

TEACHABLE BOOKS

Student Well-Being: Ableism, Equity, Respect

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GRADE LEVEL: Primary (K-3)

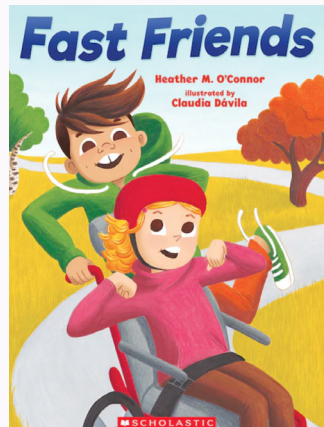
THEME: Student Well-Being

SUB-THEMES: Ableism, Equity, Respect

LEARNING FOCUS

People are similar and different. Sometimes because of one's differences, people may be treated unfairly. Ableism is when a person who has a disability is treated unfairly. They may be treated unfairly by people's behaviours or by not being able to access spaces. The learning focus of this lesson is for students to think about and recognize similarities and differences, learn about ableism and consider how they can make their community more fair for all.

FEATURED BOOK



Fast Friends by Heather M. O'Connor, illustrated by Claudia Dávila (Scholastic Canada, 2020)

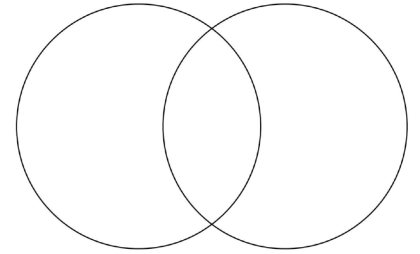


LEARNING EXPERIENCE

MINDS ON PROVOCATION

Picture Walk

Start the lesson by having a conversation with students about the meaning of same and different. Then model comparing objects to build relevance. Example: Pencil and eraser (point out attributes of items, such as both are tools used for writing but do different things). Next, prompt students to see and consider the similarities and differences between the two main characters in *Fast Friends* by showing the cover and then doing a picture walk of the book. Chart student responses on a Venn diagram.



Venn diagram

READ, PLAN, AND PRACTICE

After the initial provocation and introduction read the featured book aloud to the class. Stop reading at appropriate points to draw the students' attention to key ideas by posing probing questions and encouraging discussion.

During Reading:

What are some of the similar interests that Tyson and Suze share? (They seem to like the same books and maybe race cars.)

What are some of the differences between Tyson and Suze? (Suze uses a wheelchair, Tyson can be impatient.)

In the picture of Tyson and Suze at the park in their community, Suze is on a swing with her wheelchair. This swing is wheelchair accessible and designed so that all kids with different abilities can have fun. Is our school and local community accessible for all? (Accessible means it can be used fairly by all.)

After Reading:

How are Tyson and Suze good friends to each other?

Some people think they have to be extra gentle with Suze. Do you think this is because of incorrect/incomplete ideas or stereotypes they may have about people who use wheelchairs?

Why do you think they think this? What are some of the actions they take that show this?

This story shows us how it is important to do things *with* people and not *for* them. Sometimes people think that things have to be done for people with disabilities but this book shows us the importance of being a good teammate and respecting all people. Where in the story do we see people doing activities *with* Suze?

MAKE, TINKER, AND MODIFY

Students can be provided with the following choices to deepen their understanding on the key ideas. They can choose an activity based on their interests and engagement abilities.

Building Accessible Communities: STEAM Design Challenge

In the story we get to see a picture of a park with an accessible swing for children who use wheelchairs. It is important that all areas in our communities are accessible for people of all abilities, because this is one of the ways we can be respectful community members. Take a look at your school building or an area in your local community and think if it is accessible for all people. Is there a ramp, an elevator, accessible swings? Can you plan, design and build an accessible community area or a structure that would make the space inclusive?

Coding at Recess

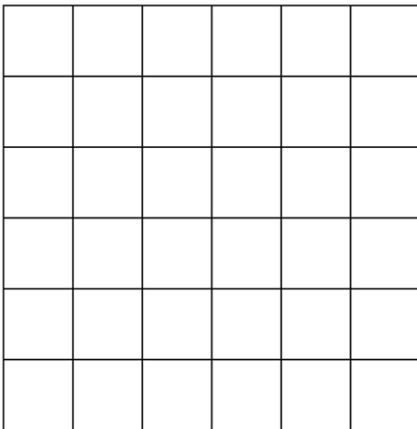
Tyson and Suze love speed! Can you start at their classroom and code them around the playground at recess? Who will they see? Who will they pass?

Unplugged Coding Instructions: Print out or draw the different characters and areas during recess (examples: basketball court, skipping ropes, hopscotch). These will be game pieces that can be put on a Butterfly clip and placed around a coding grid made with bristol board or construction paper. The goal will be for students to use positional language, code and move Tyson and Suze around the grid.

Plugged Coding Instructions: The same instructions as above and used with a robot.

Materials:

- Game pieces on a Butterfly clip
- Coding grid
- Coding arrows
- Plugged Coding: robots such as Bee-Bot or Dash



Coding grid

Advocate and Write

It is important that our communities are accessible for all people. Suze looked so happy on the swing in the park. Sometimes communities and the different areas within them are not accessible for all people. But we can all work together to make things better. One of the ways to make a change is to write a letter and raise awareness. This is called advocating to make things better and more fair. Think about your school or a space in your local community. Is it accessible for all kids? What changes can be taken to make the area a nice and accessible space for all kids? Write a letter to a city councillor, your school principal or school trustee to raise awareness about what actions you think need to be taken to ensure accessibility for all children.

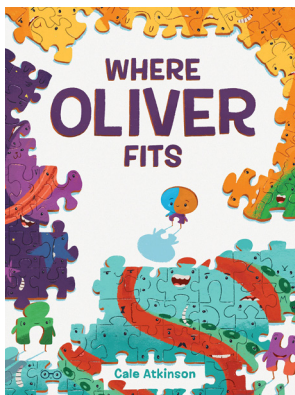
REFLECT AND CONNECT

The teacher can support and expand students' thinking by asking them to reflect and connect with the following questions:

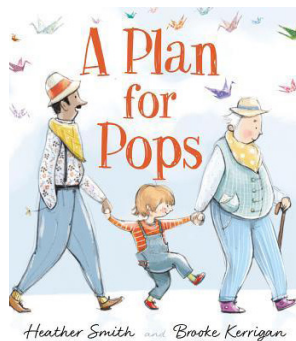
- Why is it important to create spaces that are physically accessible for all types of people?
- What are some actions that can be taken to ensure accessibility for people with different types of disabilities such as loss of sight and hearing?
- How does learning about our differences help us create a more fair and understanding classroom, community and world?



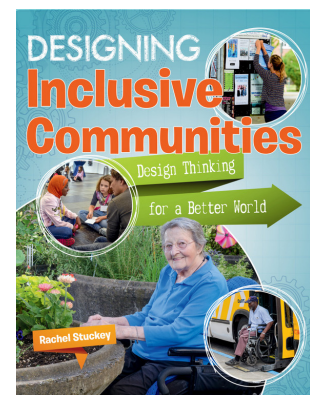
ADDITIONAL CANADIAN BOOKS AND BOOK LISTS TO SUPPORT THESE SUB-THEMES



Where Oliver Fits by Cale Atkinson
(Tundra Books, 2017)



A Plan for Pops by Heather Smith,
illustrated by Brooke Kerrigan
(Orca Book Publishers, 2019)



*Designing Inclusive Communities:
Design Thinking for a Better World*
by Rachel Stuckey (Crabtree
Publishing Company, 2018)

BOOK LISTS

- [Children's Books on Inclusion](#) – This is a list of book recommendations from the Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW) focused on disability and inclusion, including titles in English and French.
- [List of Disability-Themed Books for Kids and Teens](#) – This list from the Canadian Children's Book Centre focuses on disability, representation and inclusion.

ADAPTATIONS FOR THIS LESSON

To extend learning to the school community consider matching a K-3 class with a junior class as reading/study buddies.

MORE RESOURCES

[Children with disabilities aren't seeing themselves in the books they read, exclusive Star survey finds](#) (Toronto Star article) – This is a great article that will support teachers in building their background knowledge about the issues discussed in this lesson. It focuses on thinking critically about who is represented in children's literature and reinforces that children with disabilities seldom see themselves positively and authentically represented.