

Culturally Responsive Education K-8

Lesson Title: *Berhane's Story*

Grade Level: Elementary and Middle School

Main Character: Berhane

SEL Competencies: Social Awareness, Self-awareness

Introduction

Berhane's family are immigrants from Ethiopia. Berhane appreciates his cultural heritage, but also considers moving to the United States as an opportunity. Despite this excitement about his new home, he discusses his difficulties with understanding his new cultural surroundings, particularly the culture of school in the US.

Activity 1

Watch the video: *Berhane's Story*

Watch additional support video featuring Jesse Martinez

Watch additional support video featuring Ollie Channel

Activity 2

If you are working with a team each person should take time to reflect individually before discussing with a partner or the group.

Watch the video of Ollie Channel again.

Mr. Channel discusses how many students find obstacles and just give up. Why do you think this happens? How do you rate your ability to find the student or students who are near this point and support them to persevere in school?

What type of obstacles does Berhane face? Why is it important to consider the obstacles that Berhane faces even though these obstacles may be less obvious?

Activity 3

Watch the video of Jesse Martinez again.

Describe how you think these two students became friends? Why do you think Jesse found it hard to get to know Berhane at first? How do you think they began to find common interests?

Do you believe that it is important for your professional practice to find ways for students like Jesse and Berhane to become friends? Why or why not? If you believe that you

should, how do you assess your skills in helping students develop positive interpersonal relationships with peers?

Do you believe that academically motivated students like Berhane need help developing interpersonal relationships with other students? Why or why not?

How well would Berhane fit in in your classroom?

Activity 4

Consider your school context.

Assess your school's programming, both curricular and extracurricular, regarding how culturally inviting the school is. Do students from different cultural traditions feel welcome and involved? Do academically motivated students find opportunities for interaction with other students? What about students whose academic goals are only to finish high school? What about other groups?

Assess your school's programming in making sure that every student has an adult mentor. Are students "falling through the cracks" at your school? Why is this happening? If this is a problem, what strategies are needed to improve?

Develop an action plan to address how to improve your school's work in providing an environment where all students feel welcome and an important part of the culture at your school. What resources are needed? Who are the allies needed to implement this action plan?