MPP	office	politician

- Define the following terms
 - marginalized
 - disenfranchised
 - multifaceted
 - conscientious
 - ambitious
 - privilege
- Adapt the interview questions that were asked of Mary Anne Chambers to interview a local politician. Use the responses to write a report about that politician.

Interview Questions

1. What age were you when you decided to become involved in politics?
2. What decisive factor(s) made you want to pursue this career?
3. Who influenced your decision to become a politician?
4. What were some challenges you faced and continue to face as a woman in politics?
5. Whom do you mentor? Who mentors you?
6. How do you balance your political life with your personal life?
7. Describe your childhood history and memories.
8. What advice would you give to adolescent females who are interested in politics?

RELATED RESOURCES

- *Womankind*, Donna Nebenzahl and Nance Ackerman
- *Great Women Leaders*, Heather Ball

CURRICULUM LINKS

Grade 7

- Oral Communication: 1.3
- Reading: 1.3, 1.4
- Writing: 1.3

Grade 8

- Oral Communication: 1.3
- Reading: 1.3, 1.4
- Writing: 1.3



Don't allow other people's words to determine your goals.

Mary Anne Chambers, MPP

Mary Anne Chambers is (at the time of this interview) the Minister of Children and Youth Services, and the MPP for Scarborough East. She became involved in politics at age 52. It was a completely unplanned episode in her life, although many people, such as her banking colleagues, had previously suggested it. Upon retirement, she envisioned focusing on volunteer work.

When Minister Chambers joined the banking industry as a computer analyst, one of her colleagues stated, "I can tell you're conscientious, hardworking, and ambitious but you'll not get very far, because you're a woman, Black, Jamaican, not Canadian, married, a mother, and Roman Catholic!" Mary Anne felt that she had two choices: roll over and play dead or ignore her. Her evaluation of this comment was that if you don't have high expectations and subscribe to the idea of drawing walls around yourself, that's exactly how far you'll go. Chambers prefers to dream in possibilities as a "multidimensional female" and does not impose limitations on herself. She beseeches young people to reach for the stars. Her advice is: "Don't allow other people's words to determine your goals."

Mary Anne Chambers was invited by the Liberal Party to join forces with them; however, she needed time to carefully consider this significant career shift. She consulted a few individuals from various walks of life. Although one of her sons expressed reservations, her husband and other son were most encouraging. She fondly recalls how her husband, because he is shy, refused to canvass door-to-door, but nonetheless relented at the "eleventh hour" and admitted enjoying the challenge! Mary Anne was very encouraged by citizen feedback during her campaign. Her defining moment was when she was elected and all her supporters rallied at the office the next morning.

In terms of challenges for women in politics or

business, Mary Anne Chambers asserts that "we always have to prove ourselves, regardless of what we've achieved beforehand. In mixed-gender settings, if males dominate, there's always some skepticism."

The minister used to devote considerable time to mentor individuals, but due to her hectic schedule, she maintains contact by phone in order to sustain one-on-one relationships. She also conducts informal evening gatherings to promote networking and group mentoring sessions.

Her commitment to her family is steadfast. She speaks lovingly about her mother, whom she visits every weekend. Her family is very supportive and protective and she looks forward to spending quality time with her two granddaughters.

Growing up privileged in Jamaica afforded her a bountiful childhood. Minister Chambers attended private boarding schools. However, her parents also taught her the importance of learning about other people who were marginalized and disenfranchised. As a young adult, she taught an adult literacy summer school program. She maintains that it wasn't so much the attainment of literacy skills that excited her, but how the adult learners could apply their knowledge and thus inform themselves and others. This was her most profound insight. She expresses sensitivity to the plight of people who lack the opportunities to pursue and achieve their dreams.

Her advice to youth is multifaceted: to pursue education and acquire a career; to make a success of yourself in whatever sector you choose; to value real-life experiences; to avoid being a "career politician" and clinging to political life; and to recognize that women bring a multilayered, multitasking perspective to political life.

Her final sage comment is: "We shouldn't take ourselves too seriously, but we need to take our responsibilities seriously."

GRADE FOUR

Focus: Coping with Disappointment



Title: ***The Blue Ribbon Day***
 Author: **Katie Couric**
 ISBN: **0385501420**

RELATED RESOURCES

- *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*, Judy Viorst

CURRICULUM LINKS

- Oral Communication: 2.1, 2.6
- Reading: 1.7
- Writing: 1.5

Suggested Activities

Pre-reading

- Think of a good friend you have. Use a T-chart to make two lists; one of **commonalities** you share and one of **differences**.
- Read the story.

Post-reading

- Create a plot line for the story. Identify the main points of the story on the plot line.
- Use the plot line to retell the story to a student in another grade.
- Work in groups of three or four students to develop a list of ways to boost your confidence. For example, *Boost Your Confidence, Ten Strategies to Try*:

1. Wear your favourite clothes
2. Look in the mirror and say something wonderful about yourself
3. Be active – take time to get some exercise
4. Eat healthy
5. Learn a new skill, e.g., jump rope
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

- In pairs, make a two-minute speech about a time when you were confident and proud about an accomplishment. Observe each other. Discuss nonverbal cues such as gestures, facial expressions, and eye contact.

Extensions

- Make a list of your accomplishments such as foods you can prepare, musical instruments or sports you can play, chores you can do, etc.
- Write a compliment about a friend or family member.