

## Overcoming Disabilities

Month: Apr.

Week #: 30

Day: a. Mon. Time: 30 min.

# Disabilities Charades

Life Tree Learning Systems ©

### Objectives/Aims

The students will: recognize some common disabilities and their causes.

### Materials

white board & marker; cane, walker, crutch, wheelchair if available

### Illustration

A guessing game... It sounds fun! I wonder if I'll be able to figure out what the disability is?

### Background

The term 'disability' means: a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity, for example, walking, seeing, thinking, speaking or hearing. People with disabilities are the nation's largest minority (54 million people), and the only minority group that any person can join at any time.

"Somebody that is child-like... Born with it... Learning doesn't come easy... I wonder what disability this is?"



"Somebody who has trouble breathing... Uses an inhaler... Born with it... I wonder what disabilities that is?"

Source information for activity: <http://www.theablecrew.org/interactive/different.htm>

**Note:** To simplify and make this concept more understandable for children, I have used the one term 'disability' to include all special needs, learning differences and challenges.

### Group Activity

1. Say, "Today we are going to play a game of Charades. This is a game in which students are going to either act out or tell you about a person, with some special differences. When they are done they are going to ask the audience to see if anybody can guess what their special difference is. If you think you know what it is before they are done, please don't blurt it out or you'll ruin it for everybody else. While we're playing this game, try to imagine what all of these different people have in common. Finally, during the play, the actors may say or do something that sounds or appears funny to us, but we're not going to laugh at them, because there are real people, like you and me, that have these special differences. And I know both you and I don't like it when other people laugh at us."

2. Play the game using the vignettes found in the 'Computer Generated' section. Remind the students periodically about laughing at the actors.

### Group Discussion Questions

- What did all of these people have in common?  
A: They all had disabilities.

### **Group Discussion Questions (continued)**

2. What are disabilities?

A: A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, for example, walking, seeing, thinking, speaking or hearing. The prefix, 'dis', means 'not', so a disability is when a person is 'not able' to do something.

3. What can cause a disability?

A: It can be a condition someone is born with or it could be caused by, an accident, a stroke, a war, disease, fire, old age, poisoning, or crime.

### **Variations/Extensions**

#### **Conclusion**

Say, "People with disabilities are, first and foremost, people. What makes them different is that they have a special challenge that they need to deal with every day of their lives. Like anybody, they want to be treated with kindness and respect. Like anybody, they want to be known for the content of their character and their accomplishments, not simply their disability. They don't need our pity, but they do need our understanding. In the next few days we will learn how to treat people with disabilities with respect and how to truly help them."

These vignettes can be cut into strips and given to the individual actors. Props such as crutches, wheelchairs etc. can be used if available.

#### Polio:

Walk in dragging your foot. Pretend to be very tired from moving across the floor. Say, “I have a special difference caused by a disease. You now can take a vaccine to prevent it. I got the disease as a child and now it’s hard for me to walk. I’m lucky because some people who got this disease, like President Franklin D. Roosevelt, could only get around in a wheel chair. Who can tell me the name of the disease that crippled me?”

#### Asthma:

Walk in gasping for breath. Pretend to take an inhaler out of your pocket and take a dose out of it. Say, “I just played soccer (gasp for air) and I can’t seem to catch my breath. It’s always been (gasp for air) this way for me since I’ve been a baby. It’s like my lungs and airways get really tight (gasp for air) and I can’t breath. I take medicine, and use this inhaler, (gasp for air) to help me. Who can guess what my special difference is?”

#### Dyslexia:

Walk in with a smile on your face, go to the white board and write, ‘Newe a naqpy bay!’ Say, “Can you read what I wrote? It really says, ‘Have a happy day!’ but when I go to read things, this is how the words look to me. This is why it is hard for me to learn to read and write. I have to work two or three times harder than a student with a regular brain. Walt Disney and Leonardo Da Vinci are both my heroes because they both had this same special difference, but they both were really smart people and did great things. Who can guess what my special difference is?”

#### Down’s Syndrome / Educably Mentally Retarded:

Walk in like a little child, with a big grin on your face. Say in too loud a voice, “Hi, I’m Billy and I’m ten years” Hold up nine fingers. “I’m in the first grade. Sometimes other kids are mean to me saying I’m slow and stupid.” Pick your nose. “Once an older boy told me to go lay in the street. I did. My mommy says that I’m sp-e-ccial and I’ve always been this way. What do you think makes me different?”

#### Alzheimer’s Disease:

Walk in slowly, bent over; talk with a shaky voice. Say, “Hi, I’m Mildred and I’m seventy...” Mutter to yourself. “Is it seventy-three or seventy-four? I can’t remember... Anyway, what was I saying? Oh yes, hi, my name is Mildred. I have one, no two grand kids and their names are...” Pause and scratch your head. “Darned if I can remember. Dang disease.” Look around bewildered. “Where am I anyway? So what’s this special difference that I have?”

**Overcoming Disabilities: Disabilities Charades**

**“Somebody that is  
child-like... Born  
with it... Learning  
doesn’t come  
easy... I wonder  
what disability this  
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**“Somebody who  
has trouble  
breathing... Uses  
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**A guessing game... It sounds fun!  
I wonder if I’ll be able to figure out what the disability is?**

# Overcoming Disabilities

## Objectives/Aims

By the end of this unit, your child will recognize some common disabilities and their causes, gain empathy for those with a disability, learn how to help a person with a disability, learn that viewing disabilities as a challenge and altering their attitude can make their life happy and constructive.

## Background Information for Parents:

The term 'disability' refers to a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity (for example, walking, seeing, thinking, speaking or hearing). People with disabilities are the nation's largest minority (54 million people), and the only minority group that any person can join at any time.

People with disabilities want to be known as people first and foremost, and not known for their disability. In other words, they want to be known for the content of their character and not for the body that houses it.

"Somebody that is child-like... Born with it... Learning doesn't come easy... I wonder what disability this is?"



"Somebody who has trouble breathing... Uses an inhaler... Born with it... I wonder what disabilities that is?"

## Illustration

A guessing game... It sounds fun! I wonder if I'll be able to figure out what the disability is?

## Day 1

1. Answer this riddle: What large group of people (54 million people) can you or I join at any moment, no matter if you're a boy or girl, young or old, rich or poor?

2. Look at the illustration above and then play the Disabilities Charades Game with your parents, bothers and sisters, or friends. Take turns acting out people with various disabilities. After each charade, the audience tries to guess what the disability is. (Please remember that while this is a game, and people will laugh at the various dramatic antics, we would never laugh at someone with an actual disability. That would be disrespectful and hurtful to that person.) After each charade is successfully guessed, discuss what can cause this kind of disability and how people with this disability deal with it.

P.I. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Would you rather be known as (insert your own name in the blank):

a) Disabled \_\_\_\_\_ who can't do this or that.

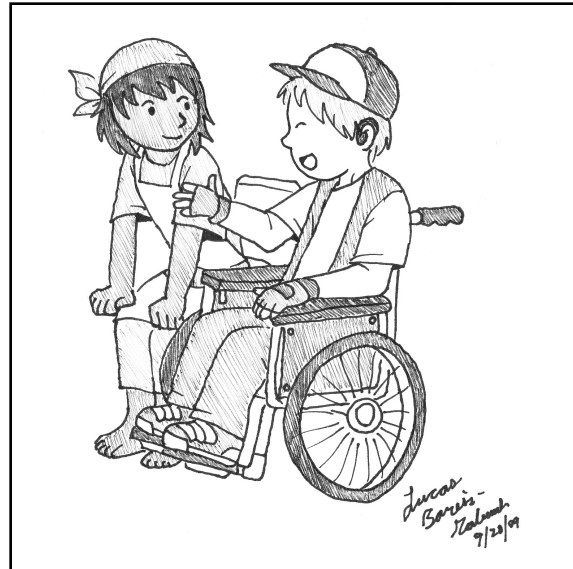
b) \_\_\_\_\_, who is a smart and capable person, but happens to have a disability.

Circle the letter (a or b) of the one you'd like to be known as.

### Background Information for Parents:

Learning how to overcome disabilities is not always the easiest thing to do. People with disabilities can easily feel sad and discouraged. They can feel sorry for themselves and give up on themselves and life. And yet, there are many people with disabilities who are happy and have done great things with their lives.

Oprah Winfrey said, "Challenges are gifts that force us to find a new center of gravity. Don't fight them. Just find a new way to stand." Disabilities are challenges that force us into a new life view, a new way of being in the world. If we accept these disabilities as a gift instead of a curse, we can create a world where we are happy and can do constructive things.



### Day 2

1. Name or research one person with a disability that you admire. List four things that you admire about them.

Person: \_\_\_\_\_

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_

### Day 3)

1. If you or I were disabled, how would we want to be treated if we were/had:

Blind? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Deaf? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Dyslexic? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

ADHD/ADD? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Down's Syndrome? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_