

Queer Community

The queer community is diverse, resilient, and proud. Throughout history, queer people have told stories, made art and music, studied medicine, developed technologies, advocated for social change, and, through actions big and small, made the world a better place. In your own community, you may know who runs local Pride events, or the GSA (Gender Sexuality Alliance) at a nearby high school. Maybe you have queer friends or family members, or maybe you identify as queer yourself. When communities come together to celebrate queerness, it reminds the queer members of the community that they are appreciated and cared for in all that they are.

In this Invitation to Play, we give some suggestions about creating opportunities for children connect with their local queer community and explore the unique ways queerness is celebrated around the world.

Planning

Summary: In this Invitation to play, the room will be divided into stations with activities themed around queer community. After the educator briefly introduces the topic and the stations, learners will be able to move between and engage with stations however they like.

Materials Needed

- Button making station
 - Cardboard circles
 - Pencils
 - Crayons or markers
 - Tape
- Building block station
 - Building blocks
- Role play station
 - Dolls & puppets
 - Doll clothes & props
- Gallery walk
 - Photos from local Pride events or queer spaces
 - Tape

Preparing the Space

- Arrange tables and chairs to create 3 stations:
- A button making station, where learners can make adhesive buttons to express themselves
 - A building block station, where learners can build 'Pride floats' that celebrate their community
 - A role play station, where learners can act out celebrations using dolls and puppets
- Around the perimeter of the room, hang up photos from local Pride events or queer spaces. Encourage learners to talk to chat about what they notice about the photos

Connecting with Community

- Consider inviting members of your local queer community to lead an activity for your learners. For example:
- Invite a drag performer to read picture books in costume
 - Invite someone with knowledge of local queer history to tell stories about the area
 - Invite a queer musician to lead a jam session
 - Invite someone who organizes local pride events or leads community activities talk about the kinds of events that take place in the area

Expanding

Children may engage with the stations in ways we might not expect. They might combine activities from different stations in creative ways or find ways to play in the space that are completely different from what we imagined. Children's inventiveness and suggestions for play can inspire our reflections on the activities and inform how we set up future learning spaces.

Engaging

Supporting

Extending

<p>Educators may circulate among different tables and join some of the activities.</p> <p>Educators can be curious and ask their learners to tell them more about how they are exploring the idea of queer community.</p>	<p>Encourage learners to share stories about their experiences at queer events or in queer spaces</p> <p>Ask learners what kinds of queer events or spaces they would find welcoming and fun.</p> <p>If a guest is present, encourage learners to ask questions and learn more about what the guest does for the community.</p> <p>Invite learners who are interested to share what they've made or something they learned in front of the group.</p>
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Noticing and Recording

As you have conversations with your learners, summarize some of their ideas on a whiteboard.

Take photos of the learners while they are doing the activities. Remember to ask learners if it is okay to take photos, and offer the option to not have their face in the photo

Reflecting

Documenting

Take photos of the stations before and during the activities.

Ask learners if there is anything they would like added to the whiteboard where you've been keeping notes. Document the whiteboard notes by either taking a photo or writing them down.

Write down your observations about what the learners enjoyed about the activities, how they engaged with the activities in ways you didn't expect, and any ideas you have for changes you'd like to make for next time.

Initiating Community Reflection

Share photos of the activities and the children's artwork on the school website and/or in the hallway outside the classroom

If you invited a guest, ask them how the experience was for them and if there is anyone they would recommend inviting as a future guest.

Reviewing

How did the learners respond to the invitations to play?
 What can we add to foster curiosity and creativity?