

LET'S LEARN STEP UP AND SPEAK OUT!

Module 3 – Stand Up for Older Adults

What's the issue?



Older adults face a variety of challenges such as loneliness, isolation, financial instability, and decreased access to resources. The loss of family and friends and mental impairment can put older adults at risk for abuse and loss of rights.

We can help older adults by providing social stimulation, and we can act to make sure they have access to resources and are protected from injustice.

What do we already know?

Explore these questions to find out what the students already know and to share impressions. Take time to explore these questions over several meetings.

- Who are older adults that you know?
- Where do they live?
- What do they do?
- How do you feel when you talk to them?
- How do older adults behave?
- What have you noticed they are good at?
- What have you noticed is difficult for them?
- What kinds of things do you do to help older adults? Why?

Facts and Words to Know about Aging

Of the older adults who were living outside nursing homes or hospitals in 2016, nearly one third (12 million) lived alone.

In 1950, about 1 in 8 Americans were 65 or older. In 2019, about 1 in 6 Americans were 65 years or older. In 2050, it is expected that about 1 in 5 Americans will be 65 years or older. In other words, more and more of our society is made up of older adults.

Words to learn:

- Ageism
- Isolation
- Respect
- Sensitivity
- Elder Abuse

Experience what it is like to be an older adult:

Set up six stations. Ideally, have an adult at each station to encourage feedback. 1. Walk with beans in shoes (to simulate the discomfort of walking). 2. Put petroleum jelly on sunglasses and try to read (to simulate failing vision). 3. Put cotton balls in ears (to simulate deafness). 4. Walk with a walker while blindfolded (to experience the difficulty). 5. Push someone in a wheelchair (to experience the barriers). 6. Try to open a box or a medicine bottle while wearing rubber gloves with cotton in the fingertips (to simulate the clumsiness of arthritis).

First Foot Acts of Charity

Ideas for Charity

Contact a senior living facility or skilled nursing facility and ask how you can help.

Prepare songs, a skit, dance, or a magic show for the residents.

Game afternoon! Bring board games, a simple true or false trivia game, or bingo to play with seniors at your church.

Read to a senior.

Plan a simple holiday project to do with senior residents.

Follow up your visit with a greeting card.

Give your Grandma or Grandpa a call!

Second Foot Acts of Justice

Ideas for Justice

Become aware of obstacles for seniors to move about.

Contact the property manager or city council person to make suggestions for improving access for the elderly.

How are older adults portrayed in movies and shows? If you notice negative portrayals, write to the producer of the movie or show and let them know your opinion. Make some positive suggestions!

Does your community provide meals for older adults? Make posters to spread the word!

What are the 2 Feet of Love in Action?

When someone needs our help, we use both of our feet to be love in action. The **charity** step is to help with immediate needs (attention, food, medication), the **justice** step is to find the root of the problem and work to make change.

Resources on Aging

Institute on Aging:
www.ioaging.org

Your local Council on Aging

Your local Senior Center



What's next?

You can Dig Deeper or Lighten it Up!

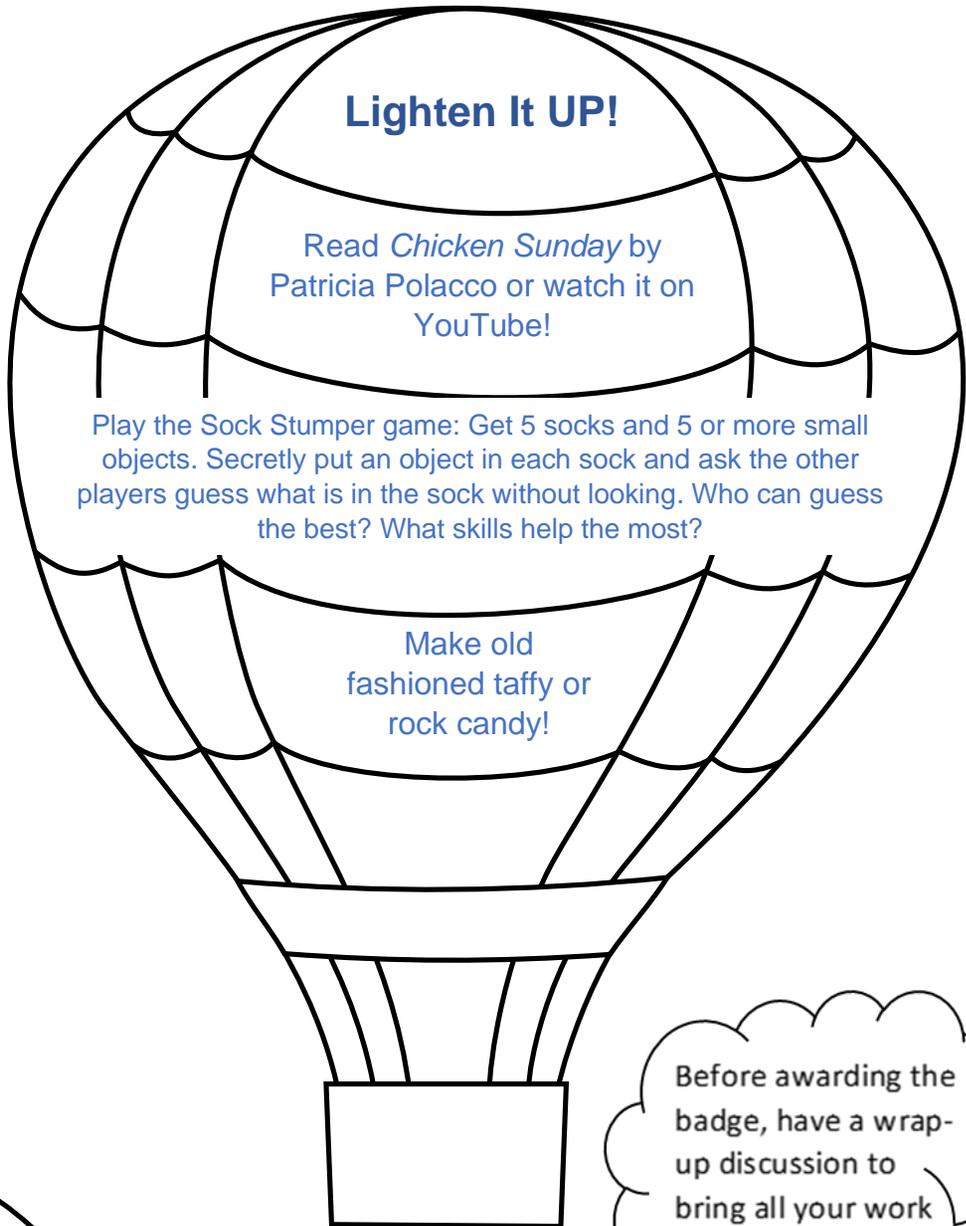


5 Faith Connections

Think of a Bible story or verse which goes with this issue.

Discuss the meaning of the GFS motto "Bear Ye One Another's Burdens"

What is different about a Christian's approach to social justice?



Lighten It UP!

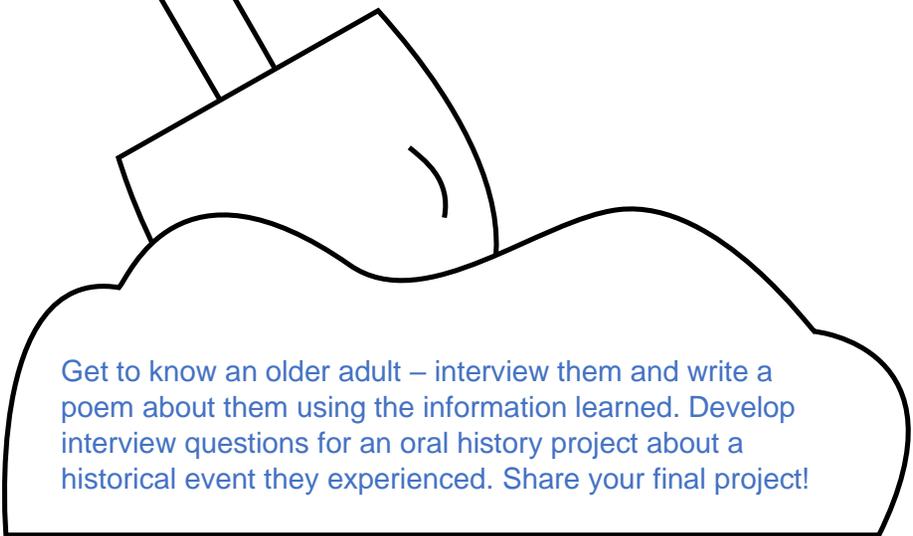
Read *Chicken Sunday* by Patricia Polacco or watch it on YouTube!

Play the Sock Stumper game: Get 5 socks and 5 or more small objects. Secretly put an object in each sock and ask the other players guess what is in the sock without looking. Who can guess the best? What skills help the most?

Make old fashioned taffy or rock candy!



Before awarding the badge, have a wrap-up discussion to bring all your work together!



Get to know an older adult – interview them and write a poem about them using the information learned. Develop interview questions for an oral history project about a historical event they experienced. Share your final project!

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