

**Unit #1 Title:** Interacting With Others In Ways That Respect Individual and Group Differences

**Lesson Title:** Origins: A simple word game (for use in human relations trainings)

**Grade Level:** 10

**Length of Lesson:** 30 - 45 minutes

**Lesson #** 4 of 8

**Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Standard:**

PS.2: Interacting With Others In Ways That Respect Individual and Group Differences

**Grade Level Expectation(s) (GLE):**

PS.2.B.10.a.i: Promote acceptance and respect for cultural differences within the global community

**American School Counselor Association National Standards (ASCA):**

Personal Social Development

- A. Students will acquire the knowledge, attitude, interpersonal skills to help them understand and respect self and others.

**Materials (include activity sheets and/ or supporting resources)**

Timer

Three judges

Instructions: *“Origins: A simple word game for use in human relations training”*

Activity Sheet: *“Origins: What do these words and phrases mean?”* 2 sets on different colored paper

Definitions: *“Origins: What do these words and phrases mean?”*

Information pertaining to this activity may be found at the following location:

Teaching Tolerance

400 Washington Avenue

Montgomery, Alabama 36104

[www.tolerance.org](http://www.tolerance.org) [www.teachingtolerance.org](http://www.teachingtolerance.org)

**Show Me Standards: Performance Goals (check one or more that apply)**

X	Goal 1: Gather, analyze and apply information and ideas 1. Develop questions and ideas to initiate and refine research 7. Evaluate the accuracy of information and the reliability of its sources
X	Goal 2: Communicate effectively within and beyond the classroom 2. Review and revise communications to improve accuracy and clarity 3. Exchange information, questions and ideas while recognizing the perspectives of others
	Goal 3: Recognize and solve problems
	Goal 4: Make decisions and act as responsible members of society

**This lesson supports the development of skills in the following academic content areas.**

<b>Academic Content Area(s)</b>	<b>Specific Skill(s)</b>
X Communication Arts	6. Participating in formal and informal presentations and discussions of issues and ideas 7. Identifying and evaluating relationships between language and culture
Mathematics	
X Social Studies	6. Relationships of the individual and groups to institutions and cultural traditions
Science	
Health/Physical Education	
Fine Arts	

**Enduring Life Skill(s)**

X	Perseverance	X	Integrity	X	Problem Solving
	Courage	X	Compassion	X	Tolerance
X	Respect		Goal Setting		

**Lesson Assessment (acceptable evidence):**

**Formative assessment relates to the summative assessment for unit (performance outcome for goals, objectives and GLEs). Assessment can be question answer, performance activity, etc.**

Subjective observation of the activity.

**Lesson Preparation**

**Essential Questions:**

“Respect is a two-way street!” What is the below-the-surface meaning?  
How does the statement relate to our world’s leaders, to you in your relationships with others?

**Engagement (Hook):**

Music and publicity over the announcements reflecting respect.

**Procedures**

**Instructor Procedures:**

**Note:** The specific instructions for this lesson may be found on the “Origins: A simple word game for use in human relations training “handout.”

In advance, decide which words will be used for each round. Copying the word lists for each round on different colors of paper (e.g. Round One on yellow paper—Round Two on blue).

Choose three students to be judges and give

**Student Involvement:**

<p>each judge a set of instructions; put remaining students in groups of 5 - 6 people.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Put words/phrases for Round One face down on the table and inform students they will have 4 minutes per round. Start the timer with 4 minutes.</li><li>2. At the end of four minutes, students are instructed to put down their pens. Ask each group to read the answers for the first word. After each group has answered, read the explanation from the definition sheet.</li></ol> <p>Each judge records the score on his or her score sheet.</p> <p>Continue activity with each word or phrase.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>3. Closure: Have students do a two-minute private writing regarding their thoughts and feelings as they discussed the words. Ask students to share their thoughts. Encourage students to monitor their words to show respect for others.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Students will thoughtfully participate in "Origins" as either group participants or judges. For each round, students will give the common usage and origins of the words or phrases.</li><li>2. Students must come up with an answer even if they have never heard of the word or phrase. The judges will assign the points for each round.</li><li>3. Students will complete a thoughtful 2 minute-writing in their journal. Students may volunteer to tell the class one of his/her thoughts.</li></ol>
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## Teacher Follow-Up Activities

Instructor gives students an opportunity to create other words that may have similar meanings as those expressed in the activity.

### Counselor reflection notes (completed after the lesson)

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## TEACHING TOLERANCE

[www.teachingtolerance.org](http://www.teachingtolerance.org)

### Instructions for “*Origins: A simple word game for use in human relations training*”

#### Note to Instructor:

You need an inexpensive kitchen timer for this activity. Copying sheets on colored paper will make it easier for you to keep the question sheets for each round together. After handing out the instructions below to three randomly selected judges, the instructor does not need to do anything.

#### Instructions to Judges:

1. Put students in groups of 5-6 people.
2. Put questions for Round 1 face down at tables; start the timer with 4 minutes.
3. At the end of 4 minutes, tell the students to put down their pens. Ask each group to read its answer for 1. After each group has answered, read the answer from the definitions sheet. Each judge records the points on her/his score sheet. Continue doing this with each question. No one can challenge the judges’ scores or ask to see the score sheets.
4. Repeat #2 with questions for Round 2, etc.
5. Add each judge’s points on the board after each round and announce winners.

#### Instructions to Groups:

Each group will have 4 minutes for each round. For each round, give the common usage and origin of words or phrases on the sheet. You must come up with something even if you have no idea what it means. There are two possible points for the common usage and three possible points for the origin of the word or phrase. The judges will assign the points for each round.

## ACTIVITY SHEET: *ORIGINS*: What do these words or phrases mean?

(Adapted from Sudie Hofmann's introduction to "*Origins*".  
<http://www.tolerance.org/teach/activities/activity.jsp?ar=657> )

The word game *Origins* reveals the history and prejudice of many words or expressions commonly used in the United States. We use these words or phrases everyday without thinking about their original meaning. If we knew the origin of the words, would we use them? This game will help you decide for yourself.

Following is a list of words – Describe their common usage and their origins (if you don't know the usage or the origin, make up something that seems "right").

General Rules: Three judges will be selected from the class; the rest of you will work in small groups. There will be two rounds (your instructor will tell you which words from the list are included in each round); during each round you will have four (4) minutes to work together and write the common usage and origin for the designated words (you **MUST** write an answer -- even if you have no idea of the meaning or origin—make one up!); at the end of four (4) minutes, groups will report their answers.

Earning Points: Two (2) possible points for the common usage; three (3) possible points for the origin of the word or phrase. Judges will award points.

At the end of each round, the judges will read the actual definitions and origins of the terms from the key.

### 1. **Gypped**

Common usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. **Jew you down**

Common usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. **Mulatto**

Common usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. **Lame**

Common usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

### 5. **Hick**

Common usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Evil eye**

Common usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Iron Maiden**

Common usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

**8. Indian giver**

Common usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

**9. Paddy Wagon**

Common usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Russian roulette**

Common usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

**11. Hag**

Common usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

**12. Chinese fire drill**

Common usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

**13. Chinese home run/Harlem home run**

Common usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

**14. Jaywalking**

Common usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

**15. Bury the Hatchet**

Common usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

**16. Bedlam**

Common usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

**17. Corny**

Common usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

**18. Hold down the fort**

Common usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

**19. Welsh (verb)**

Common usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

**20. Low person on the totem pole**

Common usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

**21. Indian summer**

Common usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

**22. Dutch bargain**

Common usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

**23. Dutch treat**

Common usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

**24. Redneck**

Common usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

**25. Gypsy Cab**

Common usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

**26. On the Warpath**

Common usage: \_\_\_\_\_

Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think? Now that you know the origins of these words and phrases, will you continue to use them? What words might you use instead?

## Teaching Tolerance

[www.teachingtolerance.org](http://www.teachingtolerance.org)

# DEFINITIONS: *ORIGINS*: What do these words or phrases mean?

### 1. GYPED

Common usage: One has been cheated.

Origin: Belief that Gypsies (Hindu people from East India & Balkan states) will cheat you or steal from you.

### 2. JEW YOU DOWN

Common usage: Hard negotiation to lower a price.

Origin: Belief that Jewish people are cheap and unethical in business. Longstanding literary references promote stereotypes that relate Jewish people to the practices of money changing usury.

### 3. MULATTO

Common usage: One African American parent and one White Parent.

Origin: Spanish word for a mule, which is the sterile offspring of a horse and a donkey. There is some evidence that it is also an Arabic word.

### 4. LAME

Common usage: A statement or behavior that is foolish or not well reasoned.

Origin: Belief that someone with a disability is incompetent or stupid.

### 5. HICK

Common usage: To describe something that is unsophisticated, outdated or stupid.

Origin: 16<sup>th</sup> century nickname for the given name Richard. Refers to a person who lives in the country.

### 6. EVIL EYE

Common usage: Evil or dirty look.

Origin: Belief in Europe and the Middle East that women could possess an evil eye, especially common in European witch trials.

### 7. IRON MAIDEN

Common usage: Tough, humorless woman.

Origin: Large metal enclosure coffin shaped and lined with iron spikes. Used during witch trials to torture and kill women suspected of being witches.

### 8. INDIAN GIVER

Common usage: Taking back a gift.

Origin: Indigenous American communities had a different concept of ownership; the focus was on sharing or trading. Things given to the colonists by Native Americans may have been reclaimed from colonists if they did not reciprocate.

### 9. PADDY WAGON

Common usage: Police van.

Origin: Derogatory term for Irish people based on the Irish name of Paddy. Although, in the past, many police officers on the East Coast were Irish, some also contend that this was a cart used to round up Irish immigrants for disorderly behavior.

**10. RUSSIAN ROULETTE**

Common usage: Potentially fatal game of dare with a revolver, which applies the concept of roulette.  
Origin: Belief that Russian culture is fatalistic.

**11. HAG**

Common usage: Ugly or old woman.  
Origin: Holy woman. Derived from Egyptian heq, meaning matriarchal ruler..

**12. CHINESE FIRE DRILL**

Common usage: All occupants of a car stopped at a traffic light quickly exit the car, run around the vehicle, and return to the car through the same door.  
Origin: Belief that Chinese culture is chaotic and the implication is that Chinese people are stupid and would run back into a burning building.

**13. CHINESE HOME RUN/HARLEM HOME RUN**

Common usage: Perceived unfair homerun because of a mythical short fence around the field.  
Origin: Stereotype originated in California, based on the reality that Chinese labor was cheap and the expression eventually meant “cheap shot.” Sportswriters have also referred to some homeruns as homer foo you, chow mein smash, and egg roll bingle.

**14. JAY WALKING**

Common usage: Violating pedestrian laws.  
Origin: Belief that a jay, a person uneducated about city life, was incapable of crossing the street legally.

**15. BURY THE HATCHET**

Common usage: To settle one’s differences..  
Origin: A 14<sup>th</sup> century British song titled “Hong up then hatchet and thi knyf.” No historical usage by Indigenous people of North America.

**16. BEDLAM**

Common usage: Noise and chaos.  
Origin: Term derived from Bethlehem, a London institution for people with mental disabilities.

**17. CORNY**

Common usage: Stupid or comical ideas or behavior.  
Origin: Belief that rural people, particularly people from farms, are foolish and uneducated.

**18. HOLD DOWN THE FORT**

Common usage: Stay behind and manage the affairs of the office or home.  
Origin: Protect the forts (military term for fortifying the building) of European American colonists against attacks by Indigenous people.

**19. WELSH (VERB)**

Common usage: Renege on an agreement or promise.  
Origin: Nursery rhyme “Taffy was a Welshman, Taffy was a thief.” Later extended to refer to English bookies who fled to Wales to avoid paying bettors.

**20. LOW PERSON ON THE TOTEM POLE**

Common usage: Used by non-Indigenous people to indicate that a person is low in seniority or significance in an organization.

Origin: American Indian culture and positions of clan members on a totem, e.g. Bears on the bottom for strength and Eagles on the top for flight. Balance and equality were stressed.

## **21. INDIAN SUMMER**

Common usage: Unusually warm days in the fall.

Origin: Belief that American Indians engage in deceit and trickery in their dealings with British colonists. Indian Summer is a false summer. Indian is used in several contexts to denote something that is cheap or false, witness Indian-giver and Indian-corn. Also supporting this idea is the British phrase St. Martin's Summer referring to the same meteorological phenomenon. St. Martin suggests something cheap or false, primarily because dealers in cheap jewelry gathered at the location of London's Church of St. Martin-de-Grand after it was torn down in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. St. Martin's day is 11 November, which often corresponds to the spell of warm weather. (From <http://www.wordorigins.org>)

## **22. DUTCH BARGAIN**

Common usage: Appears to be a bargain, but is in fact a bad investment.

Origin: Belief that people from Holland are unethical and will attempt to sell something of little worth to unsuspecting customers.

## **23. DUTCH TREAT**

Common usage: Each person pays for her/himself when out for dinner or entertainment.

Origin: Belief that originated in England and perpetuated the stereotype that people from Holland are uncharitable or cheap.

## **24. REDNECK**

Common usage: A white male who has unenlightened, narrow, and racist views.

Origin: Belief that white men who do day labor (sunburned neck) hold prejudiced views and are uninformed about social issues.

## **25. GYPSY CAB**

Common usage: A taxi cab which picks up illegal fares, i.e. is only licensed to respond to calls but illegally searches the streets for passengers.

Origin: Belief that gypsies (Rumanies – Hindu ethnic group of East Indians living in Balkan states and the U.S.) steal and engage in unlawful activities.

## **26. ON THE WARPATH**

Common usage: Description of someone who is engaging in angry, confrontational behavior.

Origin: Reference to American Indians waging war.

## **SOURCES:**

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Jewell, E. J. & Abate, F. (2001) *The New Oxford American Dictionary*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Morris, W. & Morris, M. (1977) *Morris Dictionary of Word and Phrase Origins*. New York: Harper & Row.

Walker, B. (1983). *The Woman's Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets*. New York: Harper & Row.

Wilton, D. (2004). *Word Myths: Debunking Linguistic Urban Legends*. New York: Oxford University Press.

[www.members.aol.com/morelandc/haveorigins.htm](http://www.members.aol.com/morelandc/haveorigins.htm)

[www.wordorigins.org](http://www.wordorigins.org)

The author is interested in any dialogue regarding this exercise. Linguists recognize that words may have multiple origins and this could be true for any of the words used in the exercise. In addition, if you have suggestions for expanding this exercise, please contact the author (**Sudie Hofmann, St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, MN**)