

Collage Art Speaks for Us

An activity of Stories of Casual Racism

Living in Singapore lets us enjoy the best of many cultures. We love the variety of hawker foods, festivals, music and many other aspects of our multicultural society.

The diversity of peoples has its own challenges though. Casual racism is one of them. You can read stories about casual racism at <http://more.whatsup.sg/>. Does that mean life would be easier if we were all more alike? Use collage art to express your thoughts about this deep question.

PART I – *Work in groups of three to five members.*

- 1) **Our Monochromatic Society** — On a fresh sheet of poster paper, create a collage of life in Singapore. Use only white, greys and black torn bits of paper. Title your first collage “Our Monochromatic Society”. Monochromatic (say “**mono**-kro-matik”) means having only shades of one colour.

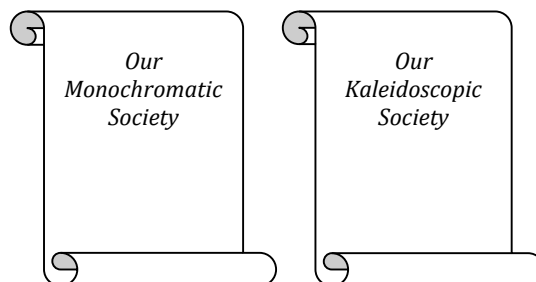
First, brainstorm about what a society in monochrome means to your group. There are no right or wrong answers. Then, agree on the main concept you wish to express through your art. Work together to construct the collage.

- 2) **Our Kaleidoscopic Society** — On a second sheet of identical poster paper, create another collage. The topic is the same: Singapore society. This time you can use as many colours as you wish to and any items — paper, buttons, seeds, strips of ribbon, toothpicks, rubber bands and whatever else you fancy.

Title your second collage “Our Kaleidoscopic Society”. Kaleidoscopic (say “**ke**-lai-de-**sko**-pik”) means having many different shapes and colours that move around to form different patterns.

This time, brainstorm about what a kaleidoscopic society means to your group. Here again, there are no right or wrong answers. Then, agree on the main concept you wish to express through your art. Next, work together to construct your group’s second collage.

- 3) Display your two posters side by side.



4) As a group, study your collages. Take turns to have each member respond to these questions:

a. How did you feel about using only greys, black and white paper for your first collage?

b. How did you feel about using whatever you wanted for the second collage?

c. On a scale of 1 to 10, how well were you able to showcase the title “Our Monochromatic Society”? Explain why you selected your rating.

d. On a scale of 1 to 10, how well were you able to showcase the title “Our Kaleidoscopic Society”? Explain why you selected your rating.

PART II – *Have a whole-class discussion.*

1) Invite every group to share its posters and reflections with the whole class.

2) Discuss the following:

- In this activity, “monochromatic” and “kaleidoscopic” are used metaphorically. What do they mean to you now that you have completed the collages?
- What are some pros and cons of living in a monochromatic society?
- What are some pros and cons of living in a kaleidoscopic society?
- Were there times when you wished society were more monochromatic? Were there also times when you would have liked society to be more kaleidoscopic?
- Can society be both — monochromatic in some aspects and kaleidoscopic in other aspects? If so, what parts would you like to be monochromatic and what other parts would you prefer to be kaleidoscopic?