

Lesson 1 – We live in an unfair world

Some of our neighbors have more than enough resources to live, and many have much less. How do we respond to one another amidst such differences?

Woe to you who add house to house and join field to field
till no space is left and you live alone in the land.

Isaiah 5:8 (NIV)

Preparation

Gather a set of Uno cards.

Get the book (or use the online version) [Maddi's Fridge by Lois Brandt](#) ([read aloud](#)).

Read guidance for [Wondering with Children](#).

Ask another adult who will be participating to develop their own (unfair) rules for playing Uno that would favor them in some way. Check with them about their rules to make sure they're on the right track (towards making the game unfair).

Explore the Other Resources (below) for additional opportunities.

Gathering (Building the community/circle)

Choose a question related to the topic (examples below) or do a check-in (pluses and minutes, roses and thorns) to help welcome everyone into the space.

- Share something kind or fair you did recently
- Who is someone who is fair in how they act with others, and why?

Playing unfair Uno

"We're going to play Uno but with new rules"

Explain new rules, play the game

If people complain about the rules, you can say, "it's just the way it is" as a way to point to the systemic nature of the problem. Afterwards, you can ask questions like:

- What was that like?
- Was the game fair or unfair? Why?
- What was it like to lose? To win?

Introduction

A stacked deck is a deck of playing cards arranged in a specific order to give one player an unfair advantage. Usually we don't know who stacked the deck, or who

made up the rules. But if we look closely, we can see that some people usually win and others usually lose.

Sometimes we don't know who made the rules, but we can see that they are unfair. Many children in the world don't have enough: not enough food to grow up healthy and strong, not enough money to go to school, and not enough money to pay for a doctor when they are sick. Their parents can't find jobs to make a living for their families and cannot afford a house that does not leak when it rains or is not cold in the winter. Other children and their families have more than enough. Right Sharing of World Resources is one organization among many that seek to change this unfair situation so that everyone can have enough.

Ask the group about places in their life where they see a "stacked deck" like in the game we played. And then say, "I want to tell you about someone named Lavinda."

The deck was stacked against [Lavinda](#), a woman in Kenya with unsteady work which made it difficult to pay for her children's school and medical costs. Fortunately she was invited to join a women's group which pooled their limited resources, shared knowledge, and stood together during difficult moments. Through the support of the group she now has a steady income and many more "cards in her deck." For example, if illness comes, she can draw from the emergency fund that they maintain together. Joining this group, Lavinda found not only practical help but a sense of belonging.

Read the book - [Maddi's Fridge by Lois Brandt](#) ([read aloud](#))

Wondering Questions for during and after the reading

I wonder what part of the story you like best?

I wonder what part is the most important for you today?

I wonder where you are in the story or what part of the story is about you?

I wonder if there is any part of the story that we can leave out and still have all the story we need?

Reflection

Choose a question to respond to that's connected to the theme:

What's something I learned today about fairness?

What's something in your community that you think could be shared better?

Other Resources / Extending the Lesson

Bible Story - The Parable of the Persistent Widow (Luke 18:1-8)

This story of a woman seeking justice from an unjust judge is an illustration of the power of persistence and faith.

What is the role of faith in the story?

What is the role of persistence?

Martin Luther King Jr. said that “the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.” How does this relate to the story?

Games and Activities

[Ten Chairs of Inequality](#)

Justice Jenga - Label blocks with different fairness dilemmas. When pulled, kids discuss responses

[Unfair Activity](#) (with language and other adjustments, e.g. something other than candy)

Scavenger Hunt - No one gets the same instructions

Plastic wrap ball - Some given gloves, some oven mitts, some nothing for their hands

Pasta Pick up - Different pastas to pick up with different tools

Songs

[We Share with Love](#)

[Love in Action](#)

[Serving Others](#)

[Kind Like Christ](#)

Explore other lessons from this curriculum here: rswr.org/economic-fairness. If you use this curriculum, we'd love to hear how the experience went and welcome any feedback you'd like to share. Please contact us at rswr@rswr.org.