Yearlong Objectives
- I can recognize my own unique skills.
- I can express myself with words and art.
- I can work as part of an ensemble.

Essential Questions
- What is unique and special about the person I am?
- What do I bring to a group?

Lesson Objectives
- Define “comfortable” and “uncomfortable” and identify which they are feeling.
- Create a collage-based thought journal.

National Arts Standards
Note: For consistency, all arts standards listed are second grade standards. However, National Anchor Standards naturally build on each other. To adjust for your grade level, find the corresponding Anchor Standard for your grade.
- Make art or design with various materials and tools to explore personal interests, questions, and curiosity. (VA:Cr1.2.2a)
- Create works of art about events in home, school, or community life. (VA:Cn10.1.2a)
- Categorize images based on expressive properties. (VA:Re.7.2.2a)
- Contribute to group guided drama experiences (e.g., process drama, story drama, creative drama) and informally share with peers. (TH:Pr6.1.2.)

Materials needed
composition books (1 for each student), pre-cut images from magazines, examples, glue sticks, scissors, talking piece, emotions cards

Time needed
90 minutes

Vocabulary for this lesson
Social-Emotional: emotions, comfortable, uncomfortable
Visual Arts: unique, composition, collage
Theatre: ensemble

Warm-Up Phase (15 minutes)
Circle: “Would you rather” question: Would you rather clip a stranger’s toenails or eat a piece of pizza out of the garbage can?
Team-building game: Build a song, Level 1 (see Team-Building Games)
I Do/ We Do (20 minutes)
Explicitly Teach
- Class objectives. Since this is the first lesson, be sure to spend a little time making sure students know that you will be covering these objectives every time, and make sure they understand what the key vocabulary in the objectives mean ("unique," "ensemble," and "emotions.")
- “Comfortable” and “uncomfortable.” Sometimes we feel comfortable, which means that everything is going well and we feel OK. Sometimes we feel uncomfortable, which means we would like things to be different. What are some things that make you feel comfortable? Uncomfortable? Cite matching objective. Show emotion cards for each.
- Introduce norms: Everyone stays safe, respectful, and seen. It is important that students do not disappear under desks or out of the room, so the teacher should be able to see all students at all times.
- Explain that all people are “unique,” or their own person. Point out obvious things that are unique about each person.
- Explain what a collage is, and show examples of Romare Bearden collages (or other examples). Show how collages are made up of images and of colors.

Keep in Mind
- Go over norms for the art space. (Class may decide to make these norms themselves, or the teacher may create them. A possibility is, “Everyone remains safe, respectful, and seen.”)
- What should we do if two people want the same materials?
- What should the consequence be if we are running all around and being loud and distracting?
- Model exactly how to use materials (glue stick, tape, scissors, scraps).

You Do (55 minutes)
The project, step-by-step
- Select a blank notebook.
- Select a central image. It should be something you really like, and that speaks to the unique person you are.
- Select supporting images and complementary colored papers to cover the entire notebook.
- Trim images and arrange them the way you want them on your notebook.
- Glue everything down with a glue stick. Add details with markers if you so choose.

Extensions: Students can make their names by cutting collage shapes out of construction paper.
Closure: Return to circle and ask whether students are feeling comfortable or uncomfortable. Practice with the talking piece.
Optional Writing Prompt: What is something that makes you feel very comfortable?

Big Picture
We may use thought journals at the end of every class to reflect on activities and write about how we’re feeling. It’s important that these reflect exactly who we are. We are all very special people!

Adjustments for K-1
Warm-Up Phase
Shorten the build a song activity/ choose either the activity or the question. Do not attempt both.

I Do/ We Do
Shorten to just include objective about being very special. Do not go over emotions. Introduce the word “collage,” but do not dwell on it. Have students repeat objectives, and simplify them by saying, “This class will help you make art to show how you feel; show what is special about you; and work with a team!”

You Do
Work with pre-cut paper shapes so students just have to arrange and glue.