My Family Tree
Kindergarten

Suggested Time Frame:

1 day

Materials:

- Family books
- Family tree paper
- Crayons
- Pencil

Optional:

- Pictures of the children
- Pictures of family members from each child's family

Vocabulary:

Family
Resemblances
Family tree
Similarities
Differences
Traditional family
Single parent family
Godparents
Foster parents

Process Skills:

Interpret Data
Observe
Compare

Condensed Content Statement:

Living things are different from nonliving things.

Living things include anything that is alive or has ever been alive.

Living things have specific characteristic traits.

Living things grow and reproduce.

Living things are found almost everywhere in the world. There are somewhat different kinds in different places.

Lesson Summary:

Children will learn about family resemblances by studying their own family heritage. They'll discuss similarities and differences among members of their family.

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Teacher Notes

- Remember to be sensitive to those children who may be coming from adopted, blended, or foster families.
- Send home the parent letter (found at the end of the lesson) several days in advance of the lesson in order to have enough time for collecting the children's family photos.
- You will want to have an example of a family tree for the children to observe and discuss. The children will enjoy meeting your family through your pictures and drawings.

Engage (Warm-up)

Using a large sheet of chart paper, brainstorm as many types/kinds of families as possible. Teacher guidance or prompting may be needed to guide certain responses. Some responses may include: traditional families, single parent families, foster parents, godparents, grandparents, extended family members, adoptive families, etc. This will allow rich discussion about respecting ALL types of families. Regardless of the type of family the children come from, they will still be able to identify some similarities and differences.

Explore (Instructional Strategies)

1. Read a selected text listed in the literature area of the lesson plan. Ask: Who has a family tree? How big is your family tree? Given this unfamiliar phrase, most of the children will begin sharing about trees in their yards/neighborhoods, etc.

2. Show them your family tree. Take time to introduce your family members to the class. Give ample time for the children to share what they observe about your family. What is the same about some of the family members? What is different about some of the family members? Be sure to emphasize similarities between yourself and the photos of family members (e.g., "My nose is the same shape as my dad's," or "My brother and I both have brown hair.")

3. Show the blank "Family Tree" paper that they will be completing by drawing the family members that live in their house. Give clear directions for the children to
   - draw each person's face or entire body.
   - label with family member's names and relationship.
   - add details around your family tree (color/decorate).
   - turn in completed trees for reference points tomorrow.

Interdisciplinary Connections

As a Math tie-in, count and chart the number of people each child has listed in their Family Trees. You can then do a class graph with "Numbers of People in the Family" on the x-axis and the number of students in the class with that many family members on the y-axis.

Assessement

1. Do all families look alike? What's the same about all families? What can be different?
2. Think of your best friend's family. How is it like your family? How is it different?

Reteach Ideas

In advance, cut apart and mix up the "Families in Nature" sorting cards, included.
Remind students that in many families, the children look like their parents. This is the case in nature, too, where the offspring will often look like their parents. (A kitten would look like the mother cat, not like another kind of animal.) Working as a class, sort the pictures and pair the adults and their babies, discussing how you could be sure that the matches are correct.

Closure

To close the lesson and celebrate each of their families, each child will create a REAL family tree. Explain to the children how delicate photographs are and how they are to be handled. Using a SMALL amount of tape, help the children arrange their pictures to create their family trees. These can be a wonderful addition to any classroom or hallway display. Upon taking the family trees down, remember to return all photographs to the children's families.

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Extensions/Additional Resources

Classroom Portals/Technology:

SMART Exchange:

- "Family Tree" (SMART Created)
- "Mother and Babies Sort: Animal and Human" (SMART Notebook Lesson)
- "Describing Animals" (SMART Table Activity Pack)
- "Group the Animals" (SMART Table Activity Pack)
- "Who Is In My Family?' (SMART Table Activity Pack)

UnitedStreaming:

- "Many Kinds of Families" (A Segment of "All About Families")

Websites:

- Family Tree Kids (http://kids.familytreemagazine.com/kids/FamilyTreeForm.asp)

Literature:

- Grandfather's Journey by Allen Say
- Honeypaw and Lightfoot by Jonathon London
- Love You Forever by Robert Munsch
- Motherlove by Virginia Kroll
- If You Were My Baby by Fran Hodgkins
- Horace by Holly Keller
- Shades of Black by Sandra L. Pinkney
- Kelly In the Mirror by Martha M. Vertreace
- Are You My Mother by Dr. Seuss
- I Love You This Much! by Lynn Hodges