



Henry David
Thoreau
EVERYONE IS SPECIAL



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ALPHABET

Please read the Overview before using this Plan.

T t Letter T introduces Henry David Thoreau, how to help people in trouble, and the value and care of trees.

MATERIALS: Construction paper Letter with hole punched in top, yarn for necklace
Snacks—Turtles (Chocolate), tortilla chips (Or use the various items for tasting as the snack.)

GETTING STARTED:

Welcome. After each person says his or her name, the group responds, "Welcome, (name)." For a child who is attending for the first time this year, add name to the letters that have been posted and to the attendance sheet, and make a nametag during or after the session. Leave an empty chair for someone who is not present or for someone who has not joined the group yet.

The *Letter of the Day*:

- Talk about the Letter.
- Give the Letter Necklace to a person with that initial.
- Talk about the things that the children have brought for the Letter, and/or Letter Bag.
- Put the things related to the letter in the Special Place

SPECIAL PERSON: Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862)

In Session E, we talked about Ralph Waldo Emerson. One day he was planning a picnic with his children. They invited children of all ages to the picnic and adults who they knew liked to have fun. One person they invited was Henry David Thoreau -- because he knew the good places to pick berries to make pies!

The day of the picnic was sunny. Everyone was finding lots of berries. Suddenly, Edward Emerson, who was about four years old, tripped and fell. The big basket that he was carrying fell, spilling his berries all over the place! He tried to pick them up, but they were dirty and squished. Edward started to cry. He

was afraid that he would get into trouble. He had spilled all of his berries, so he wouldn't get any pie! Other people tried to give him some of their berries, and tell him that they were not upset with him, but he still cried. Henry David Thoreau came over to see why Edward was crying. When he saw what had happened, he put his arm around Edward.

"Edward," he said. "If berries are to continue to grow, some had to be scattered to start new plants." Henry David Thoreau said that he thought that nature needed to have little children sometimes stumble and scatter the berries. "There will be a lot of berries right here someday, and we shall owe them all to you!" Henry David Thoreau said. Edward began to smile again.

AFFIRMATION: *Everyone is special.*

Trouble. Have they ever been in trouble for something that they did not do? What happened? Who helps you when you are in trouble? How do they help you? Have you ever helped anyone when they needed help? How? How did that feel?

THE LETTER **T** IN THE CHURCH

Trees. If there are there trees on the church property, what kind are they? How and who takes care of them?

Where and when are trees or shrubbery used in church? For example, is the church decorated for Christmas?

Talk about the need for trees, especially with the concerns about global warming.

Taste. Trying things. Have things that are common to the children and that represent different tastes, like sweet, sour, salty. Samples of items can be put into small sampler cups. Have children close their eyes and taste a little bit of an item, telling what type of taste it is, and whether or not they like it. If you have a chart, or someone keeping track of how children react to different tastes, there can be discussion after everyone has had an opportunity to taste,

regarding which items children liked the best and which ones the least. This can be done as part of snack time.

A-B-C

Animals: Tiger, turtle, turkey

Body (add to Body Picture): Teeth, toes, tongue

Calendar: Tuesday, Thursday, today, tomorrow

- Note the date of the session and any special events for the day, including birthdays.
- Note items beginning with that letter
- Note events between today and the next session.

CLOSING: Gather around the Special Place where the things related to the letter have been placed. "We give thanks for the Letter T. We have shared and learned about special people and animals and ourselves and our church. May we leave in love and peace. Next week we will meet again. Our letter will be ____ and our leader(s) will be _____." Make sure that people take home things that need to go.

VARIATIONS FOR OLDER CHILDREN

Toy check. Talk about toy safety, and check the toys in the Nursery and for younger children. There can be discussion about the types of toys that they like, and the characteristics of their favorite toys.

Do they know of any children who do not have toys? This can be extended to having a toy collection for a local homeless or domestic violence shelter, or organizations such as Toys for Tots.