



Some of Us invites readers to recognize that their American identity is rooted in the shared principles of freedom, justice, and equality, no matter how they came to live in the United States. Teachers are encouraged to read the book aloud with students and then use these teaching tips to help students think deeply about living freely and respectfully in a diverse community.

ACTIVITY ONE: AMERICAN SYMBOLS

Discuss: Introduce the concept of symbols and the positive ways that symbols can instill pride and unity in diverse communities.

Identify two prominent American symbols from the book:

- ★ The Statue of Liberty (front cover image)
- ★ The United States flag

Share facts about the Statue of Liberty, such as who donated it to the United States, where it is located, who inspired its creation, and the meaning behind components such as the torch, robe, tablet, base, and crown.

Discuss the US flag's components:

- ★ 50 stars = 50 states
- ★ 13 stripes = original colonies
- ★ Colors: red (valor and bravery), white (purity and innocence), blue (vigilance, perseverance, and justice)

Have students find and discuss how the flag's colors appear in the book's illustrations.

Create: Using art materials, guide students in making their own liberty crowns. Encourage students to personalize them. Display them in the classroom.

ACTIVITY TWO: AMERICAN CUISINES

"We bring with us our languages, our cuisines, our customs, clothing, music, stories, histories. We bring hard work and determination, intelligence and skill, optimism, joy." – Page 8

Discuss: Identify the foods shown on page 8. Which ones have students eaten before? Which ones would they like to try? What other types of foods might be available at food trucks or restaurants in their community?

Imagine and Create: In pairs or small groups, have students pretend to run a food truck. Ask them to design a menu featuring dishes from various cultures. Let them present their menus and display them around the room.





ACTIVITY THREE: AMERICAN RELIGIONS

“In return for accepting these responsibilities, we receive rights: to speak our beliefs; to worship, or not; to be treated fairly under the law.” – Page 13

Discuss: Explain that the US has no national religion and that everyone is free to believe—or not—according to their conscience. Look at the illustrations on page 13 and identify the religious traditions shown. Ask students to describe similarities among the images.

Explore: Read picture books that highlight diverse cultural and religious practices. Discuss the values and traditions shown.

ACTIVITY FOUR: AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

“We study how US Democracy works.” – Page 11

Discuss: Define democracy and explain it comes from Greek words meaning “rule by the people.” Explain that the United States is a representative democracy and the oldest one in the world. Discuss the characteristics that make US democracy unique and emphasize that democracy requires participation.

Practice: Offer students two game options. Discuss the pros and cons of each, then hold a vote to decide which to play—demonstrating democratic decision-making in action.

ACTIVITY FIVE: DEVELOP A SCHOOL TRADITION

Building a culture of belonging requires intention. Collaborate with families and other school site educators to host an annual cultural celebration that honors the diversity of the school community. Invite students and families to share food, wear cultural attire, and perform dances, poems, or songs celebrating their heritage. Ensure that US culture is represented as one of many.

FURTHER LEARNING

Use the digital research tool [Native Land Digital](#) and the associated teachers’ guide to help students learn about the Indigenous people in your local area. Learn their names, languages, beliefs, and contributions. Invite Indigenous community members to share their history and traditions with the class.

These Teaching Tips were created by Teaching Tips by Mahasin Abuwi Aleem, MLIS