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### **Lessons:**

#### **Standing By or Standing Up**

**Description:** Have students draw conclusions about the impact of basing someone's rights on something they cannot control, and reflect upon the difficulties of standing up for what is right.

**Time Required:** 20 minutes

**Materials Needed:** Video of Speech by Soeren Palumbo: <http://bit.ly/2zGJAnj>

**Description:** Have students draw conclusions about the impact of basing someone's rights on something they cannot control, and reflect upon the difficulties of standing up for what is right.

### **Steps:**

1. Tell students they are going to watch a speech by Special Olympics Youth Leader and Notre Dame honor student Soeren Palumbo. The speech illustrates the consequences of treating someone differently based on something they cannot control.
2. After showing the speech, hold a class or small group discussion using the following questions as a guide:
  - a. Did you predict that the target of the teens' discrimination was Soeren's sister? If not, what was your reaction?
  - b. How would you describe the teens who were teasing Olivia?
    - i. You may want to introduce words like "intolerant," "discrimination," and "prejudiced" if the student's don't use them
  - c. Why does the use of the R-word demonstrated intolerance?
  - d. Is it just as bad to remain quiet when someone is calling someone the R-word as it is to use the term yourself?
  - e. How would your life be different if you were judged by just one element of your life, especially if it was one you could not control?
  - f. It is possible to be an innocent bystander? What the important lessons we can learn from Soeren's story?
3. Click [here](#) if you would like to receive a respect banner for the students to sign after the discussion is complete.

### **People First Language**

**Description:** A lesson to encourage students to be cognizant of their words, and to use "People First" language when referring to students with intellectual disabilities.

**Time Required:** 20-30 minutes

Materials Needed: [People First Hand-Out](#), [I am a Person PSA](#), pencil or pen, projector to show videos

Steps:

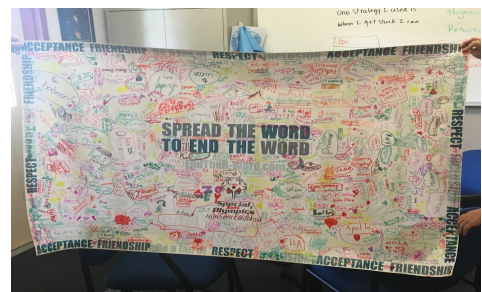
- 1) Write the phrase on the board “Sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me.”
- 2) Raise your hand if you believe that statement to be true. Raise your hand if you think it is false.
- 3) Show the Video “I am a person PSA”: <http://bit.ly/1Jx3pfa>
- 4) Have students take out a piece of paper (or discuss), and respond to these discussions:
  - a) Have you ever judged somebody based on appearance/ interests/ ability level?
  - b) Was it somebody you knew or someone you had never met?
  - c) Did this affect how you perceived that person? Did it prevent you from developing a potential friendship with that person?
  - d) If someone misjudged you based on one of your characteristics/interests how would that make you feel?
- 5) Discuss with class:
  - a) According to the Arc (a national advocacy organization for people with disabilities) People-First Language emphasizes the person, not the disability. By placing the person first, the disability is no longer the primary, defining characteristic of an individual, but one of several aspects of the whole person
  - b) People are people first; it is not our characteristics that define us
  - c) People with disabilities are often misjudged or defined by their disability which can be insensitive and hurtful.
  - d) By labeling people we devalue them as a person, thus changing our attitude toward that person and our perception of them.
  - e) By using “People First Language” we put the person before the disability which can change the way we see them.
- 6) Hand-out [People's First](#). Review responses, discuss, and answers any questions surrounding the answers
- 7) Click [here](#) if you would like to receive a respect banner for the students to sign after the discussion is complete.

## “Spread the Word to End the Word” Initiative

**Description:** Have students take part in a campaign that asks people to pledge to stop saying the R-word, as a starting point towards creating more accepting attitudes and communities for all people. We suggest using the videos below to front load the content around increasing awareness.

**Time:** 15-45 Minutes

**Materials needed:** Click [here](#) to register your class, and receive a banner from Special Olympics to have students sign take the pledge against using the R- word. This banner is large enough for the entire student body to sign.



## Steps:

1. Show one or more of the videos below to the class:

Special Olympics PSA: <http://bit.ly/2gy2qVe>

Mic News Piece: <http://bit.ly/2yJ3zDx>

Lowell High School (San Francisco) Best Buddies: <http://bit.ly/2yIZSNZ>

James Logan High School (Union City): <http://bit.ly/2g2PPcv>

Clovis North High School (Fresno): <http://bit.ly/2yErtA>

- 2) Class Discussion; some topics can include:

- a. The importance of being aware that words can be offensive and hurtful, even if it's in a joking manner
- b. Using the word "retard" in a derogatory manner is offensive because it demoralizes a group of people who may have different abilities than we do but deserve to be treated the same as anyone else
- c. Respectful and inclusive language is essential to the movement for the dignity and humanity of people with intellectual disabilities
- d. How students can change dialogue to uplift one another and use positive words, instead of negative ones

- 3) Have students taking the pledge against using offensive, hurtful language by signing the R Word Banner.

- 4) Have students take the online pledge promising to eliminate the derogatory use of the R-word. Follow the [link here](#)

Abilities Awareness Lessons: Lessons that help students understand the importance of recognizing and accepting every individual for their differences.

## Lessons:

### Understanding Disabilities

**Description:** Help students understand perceptions of disabilities and how they affect people's attitudes and beliefs.

**Time Required:** 20 Minutes

**Materials Needed:** A whiteboard or projector, a pen or pencil

### Steps:

1. As students enter the room, the "Do Now" is to complete the problems listed on the board. Tell them that they will have two minutes to complete the assignment.
  - a. Problems on board:
    - i. Translate the following Latin phrase into English: **aut viam inveniam aut faciam**. [Answer: Either I shall find a way or I will make on]
    - ii. Solve the following physics problem: A ball is launched at a 43-degree angle at a velocity of 35 m/s. What is the ball's horizontal velocity? [Answer: 23.86]
2. After a few minutes of trying, discreetly distribute answer sheets to some students but not the others. Once someone has offered the correct answer for each problem, ask:
  - a. How did the exercise make you feel?
  - b. Did you sincerely try to complete the challenge?
  - c. For those that did not get the answer sheets, did it increase your frustration when other groups got the answer and you didn't?
  - d. Tell students that these feelings will serve as a stringboard for the rest of the activity.
3. **Reflection:** After completing the activity, ask students to get out a sheet of paper and write the first thing that comes to mind when you say the phrase, "disability." Record students' answers on the board and have students draw conclusions about class responses. Discuss students' responses, asking questions such as:
  - a. Would they characterize most responses as positive or negative?
  - b. Did responses emphasize weaknesses or strengths of people with a disability?
  - c. How would they describe their existing perceptions of people with disabilities?
  - d. What is the impact to individuals, the community, and society as a whole when people are treated differently based on things they cannot control?
  - e. What happens when we focus on what people are able to do rather than their struggles?

- f. What can they do to shift their perspectives toward a strength-based view?

## Thinking Outside the Box

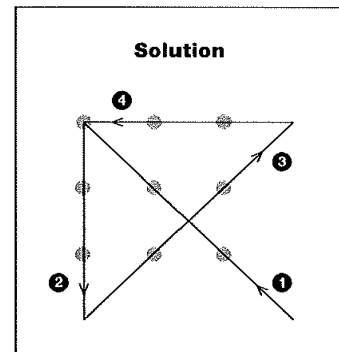
**Description:** Participants will experience the fact that we often subconsciously limit our perspectives and alternatives.

**Time Required:** 15-30 Minutes

**Materials:** ["Connect the Dots" Handouts](#), a pencil with an eraser for each participant, and a whiteboard or overhead projector.

### Steps:

- 1) Begin the activity by telling participants you'd like to challenge their thinking. Pass out copies of "Connect the Dots" handout and pencils.
- 2) Give participants 3-5 minutes to figure out the solution themselves. Whenever they are complete, have them turn their paper over.
- 3) After the time is over, have someone come to the board and share their answer. If no one volunteers, draw the correct solution for the group.
- 4) Discussion Questions:
  - a. Why is it that most of us did not think of going outside the boundaries to solve the problem?
  - b. To solve the problem, we had to get outside of our usual way of thinking – outside of the box we put ourselves in, and literally had to draw outside the lines.
  - c. This type of thinking is what is required of us when we interact with those different from us.
  - d. Drawing outside of the lines is difficult because we are so used to our own way of thinking and our own point of view that it is hard to see points of view.
  - e. To successfully interact with people from different backgrounds, abilities, and different cultures, we must learn to look at the world from many points of view.
  - f. It is important to think "outside of the box" in order to appreciate individuals for their differences, and the unique way every person sees the world.
- 5) Reflection:
  - a. Ask participants to share examples of situations when finding a good solution to a problem required thinking "outside of the box."



## **Unified Exhibition Game: How to organize a Unified Exhibition Game; this is where students play a competitive or noncompetitive activity during a physical education class, recess, and or lunch period**

**Description:** Host a Unified Exhibition Game at your school! Pick a sport, and bring together special education students, and general education students to play on the same team together. Unified games can happen during recess, lunch, physical education class or anytime during the school day. Suggested games are: basketball, modified softball, soccer, kickball.

**Example 1:** Building off of the Special Olympics Unified Soccer event. Have the students who participated in this event put on a exhibition game during lunch.

**Example 2:** A middle school will host a basketball game with the girls and boys basketball teams playing with special education students during a lunch period.

Please click [here](#) to register an activity and Special Olympics will coordinate equipment, drill books, and can provide any support leading up to the game.

Unified Exhibition Video Examples:

First ever Unified Exhibition game at Rocketship Elementary School: <http://bit.ly/2gwNAhV>

Unified Exhibition Game at Freedom High School: <http://bit.ly/2y0POMD>

## **Whole School Presentations**

Guest speakers from Special Olympics will require at a minimum 4 classrooms to participate. These presentation may not occur during Inclusion week depending on demand. Presentations will be scheduled throughout the school year.

## **Sign up for a Special Olympics Representative Speaker**

Description: Please click [here](#) to coordinate a representative from Special Olympics to come to your school and discuss topics that will educate, motivate, and activate students. Discussion topics include: What is Special Olympics? How can we increase acceptance of all differences? What can we do to motivate change?

## **Sign up for a Special Olympics Athlete Speaker**

Description: Please click [here](#) to coordinate having a Special Olympics athlete come and speak to your school. They will touch on their personal story, and open the floor up for a Q&A period where students can ask questions about their struggles, accomplishments, and any other relevant topics.

If you would like to show a video of an athlete's speech, you can do so here: [Candy's Speech](#)

## **Things to look for when selecting a Community Speaker**

Description: Do you know a community member who would like to speak? Here are some guidelines of things to look for in potential speakers that can complement the work being done throughout the week.

1. Are there any disabilities (cognitive or physical) that this person has, and would like to speak about?
2. Is this person impacted or in close relations with a person who has an intellectual disability?
3. Has this person had to overcome any personal hardships, or situations of adversity?
4. Stories of inclusion, acceptance and working together.