

Cultural Appropriation

A Guided Discussion:

Create a safe space for the discussion – listening to understand, respectful, treating others as you would like to be treated. Invite children to participate as they feel comfortable.

- Where do you come from? What are your ethnic origins or nationality? We call this our heritage. It's like our roots – like a tree – where we come from and is part of our culture.
- Who has traditional clothing/attire that they wear in their culture?
- How does it feel to put on your traditional clothing/attire? Why do you think that is? Is wearing traditional clothing a way of celebrating your culture? What does it celebrate? *Acknowledge and validate any feelings that are offered. There is no right or wrong, some may have mixed feelings depending on the context in which they are wearing it.*
- Who doesn't have traditional clothing/attire in their culture? Did they in the past? (Many may have had in years gone by even if not worn or celebrated today) How do you feel about not having traditional costume to wear?
- What does it mean to borrow something? What does it mean to lend someone something? Are there some things that you can't borrow? If you lend something to someone, how do you want them to treat it? *Draw out the concepts of valuing something and treating it with respect.*
- Do you think you can borrow someone's traditional attire? Why? Why not? What might some of the reasons be that you could borrow someone's traditional attire? What might some of the reasons be that you couldn't borrow someone's traditional attire? *Encourage all possible thoughts and answers, remind children there are different ways of thinking about this.*
- Have you heard of cultural appropriation? *It's when someone takes someone else's cultural customs or practices, ideas or clothing and take it as their own inappropriately or without understanding what it means or acknowledging where it's from.* For example, Basotho blankets should be worn with the stripe running vertically. Men should wear the blanket with the darker side facing out, whilst women should wear it with the lighter side showing.
- What do you think you could do to respect someone else's culture if you want to wear their traditional clothing or jewellery? *Ask questions, understand what you're wearing, know what it's called, treat it with respect and dignity.*
- How can we find out about someone else's culture and clothing?

You can use the PowerPoint slides on this link to guide the discussion.