

**SEL and Social Justice Curriculum****Grade: 4****Understanding Ability****Unit Description:**

This unit is designed to help students identify similarities and differences between them and others in the world. They will learn: how a growth mindset allows us to learn and take risks, grit gives us the opportunity to persevere through challenges, there are people who learn, communicate and move in different ways, differences and similarities exist between people of varying abilities. All of this work is part of a spiral curriculum that is designed to create more aware and active citizens and help address our districts' definition of social justice.

**[Bend I: Growth Mindset](#)****[Bend II: Grit](#)****[Bend III: Understanding Disabilities](#)****[Bend IV: Differences Between Us](#)****[Bend V: Similarities Amongst Us](#)****Social Justice Definition for Florham Park School District**

Social justice involves a set of principles that establish courses of action needed to address structural and systemic forms of oppression and segregation. Social justice guarantees fundamental human rights and the social inclusion and participation of every citizen. It also ensures every person will be provided with access to equitable economic, educational, healthcare, and political opportunities. A socially just curriculum addresses historically rooted and institutionally sanctioned stratification, particularly for socially constructed groups that include race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, immigration status, language, and ability.

Social justice does not manifest in a singular fashion, nor is it achieved through a specific means of instruction. We see social justice as a means to be aware of and support equality and equity. Our desire is to teach students about individual and societal actions which have created historic and systemic prejudices and discriminations that have impacted community, state and national concepts of equality, freedom, and democracy.

Social justice can and, often does, progress from awareness to civic action. In educational settings, schools must prepare students for the different phases of social justice to ensure that America becomes/remains a democracy based on the principles that all people are created equal. Schools should provide equal access to knowledge and schools should operate free of any constraints to ensure that all persons have the best opportunities to succeed. Schools should prepare students to accept their roles as citizens in a participatory society. In our setting, this means engaging in socially just work through critical examination of the self, others, institutions, and events to find patterns of inequality, bigotry, and discrimination. It also is exploring possible solutions to the problems identified and building a society in which individuals have equal

access to resources and receive equitable treatment regardless of their race, gender, religion, sexuality, income level, language, immigration status, or disability.

## NJ Student Learning Standards

### Social Justice Standards:

Diversity 6	DI.3-5.6	I like knowing people who are like me and different from me, and I treat each person with respect.
Diversity 7	DI.3-5.7	I have accurate, respectful words to describe how I am similar to and different from people who share my identities and those who have other identities.
Diversity 8	DI.3-5.8	I want to know more about other people's lives and experiences, and I know how to ask questions respectfully and listen carefully and non-judgmentally.
Diversity 9	DI.3-5.9	I feel connected to other people and know how to talk, work and play with others even when we are different or when we disagree.
Justice 12	JU.3-5.12	I know when people are treated unfairly, and I can give examples of prejudice words, pictures and rules.
Justice 13	JU.3-5.13	I know that words, behaviors, rules and laws that treat people unfairly based on their group identities cause real harm.
Justice 14	JU.3-5.14	I know that life is easier for some people and harder for others based on who they are and where they were born.
Justice 15	JU.3-5.15	I know about the actions of people and groups who have worked throughout history to bring more justice and fairness to the world.
Action 16	AC.3-5.16	I pay attention to how people (including myself) are treated, and I try to treat others how I like to be treated.
Action 20	AC.3-5.20	I will work with my friends and family to make our school and community fair for everyone, and we will work hard and cooperate in order to achieve our goals.

### Enduring Understandings/Goals

Students will understand that...

- Growth mindset allows us to learn new things and take risks
- Grit allows us to make mistakes and keep learning.

### Essential Questions

- What is a growth mindset?
- What is grit?

### Evidence of Learning (Assessments)

#### Formative Assessments:

### Accommodations and Modifications

#### Special Education:

- [Curricular Modifications and Guidance for Students Educated in Special Class Settings](#)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Book club talks</li> <li>• Student reflections</li> <li>• Conferences and small groups</li> </ul>
<p><b>Summative Assessments:</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action Research Projects</li> <li>• Reflections</li> </ul>
<p><b>Benchmark Assessments:</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Nonsense Words</i></li> <li>• <a href="#">Teachers College Running Records</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Letter Sound ID</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">High Frequency Word Assessment</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Alternative Assessments:</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• F &amp; P Running Records</li> <li>• Scholastic Running Records</li> <li>• BeBop Books for running records</li> <li>• G &amp; T Assessments: Sages-2 Screening Assessment for Gifted Elementary: Mathematics/Science Language Arts/Social Studies</li> <li>• Reasoning</li> <li>• Yopp-Singer test of Phoneme Segmentation</li> <li>• Sentence-Writing Grade Placement Test</li> <li>• Linguistics Phonemic Awareness Screener</li> <li>• Linguistics Decoding Pre/Post Test</li> <li>• Dyslexia Screener</li> <li>• PRIM checklist</li> <li>• <i>LLI; Test Preparation Lesson Framework F&amp;P levels</i></li> </ul>

**Core Instructional and Supplemental Materials**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Subgroup Accommodations and Modifications</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Differentiation for All Students (Special Needs, ESL, Gifted Learners, &amp; Mainstream Learners)</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Differentiation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Preview content and concepts</i></li> <li>• <i>Behavior management plan</i></li> <li>• <i>Highlight text</i></li> <li>• <i>Small group setting</i></li> </ul> <p><b>High-Prep Differentiation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Alternative formative and summative assessments</i></li> <li>• <i>Guided Reading</i></li> <li>• <i>Personal agendas</i></li> <li>• <i>Project-based learning</i></li> <li>• <i>Tiered activities/assignments</i></li> <li>• <i>Varying organizers for instructions</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Low-Prep Differentiation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Clubbing activities</i></li> <li>• <i>Exploration by interest</i></li> <li>• <i>Flexible groupings</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>English Language Learners:</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Unit 1: Curriculum for ELL</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">ESL K-2</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Subgroup Accommodations and Modifications</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Differentiation for All Students (Special Needs, ESL, Gifted Learners, &amp; Mainstream Learners)</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Students at Risk for Failure:</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Subgroup Accommodations and Modifications</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Differentiation for All Students (Special Needs, ESL, Gifted Learners, &amp; Mainstream Learners)</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Gifted and Talented</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Subgroup Accommodations and Modifications</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Differentiation for All Students (Special Needs, ESL, Gifted Learners, &amp; Mainstream Learners)</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Students with 504 Plans</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Subgroup Accommodations and Modification</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Differentiation for All Students (Special Needs, ESL, Gifted Learners, &amp; Mainstream Learners)</a></li> </ul>

**Core Instructional, Supplemental, Instructional, and Intervention**

## Professional Resources:

### Core Professional Resources:

- Tolerance.org
- Florham Park District Curriculum
- Edutopia.org

### Supplemental Professional Resources:

- *Icivics*

## Resources

### Core Instructional Resources:

#### BOOKS

- The Deaf Musicians by Christie Seeger
- A Friend for Henry by Jenn Bailey
- The Doctor with an Eye for Eyes by Julia Finley Mosca
- Moses Goes to a Concert by Isaac Milman
- The Black Book of Colors by Menena Cottin
- Just Ask! Be Different, Be Brave, Be You by Sonia Sotomayor & Rafael Lopez
- Thank You, Mr. Falker by Patricia Polacco
- Mama Zooms by Jane Cowen-Fletcher
- Keep Your Ear on the Ball by Genevieve Petrillo
- Emmanuel's Dream by Laurie Thompson
- The Amazing Erik by Mike Huber
- Benny Doesn't Like to Be Hugged by Zetta Elliot
- The Girl Who Thought in Pictures: The Story of Temple Grandin by Julia Finley Mosca
- *Darlene*, by Eloise Greenfield
- *Don't Call Me Special*, by Pat Thomas
- *Susan Laughs*, by Jeanne Willis
- *Featherless*, by Juan Felipe Herrera
- *Rolling Along: The Story of Taylor and His Wheelchair*, by Jamee Heelan
- The Dot by Peter Reynolds

#### VIDEOS

##### Experiences with Autism

- [Carly Fleischmann](#)
- [Temple Grandin](#)
- [Ethan Lisi](#)

##### Deafness

- [Kids Meet a Deaf Person](#)
- [Learn School Signs](#)

##### Growth Mindset & Grit

- [Carson - Ted Talk](#)
- [Grit video](#)
- [Famous Failures video](#)
- [Perseverance short](#)

### Supplemental Resources:

- Sesame Street
- [The Best Children's Books](#)
- [Social Justice Books](#)

	<p><b>Intervention Resources:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leveled Literacy Intervention Texts</li> <li>• Six Minute Solutions</li> <li>• Fountas and Pinell Guided Reading</li> <li>• Fountas and Pinell Shared Reading</li> </ul>	
<b>Interdisciplinary Connections</b>	<b>Integration of Technology through NJSLs</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correlates to routines unit in math, rules and community units in social studies Identify classroom routines in other subject areas: math, science, and social studies.</li> <li>• In Social Studies discuss routines in the community</li> <li>• Understand what it means to “read close” in social studies, science, and foreign language.</li> <li>• Offer short, nonfiction picture books and nonfiction articles on science, social studies, and foreign language related activities to encourage building background knowledge and independent reading about topics of interest to students.</li> <li>• Encourage students to respond to texts in their specific subject area notebooks as they reflect on what they have been reading.</li> <li>• Highlight texts, themes, and reflections that connect to themes related to the Holocaust; i.e. power, bullying, empathy, and social activism.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a word study word sort in Inspiration.</li> <li>• Listen to books on CDs, tapes, videos or podcasts if available.</li> <li>• Listen to books on websites (pbskids.org/lions/index.html, storylineonline.net, storyit.com, Elementary Connections Page)</li> <li>• Use document camera or overhead projector for shared reading of texts.</li> </ul> <p>Ongoing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen to books on CDs, tapes, videos or podcasts if available.</li> <li>• Listen to books on websites (pbskids.org/lions/index.html, storylineonline.net, storyit.com, Elementary Connections Page)</li> <li>• Use document camera or overhead projector for shared reading of texts.</li> </ul> <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use Microsoft Word, Inspiration, or Smart Board Notebook software to write the words from their word sorts.</li> <li>• Use Inspiration to create a double timeline looking at plot events and character motivation.</li> </ul>	
<b>Integration of 21st Century Themes and Skills</b>	<b>Media Literacy Integration</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial, Economic, Business, and Entrepreneurial Literacy</li> <li>• Civic Literacy</li> <li>• Health Literacy</li> <li>• Social Justice Literacy</li> <li>• Creativity and Innovation</li> <li>• Critical Thinking and Problem Solving Communication and Collaboration Information Literacy</li> <li>• Media Literacy</li> <li>• Life and Career Skills</li> <li>• RazKids</li> <li>• Use Screencastify to record student reading, partner feedback, and/or student goal</li> <li>• <a href="#">Digital Story Books</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Epic Digital Storybook</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Brinpop Jr.</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask students to look for specific things when they view videos or read print material, and then ask questions about those items</li> <li>• Build on the intuitive knowledge students have gained from media about the story and character</li> <li>• Clarify the distinction between fiction and nonfiction in different types of media reporting on the same topic</li> <li>• Use print materials to practice reading and comprehension skills</li> </ul>	
<b>Career Education</b>	<b>Global Perspective</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">New Jersey Educational Field Trip</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Connect With Rick Riordan</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Hispanic-Latino Heritage Month</li> <li>• National Disability Employment Awareness Month</li> </ul>	



*Session 3: Read Aloud -  
The Dot*

**Independent practice:**

Have students complete [“Imagine if” worksheets](#) and share

**Connection:** Introduce the book *The Dot* by Peter Reynolds Ask the class - How do you feel when you start/try something new? How do you feel if the new thing you are trying is difficult? How many of you like art/ to draw but don't think you are very good?

TP: Today I want to read you a story and I want you to think about if the character has a fixed or growth mindset.

Read *The Dot* by Peter Reynolds [The Dot - Peter Reynolds](#)

Discussion: *The Dot*, utilize pages 1 & 2 for discussion [Dot Discussion](#)

Everywhere you look, you can find examples of others either quitting or overcoming their challenges as we just did in *The Dot*.

Class discussion:

- Have you noticed a time you had a growth mindset in the last few days? Did you feel your brain growing?
- What about a time you felt stuck?
- Is there anything you learned today that you will apply when you feel stuck next time?

Independent Practice:

- [Dot growth mindset activities](#) - students will write a letter to another student in the class about a time when something was difficult for them, but they used a growth mindset strategy to persist. Then exchange letters!

*Session 4: Growth Mindset  
in Our Class and School*

**Connection:** How can we apply growth mindset in school? What Does it look like?

Today I want to teach you that we can create a growth mindset in our classroom and school.

Now that students have a better understanding of growth mindset- Ask students to think about/draw about/discuss how growth mindset LOOKS, FEELS, and SOUNDS in school

What does growth mindset look like?

Ex: Growing from challenges, trying new things, having a positive outlook/attitude





(November-January)	
<p><i>Session 1: How Our Brains Work: What is Disability?</i></p>	<p><b>Connection:</b> Begin the lesson by posing the question, “Have you ever seen a person that moves or speaks differently than you?” Have students turn and talk about their responses and share out examples (speaking different languages, using a wheelchair to move, etc.).</p> <p><b>Mini Lesson: Today I want to teach you that there are different types of people in our families, our classrooms, our schools and our communities. Sometimes people move, speak and learn in different ways. Some people may have a disability, which means their brains and bodies work in different ways.</b></p> <p>Show the class the <a href="#">How Your Brain Works</a> video. Before beginning the video, tell students to jot notes as they watch to keep track of jobs the brain does or things the brain helps us to do. Students will quickly find out that the brain controls everything in our bodies. Explain that even though we all have a brain, brains can sometimes work differently from one another. One person’s brain may allow them to be a musical learner, while another person’s brain might help them learn through pictures. At times, when we talk about differences in our brains doctor’s will call them “disabilities’ ’ because they affect how a person is able to live their life.</p> <p><b>Small Group/Asynchronous Learning:</b> Independently, ask students to generate a list of any questions they have about disabilities. After students have generated their lists, the teacher will compile a class list of all appropriate questions and see if we can find answers to them by the end of the school year.</p>
<p><i>Session 2: Thinking In Pictures: Autism</i></p>	<p><b>Connection:</b> Remind students how you can’t always tell certain aspects of a person’s identity or personality just by looking at them. Tell a story of learning about students’ likes and dislikes throughout the year to highlight the importance of getting to know someone on the inside in order to understand them.</p> <p><b>Mini Lesson: Today I want to teach you that some people have disabilities that you can’t see from the outside. A person who has a disability that you can’t see may think and learn in different ways.</b></p> <p>Talk to students about how some people have disabilities you can’t see right away. People who have these types of disabilities have brains that work in different ways. That doesn’t make them good/bad or right/wrong, they’re just different. Tell students that someone with autism might think in pictures, which allows them to remember many things and have different strengths in life. You may also want to explain how autism is like a spectrum, which means it affects different people in different ways.</p> <p><b>Small Group/Asynchronous Learning:</b> Small groups of students will be given different videos of people with autism explaining their experience of their disability (see above list for suggestions). Students will create a portrait of that person (including an image and characteristics of their identity/disability). Groups will share their portraits with one another and discuss similarities and differences. Circulate the room and remind students that autism is a spectrum and affects different people in different ways.</p>

*Session 3: Talking with  
Your Hands: Deafness*

**Connection:** Remind students that some people have disabilities that you cannot see, while others have disabilities that you can notice from looking at them. Challenge students to think about how each of those categories are treated and share their thoughts with a partner.

**Mini Lesson: Today I want to teach you that sometimes people have disabilities you can see from the outside. A person who has a disability that you can see may move or communicate in different ways.**

Explain how a person can be born deaf or become deaf due to an illness. Even when people are deaf, they can have a rich life that makes them part of a new community, the deaf community. There are schools and universities for deaf students and also ways we can accommodate people with hearing impairments in schools like ours. Explain to students how deafness includes people with no hearing as well as people with limited or impaired hearing. Tell kids that most people who are deaf communicate using American Sign Language.

**Small Group/Asynchronous Learning:** As a class, watch the “[Learn School Signs](#)” video together and attempt the ASL phrases and words. After watching the video, ask students to share their thoughts about the level of difficulty and what feelings they have about the idea of having to learn a new language to communicate.

*Session 4: Reading With  
Your Fingers: Blindness*

**Connection:** Describe a familiar object without using any visual details. For example, describe a book by saying, “This object is a rectangle with a smooth front and back, a thin middle with rough edges.” and see if the students can guess what the object is. Talk about how it would feel to navigate the world without being able to see.

**Mini Lesson: Today I want to remind you that sometimes people have disabilities you can see from the outside. A person who has a disability that you can see may move or communicate in different ways.**

A person who is blind has an impairment in their vision that makes it difficult or entirely impossible to see. Blind people have many tools for learning and moving around their communities. To understand what it means to be blind, listen to the book, [The Black Book of Colors](#). Talk about how it would feel to navigate the world without your vision. Describe how some blind people are born without vision and others lose their vision. Talk about the ways that blind people read (Braille) and get around (walk sticks and seeing eye dogs).

**Small Group/Asynchronous Learning:** In partnerships or small groups, ask students to conduct research on seeing eye dogs. Students should look to find out information about training, etiquette when interacting with a blind person and their dog and functions of a seeing eye dog.

*Session 5: My Brain Learns  
Differently: Learning  
Disabilities*

**Connection:** Show [this quote](#) from Harry Potter to the class and discuss the significance of this sentiment. Use this idea to introduce the next disability.

**Mini Lesson:** Today I want to remind you that some people have disabilities that you can't see from the outside. A person who has a disability that you can't see may think and learn in different ways.

A person who has a learning disability may have difficulty understanding written or spoken language. People with learning disabilities may learn differently, and they're smart! Revisit the idea of "invisible" disabilities that you can't see just by looking at a person. Talk about how people with learning disabilities have brains that help them learn things like reading and writing in a different way. Reinforce that these differences aren't a bad thing, they're just the way things are. Even people who need help learning are smart, because they can learn!

**Small Group/Asynchronous Learning:** As a whole class, look at a [series of statements](#) about learning that kids might hear in school or at home. As you read them, sort the statements into "Positive" and "Negative" groups. Have students turn and talk to discuss how these statements would make them feel. Then task students with turning these negative statements into "yet" statements (in conjunction with growth mindset-ex. Instead of, "I'm not a good reader." change the statement to, "I'm not a good reader, yet!"). Then as a class, come back together and replace the negative statements with these growth mindset statements and display in the classroom.

**Connection:** Show students the [accessibility icons](#) and ask them what they know about them. Tell students that people with physical disabilities need accommodations, like handicap parking, to move around and function in the world.

**Mini Lesson:** Today I want to remind you that sometimes people have disabilities you can see from the outside. A person who has a disability that you can see may move or communicate in different ways.

Discuss that physical disabilities include many disabilities that impact how people move and function. Reiterate that physical disabilities are the ones that you can see as soon as you meet a person. Talk about the ways in which people with physical disabilities get around and what challenges they face.

**Small Group/Asynchronous Learning:** Break students into three groups and distribute the [role play cards](#). In each group have kids assign roles and act out the scene. Then, ask students to create a possible solution to the problem presented.

**Connection:** Talk to students about how people with disabilities are often treated badly in the world, because their brains and bodies work differently. Delve into the injustice of this and that people with disabilities are just as valuable to our community as people without disabilities.

*Session 6: Getting Around:  
Physical Disabilities*

*Session 7: Famous Figures*

<p><i>Session 8: Collaborative Project</i></p>	<p><b>Mini Lesson: Today I want to teach you that people with disabilities are just as valuable to our community as non disabled people. Many people with disabilities have done amazing and powerful things in their lives. It is important to celebrate what people with disabilities can do and have done!</b></p> <p>Explain that people with disabilities are able to advocate for others and accomplish great things, despite and because of their disabilities. Model how to research a famous figure with a disability with the whole class by getting information about someone they all know about, Helen Keller. Show the class how to learn about the person through research (reputable sites only) and by completing the research data sheet provided.</p> <p><b>Small Group/Asynchronous Learning:</b> Students will be asked to research a famous figure in the world of disability. Students should find out and write down important information about their figure using <a href="#">this worksheet</a>. Suggestions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Helen Keller</li> <li>● Stephen Hawking</li> <li>● Temple Grandin</li> <li>● Ludwig Van Beethoven</li> <li>● More can be found <a href="#">here</a>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Connection:</b> Remind students of all the things they've learned about disabilities thus far. Stress the importance of celebrating different types of people in the world, not just those that look or act like us.</p> <p><b>Mini Lesson: Today I want to remind you that people with disabilities are just as valuable to our community as non disabled people. When we learn about people with disabilities who have done amazing things for their communities, we can celebrate them through art.</b></p> <p>Show students the many <a href="#">self portraits</a> that famous artists have done and point out that some of these artists also had disabilities (Frida Kahlo, for one). Point out the different styles in which each were done, and tell about how this is indicative of the artist's style and personality. Tell students that we can honor those that have done good in the world of disabilities by creating a portrait of them that represents their accomplishments.</p> <p><b>Small Group/Asynchronous Learning:</b> In partnerships, task students with creating a portrait of their famous figure in a way that would describe them best. Push students to think of the best way to represent this person through art, not just in conventional ways. Display these projects throughout the school to highlight individuals with disabilities.</p>
<p><b>Bend IV: Differences Between Us (February-April)</b></p>	<p><b>Teaching Points</b></p>

*Session 1: Communication*

**Connection:** Talk to students about a time when you lost your voice. Describe how you felt and what it was like to have to communicate in a different way.

**Mini Lesson:** Today I want to teach you that differently abled people communicate in different ways. People may use their hands, their voices or technology to communicate with others around them and others may not communicate at all.

As a group, brainstorm the ways in which people communicate. Make a list of students' ideas and supplement additional methods of communication to teach into. Stress how important communication is to learning and functioning in the world safely.

**Small Group/Asynchronous Learning:** Gather various communication devices (PECS, AAC, Braille, ASL) or methods or provide videos of these being used and allow students to observe them. Challenge students to communicate with one another using different means than they typically do (for most this will mean communicating without talking). Discuss as a group how this went and what feelings it brought up for kids.

*Session 2: Physical Access*

**Connection:** Have students turn and talk about their favorite places to go. Share out some ideas, then present the question, "how would you move around these places if you had a physical disability?". Share out some responses.

**Mini Lesson:** Today I want to teach you that differently abled people access the world around them in different ways. Even though people can use wheelchairs, canes, crutches or other tools to get around, some places may be hard for them to get to.

As a class, brainstorm some ideas of kids favorite activities that they do during recess, PE or after school. Make a list on the board and remind them about the different ways in which people can move. Talk about which activities would be easy/hard to include a person with a physical disability in.

**Small Group/Asynchronous Learning:** Ask small groups of students to come up with solutions or ways to include kids with physical disabilities in their favorite activities. Kids may even research alternative sports programs for people with disabilities to see ways that accommodations can be made to include people of all abilities.

*Session 3: Learning Tools*

**Connection:** Show the video [Chimps & Tools](#) and ask students to turn and talk about their observations. Explain that tools are essential for all living things.

**Mini Lesson:** Today I want to teach you that differently abled people learn in different ways. People can use various learning tools and support from adults to access their education and acquire knowledge.

*Session 4: Independence*

As a class, begin brainstorming the definition of “tool”. First, brainstorm different examples of tools and think about what they all have in common. Then, ask partnerships or triads to come up with a definition. They can write these on a post-it or on a white board. Share out definitions and congratulate students on their work.

**Small Group/Asynchronous Learning:** In your classroom, ask students to go on a scavenger hunt for one learning tool they use. Get creative! Even if kids don’t have pencil grips or wiggle seats, they can see other objects (such as a clipboard or dictionary) as a tool that they use. Reinforce the idea that even though we all use different kinds of tools in the classroom, we all need them to learn!

**Connection:** Pose the following scenario to the class, “Imagine we are observing another 4th grade class during math. One student in the class completes the math problems on his own, but takes 10 minutes, while another student uses a hundred chart and highlighter, but takes 8 minutes. Which student is better at math?” Allow students time to think, pair, share about this scenario. Challenge kids to think about why they chose the student they did.

**Mini Lesson: Today I want to teach you that differently abled people have different levels of independence. People may need help moving around, taking care of themselves or learning throughout, and that’s okay!**

As a class, ask students to write what the word “independence” means to them on a post-it. Place post-its on the board and allow students to observe what others wrote. Discuss feelings associated with independence and those you might feel when you are not independent. Explain that independence is the act of doing things or acting on your own and that all people are about to do one thing or another with independence. Sometimes, though, people with disabilities need help doing things that we can do with independence (dressing, toileting, getting into a car, learning, etc.)

**Small Group/Asynchronous Learning:** Ask students to independently write and draw about a time when they need help. Reinforce the idea although we all have times when we want or can be independent, we all need help sometimes.

**Connection:** Tell students about a time when you designed/thought of an invention that would help someone. Ask students to share times when they’ve done the same and reflect on how that made them feel.

**Mini Lesson: Today I want to teach you that there are people dedicated to helping individuals with various disabilities. One way people help is by designing objects that assist people with disabilities in their daily lives. The Cooper Hewitt Museum of Design In New York City is one place where you can see these amazing inventions!**

*Session 5: Explore the  
“Access & Ability” Exhibit  
at the Cooper Hewitt  
Museum of Design*

<p><i>Session 6: Celebrate Innovation</i></p>	<p>As a whole class, show students the Cooper Hewitt Museum of Design website, specifically the <a href="#">“Access &amp; Ability”</a> exhibit. Explore some of the exhibits and read about what they do to help people with disabilities.</p> <p><b>Small Group/Asynchronous Learning:</b> Give students time to explore the objects shown on their own iPads/Chromebooks in partners. Encourage kids to read and find out about the objects they find most interesting. Complete <a href="#">a worksheet</a> telling the name of the object, what it does and who it helps after researching.</p> <p><b>Connection:</b> Rally students to celebrate all the work they’ve done to build empathy for those who learn and move differently than them. Get excited about today’s celebration of innovation.</p> <p><b>Mini Lesson: Today I want to teach you that you have the power to create something to help others too! You can think about a problem differently abled people may have and design a solution to fix it!</b></p> <p>Remind students of the many challenges that people with disabilities face on a daily basis. Talk about how we can take action to make life more fair to those who think and move differently by designing our own inventions to help solve daily problems.</p> <p><b>Small Group/Asynchronous Learning:</b> Task students with designing their own helpful tool to help someone with a disability. Present this task as you do with scientists (make a plan, test it out, change it, evaluate it) and encourage kids to plan something they can actually create in school or at home. If it is not able to be created in school, have kids create a diagram of their invention and display them around the classroom.</p>
<p><b>Bend V: Similarities Amongst Us (April-June)</b></p>	<p><b>Teaching Points</b></p>
<p><i>Session 1: We’re Not So Different</i></p>	<p><b>Connection:</b> Show the class a blank Venn Diagram and discuss what this is used for. Highlight the fact that there are three categories (A, B and A &amp; B) but no category is labeled “good” or “bad”. Use this to introduce the lesson about celebrating similarities and differences.</p> <p><b>Mini Lesson: Today I want to teach you that even when we can see differences between us, we have many similarities. All people, no matter how the move, learn or communicate, have feelings.</b></p> <p>Review the Zones of Regulation with the class. Talk about how there are no “good” or “bad” feelings, but rather “expected” and “unexpected” times to have those feelings. Even when we have an unexpected feeling, we can cope with it in a healthy way.</p> <p><b>Small Group/Asynchronous Learning:</b> Hang four pieces of chart paper throughout the room, each with one of the following phrases on it, (1) When I learn something easily I feel... (2) When I don’t understand something in school I feel... (3) When I get a good grade on a test I feel... (4) When the teacher calls on me and I don’t know what to say I feel...</p>

*Session 2: Respectful  
Language Around  
Disability*

Students will complete a carousel writing activity where they all walk around at the same time and write their answer to each phrase on the chart paper. At the end of the activity, observe each poster as a class and circle similarities and differences. Discuss how many of us, despite our differences, had the same feelings in these scenarios. Highlight how when we know how others feel, we can support and encourage them.

**Connection:** Present the quote to students, “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me.” Prompt students to comment on the validity of this statement. Tell the class that we may choose to let words not affect us, but hurtful language can do a lot of damage in the long run.

**Mini Lesson: Today I want to teach you there are respectful and disrespectful ways to speak about disabilities with others. In our community, it is important to use respectful language when speaking about differences. Everyone, no matter their ability, deserves respect.**

Write the word “stupid” on the board inside of a circle. Model as a whole class the ways in which to complete a word web. Ask students to turn and talk about how this word makes them feel and what it makes them think of. Write ideas as parts of the word web and tell students that they will be given both positive and negative words around disability to do the same activity with.

**Small Group/Asynchronous Learning:** Divide students into small groups and give each group a word web with a word related to disability on it (these may include “slow learner”, “differently-abled”, “retard”, “normal”, “person with autism”, “wheelchair bound”- see [this website](#) for some reference). Students will brainstorm what they think of when they hear this word and write their ideas on the web. Come back together as a whole class and discuss which words are respectful words to use related to disability and which promote stereotypes and unfairness. As a class, make a pledge to use only respectful language.

*Session 3: Labels Don't  
Make Me*

**Connection:** Show a grocery item that has a label (such as “ketchup”). Ask students to think about what this label tells them and if it is helpful.

**Mini Lesson: Today I want to teach you that labeling others can have negative effects. We are more than the labels that others give us, we are unique individuals with many sides and qualities!**

Show the class a list of labels that might apply to people in our school or in our lives. Suggestions include: autistic, wheel-chair bound, Level \_\_\_\_, resource room, etc. Tell students that today we are no longer our labels. Our labels are part of us, but they don't define who we are, so we shouldn't call ourselves those things. Explain how talking about people only based on their labels diminishes the other parts of their personality and identity.

*Session 4: Cultivating  
Compassion with Dignity*

**Small Group/Asynchronous Learning:** Give an example of reading levels and explain that we will be creating poems to work through this process of shedding our labels. Poems can go like, “I am not a Level M, I am a mystery book reader!” Students will work on their poems independently, with the teacher circulating to provide suggestions and encouragement.

**Connection:** Tell a story about a time when someone showed you compassion. Describe the feeling of having someone offer their help and support to you in a time of need.

**Mini Lesson: Today I want to teach you that all people deserve compassion. Compassion is the desire to help others, especially those going through hardship. Differently abled people need compassion in different ways.**

Discuss and write the definitions for “[compassion](#)” and “[dignity](#)” on the board. Talk about how important it is for people with disabilities to maintain their dignity, even in times when they have little independence and need a lot of help. Tell the class how maintaining your dignity also means maintaining your identity.

**Small Group/Asynchronous Learning:** Give partnerships a [scenario](#) about a person and a problem and task them with writing a story about a way that they would show compassion towards this person while keeping their dignity intact. Have students share stories with each other and discuss how this might impact their own lives.

*Session 5: Assessing Access  
(1)*

**Connection:** Show the class [this cartoon](#) about fairness. As students turn and talk about the fairness of this statement and what the alternative would be to make it more fair.

**Mini Lesson: Today I want to teach you that it is important to look at our communities with a critical eye. We can look at spaces in our school community and think, “Is this fair?” to think critically about access for all people.**

Tell students that today they will be assessing the accessibility of their school building for differently-abled people. Remind students that this could mean people who walk, people who use wheelchairs, short people, tall people, etc. Before the activity, brainstorm a list of places to observe and as the kids walk around, mark whether they are accessible to differently-abled people.

**Small Group/Asynchronous Learning:** As a class, go on a walk throughout the school and evaluate the accessibility of different areas. Encourage kids to think critically about whether these spaces are fair to all types of people and make notes as you go.

*Session 6: Assessing Access  
(2)*

**Connection:** Remind the class of all the things they've learned about empathy, dignity and fairness over the past school year. Congratulate them for being open-minded and understanding of all types of people.

**Mini Lesson:** Today I want to teach you that when we look at spaces with a critical eye, we can take action to fix them! We can design our own solutions to provide access for all.

**Small Group/Asynchronous Learning:** In small groups or partnerships, task students with creating a plan to solve accessibility problems you observed in the last session. Talk about who could help implement these plans and what other spaces in the community may need solutions for accessibility.