

### **Differences of...**

*The episode discussed a split that occurred within a community. This activity helps students to think about the different aspects and affiliations that exist within groups. This exercise will be most effective for students in grades five and up.*

- 1.) Ask the students to list three communities to which they belong or that they are aware of in our society. This could include school groups, groups of friends, religious or spiritual communities, scouts, arts or sports-related organizations, etc.
- 2.) Invite them to choose one group in which they have witnessed even smaller groups existing. For example, in school they might notice that there are different groups who have specific interests spending time together. In a spiritual community, they might notice that some people group together by age. In a large group of friends, it might be the case that certain people are closer to each other than others.

*Note: It is important to assure the students that these groupings do not necessarily indicate purposeful exclusion. They might observe that it does exist, but it should not be assumed.*

- 3.) Now, ask them to make a list of up to five commonalities – things which the people in the larger group have in common.
- 4.) Ask them to make another list of five differences within the larger group – this could include items connected to background, age, etc.
- 5.) Now have the students consider one of the smaller groups within the larger one. Ask them to make the same two lists for that subgroup.
- 6.) Invite the students to review all four of their lists and consider which items are facts and which are guesses. Ask them to put asterisks next to any items that are guesses, but may or may not be true. (A teacher can offer assistance on this, helping them to notice their own assumptions.)
- 7.) Invite the students to review their four lists again, this time circling the items that they think are most important or have the most impact on the groups.

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8.) Now, engage in a conversation with the students about their observations. Did they make assumptions? Where? What did they notice about that which they deemed most important? What did they notice about the commonalities and differences among the smaller groups vs. the larger ones? How might they use what they learned in their observations to make the groups more inclusive?