

# Special Needs Awareness Week

I asked my students on the evaluation if our Physical Education Department should teach the Special Needs Awareness Unit to future students. The overwhelming conclusion from our 700 middle school students was YES! I believe the students will remember the Special Needs Awareness Unit in life beyond the classroom. The students will treat people with disabilities with empathy not sympathy. They have experienced a few of the obstacles individuals with special needs must encounter every day of their lives. This project teaches students how much we are alike, not different.

## Curriculum/State Standard

Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirement:

**Health and Fitness #3** - The students analyze and evaluate the impact of real-life influences on health.

**Component 3.4** - Understand how emotions influence decision-making.

**Component 3.3** - Use social skills to protect health and safety in a variety of situations.

**Component 1.1** - Develop fundamental physical skills and progress to complex movement activity as physically able.

## Overview

The project builds special needs awareness and facilitates the inclusion process into the P.E. curricula through active learning experiences. It increases knowledge about special needs individuals and fosters positive attitudes toward persons with special needs. It also promotes acceptance of people with special needs in all aspects of school and community.

Continued ...

# 7-8

GRADE LEVEL



ARTS



LANGUAGE



MATH

# Misc

MISCELLANEOUS



SCIENCE



HISTORY



SOCIAL STUDIES

# 5

DAYS

# \$900

TOTAL BUDGET



THIS WINNING LESSON PLAN WAS SUBMITTED BY:

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# "Special Needs Awareness Week" project continued...

## Objectives

- Students will describe how emotions may influence decision-making and plan how to act in an emotional situation.
- Students will express opinions and resolve conflicts constructively while maintaining safe and respectful relationships.
- Students will perform everyday movements using various special needs equipment.
- Students will use interpersonal skills to work in teams, teach others, make decisions, appreciate various cultures.
- Students will elaborate on their understanding, explanations of conclusions through performances, written and oral communications.
- Students will address a concept, problem, or issue that is similar to one that they have encountered or are likely to encounter in life beyond the classroom.

## Materials

**ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder) Station** - TV and VCR, radio, strobe light, pens and pencils, clip boards with "name the states" and "math facts" handouts

**Learning Disability Station** - Overhead projector, mirrors and star shapes, "The Friembly Bog" example of writing, list of famous people, easter seals list of common misconceptions.

**Wheelchair-Mobility Challenge Station** - 10 wheelchairs, 50 cones, pretend lunch food and trays, bathroom stall.

**Crutches/Walkers-Mobility Challenge Station** - 20 regular crutches, 2 pairs of forearm crutches, 10 walkers.

**Visual Impairment Station** - Blindfolds, braille bookmarks, goggles with waxed paper, braille magazine.

**Hearing Impairment Station** - TV and VCR, sign language video, sign language charts, ear muffers to cut noise, hearing test machine.

**Amputation Simulation Station** - 5 pairs of jeans, 15 button shirts, shoes to tie.

**Without Pity Video Station** - Video projector and "Without Pity" video

**Say What You Mean Station** - Patterns of shapes to describe, pencils, paper and table.

## Readiness Activity

Guest speakers kicked off our Yelm Middle School Special Needs Awareness Week: a nurse spoke about caring for special needs children left by their parents to be cared for at a unique facility by the State of Washington. She also talked about her choice to adopt a former patient; a special education teacher for Yelm Community Schools explained from personal experience the difficulties faced by an individual with disabilities each and every day; an occupational therapist for Yelm Community Schools discussed special equipment used by students with special needs and the job opportunities that are available for these students.

## Strategies/Activities

**ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder) Station** - Students attempt to do math facts and name all 50 states while a video is playing on the TV, a strobe light is blinking, and a radio is playing. Students were expected to write with their weak hand and keep their feet swinging back and forth throughout the activity. This station is attempting to simulate for students what it is like to have ADHD.

**Learning Disability Station** - Students participated in a discussion about what a learning disability is. Students were introduced to a list of famous people with disabilities. Students were shown writing samples from people with dyslexia and other learning disabilities. Then they performed the mirror activity that forces the brain to receive mixed up messages. Have students communicate the emotions they have identified today through the various activities. Establish ways students incorporate the "Friends Who Care (Easter Seals) Helpful Hints When Meeting Friends with Disabilities" information.

**Crutches/Walkers-Mobility Challenge Station** - Students must move through an obstacle course using crutches and/or walkers. The course should include opening and closing doors, carrying books, and moving a long distance in a short amount of time.

**Wheelchair-Mobility Challenge Station** - Students must move a wheelchair in and out of doors and bathroom stalls, attempt to serve themselves a lunch, and work through an obstacle course.

**Hearing Impairment Station** - Students will learn some basic sign language, take the hearing test, and attempt to figure out what the people on the video are signing.

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## *“Special Needs Awareness Week” project continued...*

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### **Visual Impairment Station -**

Students wear blindfolds to simulate being blind or goggles with wax paper to simulate being legally blind. Students learn to guide others using their elbow to lead visually impaired people around obstacles. Examples of Braille are out for students to investigate.

### **Say What You Mean Station -**

One student describes a pattern of shapes to another student so they can attempt to draw what is being described.

### **Without Pity Video Station -**

Show the thought provoking video Without Pity. The video depicts the lives of several individuals with special needs.

### **Culminating Activity**

The culminating activity was a written exam for the students. The exam included short answer essay questions and true/false questions. A copy of the exam is attached.

### **Evaluation**

The students were given a written evaluation form to fill out as a part of their written exam.