Community Circle Script #1: Differences and Similarities

**Objective(s):**

* To understand that we all have differences and similarities to each other.
* To understand why it is important to celebrate differences and similarities. To identify some of the differences and similarities that we have in our classroom.
* To understand the experiences of someone different from ourselves.

**Time:** 20-30 minutes

You could break this up across several shorter community circle times, if needed. Do the opening activity each time (with 2 to 5 prompts) and select 1-3 learning questions each time, then add the reflection prompt during one of the latter circle opportunities.

**Materials:** Board or paper/white board to write on (optional), writing utensil.

**Other Preparation:** Creating space for students to sit in a circle.

**Opening Activity:** Today, we are going to talk about things that make us “similar to” or like each other, and things that make us different from each other. First, we’re going to do a little activity to think about what we have in common and what is different about us. I’m going to ask you to stand up if what I say is true for you. When you stand up, look at others who are standing to find similarities to them. Stand up if you:

* + Have a brother
  + Like chocolate chip cookies [or other food]
  + Like [sports team]
  + If your birthday is in [select a month]
  + Have ever been to [select a location]
  + Celebrate [x] holiday (select a holiday other than a traditional U.S. holiday that is relevant to several of your students
  + Have a cat

*Considerations for circle leader(s):*

* *For older students, consider asking about learning styles (e.g., like to complete work by myself rather than in a group, like to read a book myself rather than listen to an audio file of the book)*
* *Consider selecting a few statements that will likely allow connections between students who are not already friends/connected*

**Learning Questions:** We all have some things that make us similar and some things that make us different.

* What does it mean for something to be ***similar***? Can you give some examples?
* What does it mean for something to be ***different***? Can you give some examples?
* What are some things that make us similar in this class?
  + EXAMPLES: Going to this school, age, race, skin color, gender, where we live, what things we like, what activities we do, what things we read, what teachers we have.
* What are some things that make us different?
  + EXAMPLES: Month we were born, race, skin color, gender, languages we speak, height, wearing glasses, where we live, what things we like, what we do outside of school, what we eat, how many siblings we have.
  + Why might it be nice to be around people who have differences from you?
  + Why might this be hard?
* Some of us might have some things in common that other people don’t. For example, you are all students, but I’m a teacher. [Feel free to add other examples from your class --e.g., some of you are wearing red, some of you speak Spanish etc.] *Are there any examples you can think of like this?*
  + Why might it be nice to be around people who have similarities to you? Why might this be hard?
* When is it helpful to know about similarities and differences in our classroom?
* How can you learn more about the similarities and differences in our classroom? What are some ways we could learn more about each other?
* When are some times that you like to feel similar to others, and when are some times that you like to feel unique?
* What might be hard about being different from everyone around you (e.g., the only person who speaks Spanish in your classroom)? What might that feel like?

**Reflection Prompts:** Select one of the reflection prompts below based on your class’s age group and interests:

1. Imagine you had a twin. What would be great about that? What might be hard about that?
2. If you were stranded on a deserted island, would you rather have a group of people with you who were exactly like you or a group of people who were different or diverse in many ways? Why?
3. I want everyone to close their eyes and remember an experience of interacting with someone who is different from you in some way, such as [mention some of the differences that the class brainstormed]. Does anyone want to share their experience? What did it feel like?

**Closing**: Thank you for sharing in the circle today. If anyone has more thoughts about similarities and differences, feel free to share later. Let’s all share one word for how we’re feeling right now.