

## Different Ways of Living Unit

### Benefits:

- Leads to greater acceptance in an inclusive classroom.
- Develops problem solving skills.
- Develops compassion.
- Promotes consideration of different perspectives.

### Format for Lesson Plans Related to Disability Awareness: Experiencing Special Needs

- Each day focus on one disability (physically handicapped, visually impaired, deaf, etc.).

The first day:

1. Explain the purpose (see benefits above).
2. Clarify procedures: Students who are playing the role of an individual who is handicapped will be required to participate in as many of the school activities as possible. It will be up to that person to ask for assistance. Other students should not provide assistance unless it's requested. The teacher will leave it up to the student to solve problems. At all times, students should follow safety rules explained and demonstrated by the teacher each morning.
3. Set their focus to pay attention to their thoughts, feelings, and reactions (which will be shared at the end of the day).
4. Invite student volunteers to experience what it's like to have that disability. Choose volunteers who will be handicapped for half of the day (some in the morning, and others in the afternoon).
5. Explain and demonstrate safety rules.
6. End the day by providing time for students to share their reactions. List them on a chart.



The second day:

1. Have students write in their journals what they learned from the previous day.
2. Introduce the next disability, explain safety rules, and select volunteers.
3. End the day by providing time for students to share their reactions. List them on a chart.

Follow the same steps for the remainder of the week. On the last day, allow time to summarize what students learned (verbally as a group and then in writing individually)

Materials Needed:

- Journal (structured with prompts)
- Books related to each disability
- Optional: guest speakers who work with those who are disabled, or who live with a disability, additional information students can add to their journal/unit packets (service animals, aids and appliances for the blind, poetry written by individuals who are disabled, etc.)