

# The Geography of Diversity

TO RAISE GEOGRAPHIC AWARENESS, I ASKED MY 4TH-GRADE STUDENTS TO RESEARCH THEIR ancestry. As students identified various countries of origin, we placed colored stickers with their names on a large map. We displayed the map in the hallway.

Drawing from that, students wrote essays on why the diversity of America remains important.

We discussed what the Native Americans gave us, the gifts our families brought to the country, and what we individually bring to it today. We discussed our commonalities and our differences, coming to realize that we are different, yet the same.

The message displayed on the class project was, "Diversity is a gift from our country to us." Student essays were completed on paper with a special border depicting gift boxes. Each student colored the border differently; two could be somewhat alike, but there had to be a noticeable difference, as there is in each of us.

We placed the diversity essays in the hallway near our map. The display drew the attention of many as they passed by — students, staff and parents. We noticed many people stopping to examine and discuss the map and its message.

**Barbara Schlemmer**  
McKinley Primary Center  
South Bend, Ind.

GRADES

3-6



**TEACHING TOLERANCE RECOMMENDS** National Geographic's *Geography Action!*, an annual K-12 education initiative, provides numerous multi-disciplinary resources for educators and students to help deepen the sense of our global community. To learn more, visit [www.nationalgeographic.com/geographyaction](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/geographyaction).

## Write for Us

We welcome submissions of Activity Exchange items from classroom teachers. Submissions (up to 400 words) should include concise information on specific activities. A fee of \$100-\$200 is paid for each Activity Exchange item we publish. Longer lesson plans will be considered for publication on the web; payment for these ranges from \$200-\$500. Send submissions to: Teaching Tolerance, 400 Washington Ave., Montgomery, AL 36104. Allow 1-3 months for reply.

