



Disability Etiquette Lesson Plans

Provided by DBTAC Rocky Mountain ADA Center

Suggested Ages
Preschool

LESSON PLAN FRAMEWORK

Most early childhood educators would agree that young children learn best when they are actively engaged in meaningful, developmentally appropriate learning activities. In addition to these best practices, young children also excel when the classroom has a sense of community for all members (NCREL, 1997).

This lesson is designed to increase the sense of community, by exposing children to the concept of disability. The goal of the lesson is to show children that although people who have disabilities might have some qualities that are different, people truly have many, many more things in common. Following the initial direct instruction in this plan, there are particular learning activities that address gross motor skills, language arts, and arts and crafts/fine motor skills.

PRE-LESSON PREPARATION

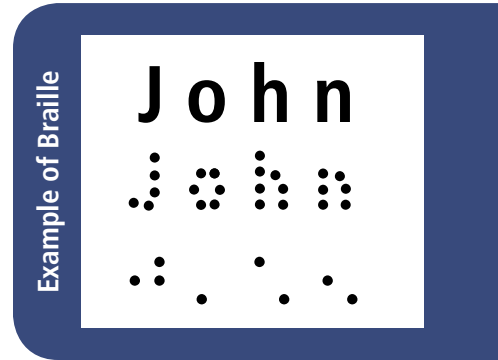
Teacher should prepare the pages for a class “big book” that will be developed in the Language Center. The “big book” is a big picture book version of a story, in this case use *Susan Laughs* as a basis for creating the book. Be sure to create one page for each student for the book.

Teacher should prepare students’ names on name strips in Braille. Write the students’ name in print, then dotted letters in print, then dot them using Braille. Braille alphabet cards can be downloaded from the National Braille Press at, <http://www.nbp.org/ic/nbp/braille/index.html>. Braille fonts can be downloaded at no cost from Braille Font at, <http://www.braillefont.com/>.

INITIAL INSTRUCTION

Materials needed: coloring sheets that model appropriate interactions with people with disabilities that can be downloaded at <http://www.adainformation.org/childcare>.

Lead a large-group discussion on each tip, one by one. As the teacher explains each tip, have students role-play/model the tip for the class. For example, pull a chair up into the circle, and have a student sit in it, simulating a



physical disability. Tell the class, “Suppose Sawyer uses a wheelchair to move around. What are some things that we would remember to do? What are some things that we should not do?” After the role-playing and modeling, the teacher can hand out the coloring sheets to the students.

This lesson is designed so that the initial instruction would occur with the entire class. The other three activities (gross motor skills, language arts, arts and crafts) could be done in centers, or with the large group.

GROSS MOTOR SKILLS

Materials needed: blindfolds, cotton balls, a child-sized wheelchair (or a regular small chair).

In this learning activity, children will play common games, but with a simulated disability.

1. The first game is Musical Chairs. Place cotton balls firmly in the students’ ears. Tell them to start when they hear the music, and find a chair when the music stops. The music should be at a reasonable level, so that it might be difficult for them to hear the stopping and starting clearly.
2. The second game is Ring Around the Rosy. Take cotton balls out, and blindfold children. Have them play Ring Around the Rosy. This might be a little easier than Musical Chairs, since the children hold hands. However, it should be sufficiently challenging to simulate visual impairments.
3. The third game is a bean bag toss. Have students stand at a certain point, and throw bean bags toward the targets. Students should then take turns playing the game while sitting in the chair.

After the games, debrief with the children:

- Which game was hardest to play?
- What could make Musical Chairs easier?
- What could make Ring Around the Rosy easier?
- Was it easier or harder to toss the bean bags if you were sitting in the chair?
- Do you think that children who can’t see or who can’t hear or can’t walk well can still play games like this? How?
- Do you think that all children like to play games together?

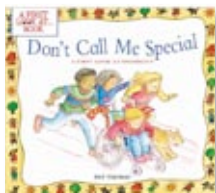
LANGUAGE ARTS

Materials needed: pre-made “big book” pages, crayons.

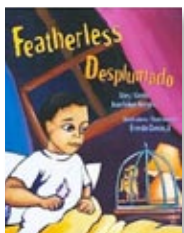
For this learning activity, the teacher will share the book *Susan Laughs* (see description below).

After reading the book, make a class “big book” with the students, using the scenarios from the book *Susan Laughs*, or other scenarios. For example, hold up the pre-made page for the big book that says “_____ laughs.” Ask the children, “Who in our class laughs?” All will raise their hand; select one child, and write their name in the blank. Model the writing for the class; say the letters as you write. Give the page to the student, and have them trace their name, and copy the phrase under where it is already written. They can illustrate their page for placement in the book. Do the same for all children/pages.

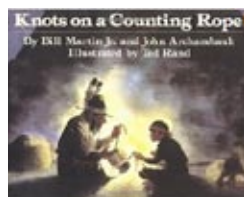
Reading List:



Don't Call Me Special: A First Look at Disability by Pat Thomas. Written by a psychotherapist, this full-color picture book explores questions about disability in a “kid-friendly” way. This book is intended for preschool through early elementary grades, and tells children what a disability is and how people learn to deal with them. (ISBN-13: 978-0764121180).



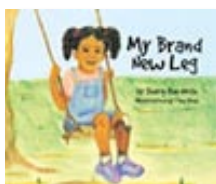
Featherless/Desplumado by Juan Felipe Herrera. This is a story of a boy who gets his wings. Although Tomasito’s spina bifida keeps him in a wheelchair, where he often feels as confined as his flightless and featherless pet bird, he discovers that he can feel free when he is on the soccer field. (ISBN-13: 9780892391950)



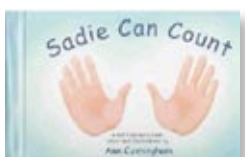
Knots on a Counting Rope by Bill Martin, Jr. and John Archambault. In this poignant story, the counting rope is a metaphor for the passage of time and for a boy’s emerging confidence in facing his blindness. (ISBN-13: 9780805054798)



Mama Zooms by Jane Cowen-Fletcher. A boy’s wonderful mama takes him zooming everywhere with her, because her wheelchair is a zooming machine. The author based Mama Zooms on the life of her sister, “a wheelchair mom (and a practicing veterinarian).” (ISBN-13: 9780590457750)



My Brand New Leg by Sharon Rae North. This book introduces children to amputation and prosthetics and teaches how “different” doesn’t mean limited. In the story, a young girl with a prosthetic leg shows a new friend all of the activities that she can still do with a prosthesis, such as running, riding a bike and hiking. (ISBN-13: 978-0974154404)



Sadie Can Count by Ann Cunningham. This multi-sensory, counting book (numbers 1-10) has text produced in both Braille and print. The illustrations are both tactile and printed in full color, making the book useable and enjoyed by both those who are blind and those who are sighted. (ISBN-13: 9780977005482)



Someone Special: Just Like You by Tricia Brown. This book is a non-fiction book, illustrated with photographs that show preschool-aged children with disabilities in their everyday life – playing and learning. It shows that children are definitely more alike than they are different. (ISBN-13: 978-0805042689).



Susan Laughs by Jeanne Willis and Tony Ross. This book features short rhyming phrases to tell things that Susan, the young red-haired girl, can do – common, everyday things with which all children can identify. The last illustration of the story shows Susan in a wheelchair, but by that time, young readers can see that Susan is just like them in so many ways. (ISBN-13: 978-0805065015).



Two Tracks in the Snow by Louella Bryant. This book is centered on Ari, a young boy who has spina bifida, and uses a monoski, has been skiing for years. He is able to help six year old Will, a new snowboarder, learn to manage the snowboard. They come down the mountain together making two tracks in the snow. (ISBN-13: 9780944727454)



Zoom! by Robert Munsch. This book, written by one of North America's best-selling children's authors, details the adventures of strong-willed and quick-thinking Lauretta. When Lauretta tries out a 92-speed, silver and gold, dirt-bike wheelchair, she gets a speeding ticket but also helps out her brother. (ISBN-13: 9780439187749)

ARTS AND CRAFTS / FINE MOTOR SKILLS

Ask students, "If you couldn't see, how could you read?" Explain that people who are blind use Braille, which is a raised "bumpy letter" system. Give students the pre-made name strips. Have them trace their name with their finger, then trace their name on the dotted letters with a crayon. Finally, give them Cheerios and glue. Have them glue Cheerios on the Braille dots to form their name.

REFERENCES

North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (1997). *Critical issue: Organizing for effective early childhood programs and practices*. Retrieved from <http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/students/earlycld/ea100.htm>.

NOTES

The DBTAC Rocky Mountain ADA Center (DBTAC) is operated by Meeting the Challenge, Inc. and makes information, training and technical assistance readily available to employers, people with disabilities, and other entities with rights and responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). DBTAC serves individuals and organizations within a six state region including Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming.

For more information, please visit www.adainformation.org, or contact your local ADA Center at (800) 949-4232 or adainfo@adainformation.org.