



PURPOSE

To introduce human dignity as our special value as human persons.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson students will be able to:

1. Understand **human dignity** as the special value of human persons.
2. Explain that all persons have dignity.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- baby pictures (see Preparatory Work)
- **Dignity Self-Portrait** worksheet (see Materials)
- **Dignity Defender!** nametags (see Materials)

VOCABULARY

- **experience**: an awareness of presence or value
- **human dignity**: the universal, intrinsic, and inalienable value of human persons
- **universal**: every one of us has dignity
- **intrinsic**: our dignity is part of who we are; it is with us our entire life
- **inalienable**: dignity cannot be given to us or taken away from us

PROCEDURE

Step 1: Introduce the course: During these lessons, we will answer three questions:

- (i) Who am I?,
- (ii) What can I do?, and
- (iii) Who can I become?

Once we understand who we are, and what we can do, we can start to make all the right choices in order to become the most excellent people that we can be.

Then introduce yourself. Share the place you were born, and share one fact about your parents' culture—where they come from, what sort of ethnicity runs in your family, etc. If you can provide a baby picture to share with the students, share it now. Then ask students to share their baby pictures, and to explain why their parents chose the name they have.

Step 2: Set the ground for human dignity.

Play the **Groupings Galore!** game with students. Ask students to group themselves accordingly to different categories: age, favorite color, number of siblings, birthday month, favorite sport, etc. End with asking students to stand accordingly by category of living being (plant, animal, human). All students should stand in the human category

Step 3: Introduce human dignity, the core concept of the course: What we experienced in this activity is our human dignity—our value as a human person. Every single person has this value, just because he or she is human, even though there are so many things about us that are different!

Write on the board:

- **experience:** an awareness of presence or value.

This is the most important way by which we come to know human dignity: we experience our own mystery, uniqueness, and value, and we can also experience the mystery of another person which is so much like our own!

When we experience another person, we experience their mystery—we experience the life that they are living, that we cannot live; the things about them that we cannot know; a mystery that we cannot ever fully understand. In some ways, every person is like his or her own world!

Teach the three prongs to dignity:

- **universal:** every person has dignity, regardless of abilities, status, etc.
- **intrinsic:** our dignity is with us our entire life; it is part of who we are
- **inalienable:** dignity cannot be given to us or taken away from us

Explain: Human dignity helps us answer the question, “Who are we?” We are human persons who each have dignity.

We have this value always because we are human. All humans share it. It is a value we each should come to know by experience, because we experience that we are not another human person—that no other human person could live our life for us, or know the things about ourselves the way we know them.

What is important also is that we can demonstrate our dignity in the ways we act and the choices we make. We can live more or less excellent lives—we can live lives of respect, or lives of disrespect, for the dignity of the person. We will learn about this in future lessons. For now, we can say that the

most excellent person is the one who lives his or her life respecting human dignity in each of his or her actions.

Students should complete the ***Dignity Defender!*** nametags, and keep on their desks for the duration of the HDC.

Step 4: Prompt students to reflect on their own dignity.

Explain: Our first step in knowing who we are is knowing about our human dignity, which we share with all other humans. Let's complete a self-portrait—an image of ourselves—to reflect this dignity that we have!

Student should complete the ***Dignity Self-Portrait*** worksheet, using the photo of themselves that they brought to class as part of their preparatory work. If they need the photos salvaged, they can draw themselves instead.

Step 5: Summarize.

Begin with a share-out:

- Do you have human dignity? [yes]
- Do I have human dignity? [yes]
- Does the principal have human dignity? [yes]
- Does a baby who can't talk yet have human dignity? [yes]

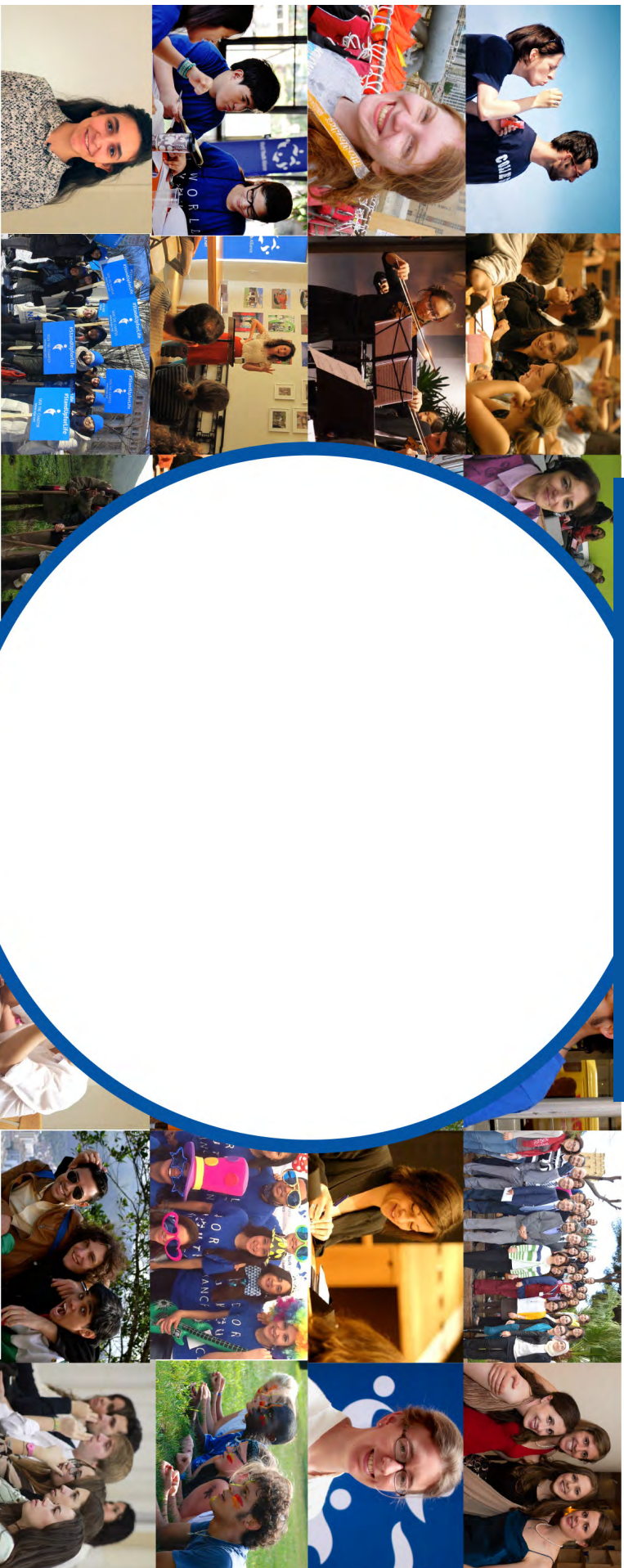
Explain: Today we learned that we have human dignity, our unique value as human persons. Dignity is a part of being human, so all humans share it. Once we know about our dignity, the next step to knowing who we are is learning about the things that we can do—about our powers!—and the ways we can use our powers to grow to be excellent people. We will learn more about these powers in the coming lessons.

FOLLOW-UP & HOMEWORK

Ask students to take the ***Dignity Self-Portrait*** worksheet home and share it with their family.

MY NAME IS _____, AND

I HAVE HUMAN DIGNITY!



Human dignity is the unique value of every human person.

When is your birthday? _____ Where were you born? _____

List the members of your family. _____

List one way you are like your family members. _____

List three things that makes you special. _____

Describe who you want to become. _____



DIGNITY DEFENDER

DIGNITY DEFENDER

