

Paula's "You Are Special!" **PUZZLE PROJECT TIPS!**

(from the "Puzzle" segment in RIGHT ROAD FOR KIDS!™ Episode 1!)

- 1) **MAKE OR PURCHASE A BLANK WHITE PUZZLE** → One company that currently makes a similar puzzle to the one we use in Right Road For Kids!™ Episode 1 is ROYLCO. The puzzles can be purchased on Roylco's website. The product is called "Puzzle Quilt Pieces" and the product number is 52022. At this writing, cost is approximately \$7.00 per package - well worth the purchase price. Each package comes with 32 pieces; each piece is approximately 4" x 4". If you are the creative sort, you can absolutely make your own plain white puzzle with enough pieces for each of the kids in your class! I suggest using foam board for sturdiness.
- 2) **MAKE A BLACK BACKGROUND** → For the second part of the project, I take out one of the pieces to show what it's like in the world when just one person doesn't feel special. For the strongest effect, it is very important that the background behind the puzzle is solid black. You will have to be somewhat creative and this can take a bit of time, but again, it is well worth the effort as it is such a powerful visual for kids (and adults!). While it can be a bit expensive, the easiest way to do this is to purchase a large piece of black foam board. (If your class is large, you may need two pieces.) A large piece of black poster board will do the trick, too. It is just a bit flimsy and you may want to mount it to a large white foam board. (Helpful hint: If your timing is just right, dollar stores sometimes have the foam board for \$1 per sheet - a huge savings over the cost at many other stores.)
- 3) **NUMBER THE PIECES AND THE BACKGROUND** → Since the puzzle starts out all white (before the kids decorate/design their pieces), it may take a LONG time to put back together if you don't number the pieces. Make sure the number you put on the back of each piece matches the location of where it will go back into the puzzle. (Helpful hint: When writing on the black background, use a light colored gel pen or white crayon. The numbers will be hard to see otherwise.)
- 4) **HAVE GEL PENS OR MARKERS AVAILABLE FOR THE KIDS** → Since the goal is to encourage the kids to include as much as they possibly can about themselves (on their relatively small puzzle piece), gel pens or thin-tip markers are suggested. For this particular project, crayons and wide-tipped markers can get a bit blotchy in fine print, colored pencils don't show up the best, and plain pencil is a little drab since the kids are aiming to truly show their "colorful" specialness.
- 5) **FOR HELPFUL HOW-TO PROJECT FLOW** → Review the "Puzzle" segment in Right Road For Kids!™ Episode 1: You Are Special!