Diversity Activity

Essential Question: Is it more helpful to have a class with the same strengths or a class with different strengths?

Goal: This activity aims to build the following understanding - it is more helpful have a class with different strengths because its members can support each other in more ways.

Task: Each team is tasked with constructing a paper die.

Materials (for a class of 25): [die sheets](http://printables.atozteacherstuff.com/download/cube_outline.pdf) (10), colored pencils (5 sets), markers (5), scissors (5), tape (5).

Steps:

1. Introduce the essential question. To figure out an answer, students will participate in a “thinking activity.” Although the activity won’t be exactly like real life, explain that it might help them answer the question.
2. Describe the task of making a paper die and briefly model the process.
3. After informing students that they will be working in teams, review norms for positive group work, e.g. taking turns, using kind words.
4. Explain “the catch:” each student will be assigned one of five “strengths:” coloring (using pencils), writing numbers (using markers), cutting, folding, and taping. In their teams, students may *only* use the materials that accompany their assigned strength, e.g. if a student’s “strength” is taping, she may not use the scissors.
5. Assign a “strength” to each student. In a class of 25 students, 5 students will be assigned same strength.
6. The activity consists of two rounds. First, form groups by the SAME strength. Equipped *only* with the tools accompanying their strength, offer each team a die sheet and challenge them to make as much of the die as possible
7. After a few minutes, reconvene as a class. Discuss the difficulty of completing the task when each team member has the same strength. Ask students how they might arrange themselves into more helpful teams. Guide students to the conclusion that each team will need all five “strengths” to make the die.
8. Form groups where each member has a DIFFERENT strength. Equipped with all of the necessary tools, offer each new team a die sheet. Circulate and assist as individuals team members exercise their “strength” to help make the die.
9. Reconvene as a class. Reflect on the experience and return to the essential question. Some possible questions:
   * What was more helpful for making the die – a group with the same strengths or a group with different strengths? Why?
   * *What do you think is more helpful for learning – a class with the same strengths or a class with different strengths? Why?*
   * What are some of the different strengths that people have in our class? How might all of these different strengths help us learn?