



SUN PROTECTION

Subtopic: What Gives Skin Its Color? **Age Group:** 11-13 **Time:** 45 min

OBJECTIVE: SWBAT

Students will be able to:

- Explain how melanin gives skin color
- State that the amount of melanin is what makes skin darker or lighter
- Discuss how skin color is perceived in society

MATERIALS

- *Skin and Society* sheet (1 copy for Facilitator use only; cut up)

ASSESSMENT

- During Introduction to New Material, assess whether students understood material by asking review questions.
- Assess students' discussion regarding skin color and society during Guided Practice.
- During Closing, evaluate discussion regarding exercise to see if they were able to develop ideas during the Guided Practice.

OPENING

2 min

1. Say, "Sometimes people are treated differently because their skin is a different shade, but really, it's just science that makes us have different skin color. What is the real reason we have different shades of skin? Why do we have different skin color? Science! It just comes down to something called melanin."

INTRODUCTION TO NEW MATERIAL

5 min; Materials: None

1. Ask if any students know what melanin is.
2. Explain that, just like our hair, the amount of melanin determines our skin color. The amount of melanin you have is out of your control and determined by genetics—or your parents' genes.
 - a. Use lemonade/sugar analogy: Lemonade is like our skin and sugar is like melanin. Sugar determines the lemonade's sweetness. The more sugar you add to the lemonade, the sweeter it gets, but regardless of the amount of sugar, it is still lemonade. The amount of melanin someone has determines their skin color. The more melanin someone has, the darker the skin, but no matter how much melanin the person has, it is all still the same: skin.
3. Ask, "So what gives skin color?"
 - a. Students should respond "melanin."
 - b. If students do not know or are unresponsive, say, "Skin color is determined by melanin. Repeat after me: [mel-a-nin]. Melanin!"

GUIDED PRACTICE

20-25 min; Materials: Skin and Society sheet (cut up)

1. Explain they will be doing an activity:
 - a. They are going to work in groups of three/four (pairs work too if it is a smaller class).
 - b. Each group will receive a number (1, 2, 3, etc.)
 - c. Students will each receive a word, and they have to talk about how that word relates to skin color and society.
 - d. When I say, "Switch," they will pass it to the next group. They will have about a minute (or more) for each word (time depends on how many groups there are). Group 1 will pass their word to Group 2. Whoever the last group is will pass their word to Group 1.
 - e. Remind students that they are young adults and they must use utmost respect. We have different opinions and this is a discussion. Not an argument.
 - f. Ask for questions.
2. Students split into groups.
3. Distribute words.
 - a. There may be more words than groups. You can choose what words you want to use.
4. Walk around to make sure students understand the words they have and to listen to discussion students are having.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

None.

CLOSING

10-15 min; Materials: None

1. After the activity is finished, ask students which words they thought were the most interesting. What were some things they discussed?
2. Choose a couple words to discuss.
3. Afterwards, explain, "We thought about how skin color has affected/affects society, but what really gives skin color?"
 - a. Students should respond, "Melanin."
4. Explain that, even though we all have different color skin because some people have more melanin than others, we really are the same because for all of us, the amount of melanin is what makes us different. It's just pigment. It's science.
5. Ask students what they have learned today.