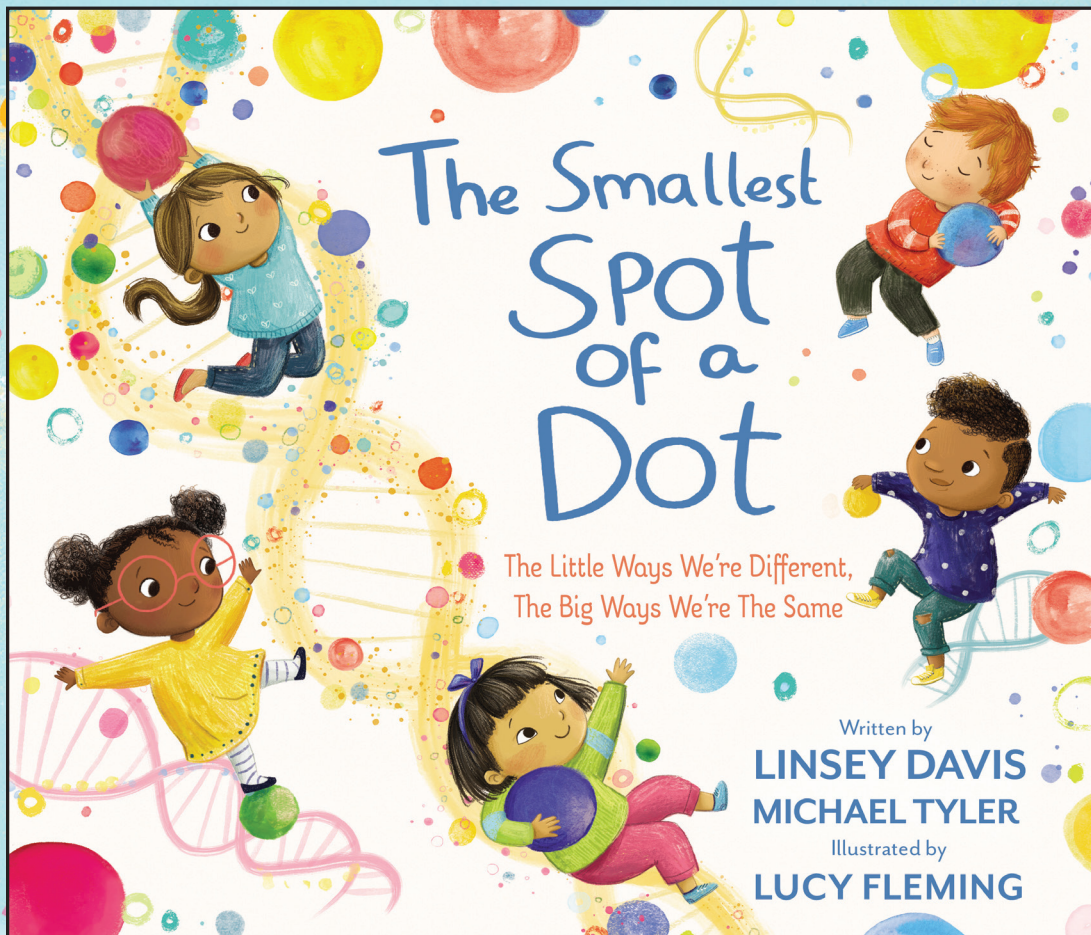


CURRICULUM GUIDE



The Smallest Spot of a Dot

The Little Ways We're Different, The Big Ways We're the Same

BY Linsey Davis AND Michael Tyler ILLUSTRATED BY Lucy Fleming

FROM BESTSELLING AUTHOR and ABC News correspondent and anchor Linsey Davis, comes a picture book that celebrates both diversity and equality by showing kids that our genes are 99.9% identical.

The Smallest Spot of a Dot is a wonderful introduction to the basics of genetics and DNA for young students in grades K-2 which emphasizes the ways humans are more alike than different.

The Common Core State Standards addressed by the discussion questions, activities, and worksheets in this guide are noted throughout. For more information on the Common Core, visit corestandards.org.

Discussion Questions

- Study the cover illustration. In what ways are the children the same? How are they different? **CCSS.ELA.RL.K.7; CCSS.ELA.RL.1.7; CCSS.ELA.RL.2.7**
- The authors describe the spots in the book as “tiny gene-dots.” What do they call the single gene-dot that is unique to each one of us?
CCSS.ELA.RL.K.1; CCSS.ELA.RL.1.1; CCSS.ELA.RL.2.1
- According to the story, what parts on the outside of our bodies are determined by this single gene-dot? **CCSS.ELA.RL.K.1; CCSS.ELA.RL.1.1; CCSS.ELA.RL.2.1**
- “We have different faces and bodies and names, But we’re still 99.9% the same.” What things do we all have in common?
- What do you think the authors want readers to remember most from this book?
CCSS.ELA.RL.1.2; CCSS.ELA.RL.2.2
- Look back through the book with a partner or with the class as a whole. Which is your favorite illustration? Which is your favorite line of text? Why did you make these selections? **CCSS.ELA.RL.K.7; CCSS.ELA.RL.1.7; CCSS.ELA.RL.2.7**

Activities for Students

Ciao!

Look at the pages where the small spots named “Gene” are introduced. With a partner, try out all of the ways to say “hello” listed on these pages.



The Same and Different

On the dedication page, the author writes, “Only .1% of our genes make us uniquely who we are. We are 99.9% identical, alike, the same—equal.” Find a friend and discuss how the two of you are alike and what makes you each unique. Record these observations using a Venn diagram.

Readers’ Theater

Perform the text in this story as a readers’ theater. Divide the text into sections and assign parts to different students. Practice which parts will be read by individual students and which sections will be read by the group. Practice the script several times to ensure fluent and expressive reading. Find another class to share a performance of your readers’ theater script.

Common Ground

Find examples from the story of the ways in which all humans are the same. Copy one or more of these parts of the text onto a poster and add your own illustrations. Think of a title for your poster about equality. Display the posters in your classroom.

The discussion questions and activities in this guide were created by Leigh Courtney, Ph.D. She teaches in the Global Education program at a public elementary school in San Diego, California. She holds both masters’ and doctoral degrees in education, with an emphasis on curriculum and instruction.

Dear Educator,

For the next worksheet (Design Your Own Dog), photocopy this page of trait strips as needed so you can give one strip to each student:

**SHORT
FUR**

**CURLY
TAIL**

**SHORT
LEGS**

**FLOPPY
EARS**

**CURLY
FUR**

**STRAIGHT
TAIL**

**LONG
LEGS**

**POINTY
EARS**

**LONG
FUR**

**SHORT
TAIL**

**SHORT
LEGS**

**FLOPPY
EARS**

**SHORT
FUR**

**STRAIGHT
TAIL**

**LONG
LEGS**

**FLOPPY
EARS**

**CURLY
FUR**

**CURLY
TAIL**

**SHORT
LEGS**

**POINTY
EARS**



Name: _____

DESIGN YOUR OWN DOG

The smallest spot of a dot of DNA doesn't only determine how each human being looks, dogs have DNA too! Each dog's gene-dots determine their hair length, color, and texture; their ear positioning, and more! Look at your dog's traits on the strip of paper handed out by your teacher. Use the information on your strip to draw a detailed illustration of your dog. Name your dog, come up with a name for this new breed, and describe the key traits of the breed you created.



Name of dog: _____

Breed: _____

Breed traits: _____

