

**DISABILITY 101:**  
**Increasing Disability Awareness and Sensitivity**

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## Preface

*The Disability 101: Increasing Disability Awareness and Sensitivity curriculum was created as a Community Collaboration Project for an Interdisciplinary Team Development class (DIS 694) in the Certificate in Disability and Diversity Studies Program through the Center on Disability Studies, University of Hawai'i at Manoa. The curriculum was designed as an effort to promote inclusive communities where people with disabilities are treated with respect and dignity.*

*We developed this curriculum to give educators a tool to teach youth about disability issues and raise awareness of how attitudes and language affect how we perceive disability. Disability 101 was created to provide an introduction to disability studies, to stimulate interest in disability issues and provide a mechanism to begin conversations about disability and inclusion.*

*The curriculum is targeted for use with youth (ages 10-14 years old) but can be modified and adapted to address other target populations. While cultural factors were taken into consideration in the development of the curriculum, all users of Disability 101 should feel free to revise the lesson plans and activities to better suit specific cultural needs.*

*We would like to thank our professor, facilitator, mentor, and editor, Dr. Steven Brown, for his guidance and encouragement in the creation of Disability 101. His high expectations motivated us to develop a sustainable product that addressed our goal of promoting disability awareness and sensitivity.*

*We would also like to thank the following individuals:*

*Brian Kajiyama, for consenting to have his personal story highlighted in the curriculum and providing the DVD and photographic images used in Disability 101;*

*Jennifer Grant, 9<sup>th</sup> grade social studies teacher, Farrington High School, for initial implementation of the curriculum and her valuable feedback;*

*Neil Marcus, for providing ideas on how to reach our target audience; and*

*Petra Koppers, for suggesting we use technology to enhance our communication in the process of the curriculum development.*

*Courtney L. Hatch, for checking web links. All are accurate as of Feb. 27, 2010.*

*We hope you will find Disability 101 a useful introductory tool to Disability Studies. Thank you for your interest in increasing disability awareness and sensitivity.*

*-Sara Cook, Gaurav Duggal, and Melissa Gibo  
Authors and Creators of Disability 101*

**DISABILITY 101:  
Increasing Disability Awareness and Sensitivity**

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## Introduction

Disability is universal. As evidenced by global statistics, disability exists in every culture, in all nations around the world. Although there have been improvements in civil rights for individuals with disabilities in the United States, treatment of people with disabilities continues to be negative in America and elsewhere. To address inequities and discrimination against people with disabilities, a disability culture has emerged to advocate for equality, inclusion, and social justice and promote disability awareness and sensitivity.

Several disciplines (for example, psychology, sociology, education, medicine, and law) have recognized the importance of addressing disability issues and have collaboratively created a new discipline, Disability Studies. As a discipline, disability studies takes an interdisciplinary approach to explore disability from experiential, historical, and cultural perspectives. Disability studies has helped the disability movement take strides towards greater equality for people with disabilities. With the emergence of a disability culture, public perceptions of disability and attitudes towards people with disabilities have experienced gradual paradigm shifts.

It is important we instill in our youth an awareness of disability and continue to promote sensitivity to disability issues. Educating youth to understand people with disabilities are people like everyone else can shift negative perceptions of disability towards acceptance and respect. This curriculum is intended to provide educational tools that promote disability awareness and sensitivity. We believe if children are given the tools to understand disability, they will be able to see disability more positively. In turn, as they become more sensitive and aware of disability issues, they can then create change in the world around them. As our children are our future, it is within their power to create a society where all people are respected and valued for their unique abilities and strengths.

## Curriculum Overview

This curriculum is intended to promote disability awareness and sensitivity in youth by developing positive images of people with disabilities. Designed as a five-part lesson series, this curriculum will provide engaging educational tools to increase knowledge about specific disabilities, address disability stereotypes, and empower students to use positive language in their daily communication.

The entire 2.5 hour curriculum has been broken down into five lessons. Each lesson is formatted for approximately 30 minutes implementation time. The purpose and student learning objectives are included for each lesson to provide an overall idea of the intended outcome.

At the completion of the curriculum students should be able to recognize the abilities of people with disabilities, feel comfortable addressing disability, and use language that creates positive images of people with disabilities. By creating positive impressions of disability, this curriculum will provide students with tools to break down stereotypes and create more inclusive and respectful learning environments.

Although this curriculum is intended for use in middle school and early high school, it may also be used with adults. Disability affects all people of all ages. This curriculum was established to promote disability awareness and sensitivity for all groups, regardless of age or experience.

## **Lesson 1**

### **Understanding Disability**

**Purpose:** To know what it may feel like to have a physical or learning disability.

#### **Lesson Objectives:**

Students will be able to:

- Identify their personal feelings and attitudes regarding disability.
- Have a basic understanding of what it may feel like to have a physical or learning disability.
- Empathize with individuals with disabilities.

#### **Materials Needed:**

- Pencil or pen
- Pre-Test Survey
- Rationale Handout/Poster
- Paper (2 sheets)
- School Name Sample (written backwards)

#### **Background (10 minutes):**

1. Have students complete Pre-Test Survey. **Be sure to give each student an ID number so tests will remain confidential. Be sure to keep a copy of the ID number so students can use the same number for the Lesson 2 Worksheets and Lesson 5 Post-Test.**
2. Ask students to think about people they know who have disabilities.
3. Ask students to raise their hand if they know at least one person who has a disability.
4. Provide students with brief Rationale Handout or post Rationale Poster on the board.

#### **Activities (5 minutes):**

1. Have students take out two sheets of paper.
2. Have students write the name of their school (e.g. Farrington) with their dominant hand (right hand if right-handed, left hand if left-handed) as many times as they can in 30 seconds.
3. Give student who has written the school name the most times a prize (e.g. candy bar).
4. Have students write the name of their school with their non-dominant hand (left hand if right-handed, right hand if left-handed) as many times as they can in 30 seconds.
5. Tell students this activity is intended to simulate a physical disability (such as being paralyzed, for example not being able to move part of your body).
6. Explain to students how assistive technology and accommodations are helpful to people who have physical disabilities (such as having an assistant take notes for you, having wheelchair ramps, or using a special keyboard) so they can participate with everyone else).
7. Have students write the name of their school backwards (see sample) as many times as they can with their dominant hand in 30 seconds.
8. Tell students this activity is intended to simulate a learning disability (such as when letters may appear jumbled, for example “read” looks like “raed”).

9. Explain to students having a learning disability does not make someone less smart than anyone else. With appropriate help and support students with learning disabilities can be as successful as other students.

**Reflection (15 minutes):**

Have students engage in discussion about the exercise they just completed.

Sample questions to ask:

1. How did writing with your non-dominant hand make you feel?
2. What do you think it is like to have a physical disability?
3. How do you think people with physical disabilities would like you to see them?
4. What was it like trying to write backwards? Was it frustrating?
5. How do you think it feels to have a hidden disability (a disability you cannot see)?
6. Which do you think poses more challenges, a physical or learning disability?

### Pre-Test Survey

ID number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Period: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Gender: Male Female
2. Do you have a disability? Yes No
3. Do you know someone with a disability? Yes No
4. What is the meaning of disability? (Circle one)
  - a. Unable to complete life activities in a certain way
  - b. Can be physical
  - c. Can be invisible (you cannot see it just by looking at someone)
  - d. All of the above
  - e. Only a and b
5. People with disabilities (Circle all that apply):
  - a. Always depend on other people to take care of them
  - b. Live successful and independent lives
  - c. Are nice, but not very smart
  - d. Don't have a lot of friends
  - e. Should be treated like everyone else
6. Which of the following are examples of disabilities? (Circle one)
  - a. When letters appear jumbled, for example "read" looks like "raed"
  - b. Losing all or part of your hearing
  - c. A brain disorder causing a person to black out or have seizures
  - d. Both b and c
  - e. All of the above
7. Circle the statement that is NOT true about disability.
  - a. Many people have some type of disability
  - b. There are actors, professional athletes, and inventors with disabilities
  - c. You can always tell when someone has a disability
  - d. It is ok to have a disability
  - e. Certain words about disability are more negative than others
8. Circle the sentence that discusses the person with a disability in the most appropriate way:
  - a. The blind guy is in a wheelchair
  - b. The guy confined to the wheelchair suffers from blindness and is paraplegic
  - c. Jim uses a wheelchair and he is blind
  - d. All of the above are okay to say
  - e. None of the above



## Rationale Handout

Why is it important to understand disability and how to treat people with disabilities with respect and dignity? Because everyone will encounter someone with a disability at least once in their life. People with disabilities make up the largest minority group in America (Snow, 2008). Although people with disabilities are more included in mainstream society than ever before, they continue to face discrimination and negative stereotypes about disability.

Learning how to see people with disabilities as equal citizens in society is important in creating a world where all people are valued for their different abilities and strengths. Disabilities are present in all cultures across the world. Therefore, people should be aware and sensitive to disability issues so people with disabilities are treated equally.

### Basic Disability Information:

People with disabilities are people like everyone else.

People with disabilities aren't always treated fairly or kindly.

People with disabilities have the right to access their communities but often face prejudice and physical barriers.

Everyone will encounter disability at some point in their life.

Approximately 1 out of 10 people in the world has a disability (Lagerwall, 2004).

Many people will acquire a disability at some point in their life.

82.6% of people 65 years and older have some sort of disability (2007 Disability Status Report).

10.7% of working age (21 to 64 years old) people in Hawaii have a disability (2007 Disability Status Report).

37.2 million adults in the U.S. have hearing difficulties (CDC, 2006).

21.2 million adults in the U.S. have a visual impairment (CDC, 2006).

4.7 million children ages 3-17 have been diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in the United States (National Center for Health Statistics, 2006).

6.14% of youth in Hawaii ages 4-17 have been diagnosed with ADHD (CDC, 2003).

7.8% of youth in the United States ages 3-17 have been diagnosed with a learning disability (CDC, 2006).

**Forrington**

## Lesson 2 Breaking Down Stereotypes

**Purpose:** To develop positive images of people with disabilities.

**Objectives:**

Students will be able to:

- Openly share their current perspective on people with disabilities in a safe environment.
- Observe a person with a disability and describe how their stereotypes do or do not fit the person.
- Reflect on how their perception of people with disabilities has or has not changed from watching the video.

**Materials Needed:**

- Cerebral Palsy Definition Sheet
- Audiovisual equipment (i.e. television and DVD player, computer w/ projector)
- Brian Kajiyama video clip
- “Who is This Guy?” Worksheet (**Be sure to have students use their previous ID number for all worksheets today**)
- Brian Kajiyama Worksheet

**Background (10 minutes):**

1. Share with students that today we will be watching a video of a person with Cerebral Palsy (C.P.).
2. Put definition of Cerebral Palsy on the board.
3. Pass out “Who is This Guy?” Worksheet.
4. Have students answer questions in the “Before you watch” section.

**Activities (10 minutes):**

1. Watch video clip.
2. After viewing the video pass out Brian Kajiyama Worksheet.
3. Have students answer the “After you watch” section.
4. Talk as a class about the new answers.

**Reflection (10 minutes)**

Have students write about and/or discuss the following reflection questions as a class:

1. Did your answers to the questions change after you watched the movie? If so, how?
2. What kinds of lives do people with disabilities lead?
3. What have you learned about Brian that affected your view of people with disabilities?

## Lesson 2 Additional Resources

1. If you are interesting in seeing more videos of Brian Kajiyama, please refer to the following resources that can be found on You Tube:
  - a. **Seeing Beyond Images: A Prelude:** [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CI-G\\_PxWD6g](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CI-G_PxWD6g) In this video poetry piece, Kajiyama asks for people to look beyond the image of his disability and begin to see him for who he really is.
  - b. **Who I Am:** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gxAv4jr6jGM&feature=related> Another video poetry piece created to complement “Seeing Beyond Images: A Prelude”. This video emphasizes who Brian Kajiyama is beyond a person with a disability.
  - c. **Who Are You?** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PxKeKSee918> Another video poetry piece where Kajiyama puts a “twist” at the end.
  - d. **Heart of a Warrior (ESPN 2008):** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LjvPk-lqbG0> A feature story on ESPN on Kajiyama as a Hawai‘i football fan and coach.
  
2. This is the story of Patrick Nicholson, a young man with Down syndrome, who helps coach football at his high school. This is another inspirational video to break down stereotypes of disabilities. <http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=4546483n>

## **CEREBRAL PALSY (CP):**

**A disability caused by damage to the brain that affects body movement and muscle coordination.**

This could mean people with CP have difficulty controlling their muscles (such as having a hard time sitting up straight) or their muscles are too tight (such as having legs that are very stiff).

ID number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Period: \_\_\_\_\_  
 School: \_\_\_\_\_

## WHO IS THIS GUY?



### Before you watch the movie:

*Answer the following questions about the person you see in the picture.*

1. **Circle the phrase you think would best describe the person in the picture:**
  - a. Fast learner OR slower learner
  - b. Many friends OR few friends
  - c. College student OR attends special school
  - d. Enjoys sports OR enjoys watching TV.
  
2. **Do you think he has a job? Yes / No**
  
3. **If Yes, where do you think he works?**  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. **What do you think he does in his free time?**  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. **Think of one word that best describes him.**  
 \_\_\_\_\_

ID number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Period: \_\_\_\_\_  
School: \_\_\_\_\_

## BRIAN KAJIYAMA



**After you watch the movie:**

*Answer the following questions about Brian Kajiya.*

**1. Circle the phrase you think would best describe Brian:**

- a. Fast learner OR slower learner
- b. Many friends OR few friends
- c. College student OR attends special school
- d. Enjoys sports OR enjoys watching TV.

**2. Does Brian have a job? Yes / No**

**3. If Yes, where does Brian work?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**4. What does Brian do in his free time?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**5. Think of one word that best describes him.**

\_\_\_\_\_

### Lesson 3 Breaking Down Stereotypes (Part II)

**Purpose:** To develop positive images of disability through the use of popular culture.

**Objectives:**

Students will be able to:

- Identify correct definitions and characteristics for different types of disabilities.
- Recognize strengths, abilities, and talents of individuals with disabilities.
- Recognize successes and accomplishments of people with disabilities.

**Materials:**

- Disability Definitions Matching Activity Worksheet
- Disability Definitions Matching Activity Answer Key
- Pencil or pen
- Audiovisual equipment (i.e. computer and projector)
- “Breaking Down Stereotypes” PowerPoint
- “Breaking Down Stereotypes” PowerPoint Activity

**Background (10 minutes):**

1. Explain to students they will be given a worksheet and are to match the disabilities in the left column to the definitions in the right column.
2. Hand out Disability Definitions Matching Activity Worksheet.
3. After students have completed the worksheet to the best of their ability, use the answer key and go through the correct answers.
4. Answer questions if students have any.
5. Ask students if they were able to answer some of the questions correctly because they know someone with that specific disability.

**Activities (10 minutes):**

1. Distribute PowerPoint Activity sheets to students.
2. Present the PowerPoint to students. You should spend about 10 seconds per slide. Read the bullets aloud as they appear on the screen.
3. During the first 14 slides (Slides 2-15, after the title slide), have students complete the corresponding PowerPoint Activity sheet indicating whether or not they believe the person has a disability.
4. Once students have answered Yes or No for all the people on the activity sheet pause the PowerPoint on Slide 16.
5. Have students briefly discuss their answers. Go through the list of famous people on the PowerPoint Activity sheet asking students (by show of hands) who answered Yes and who answered No.
6. Continue with the second half of the PowerPoint presentation.
7. During the remaining 14 slides, emphasize the **ability** of people with disabilities.

**Reflection (10 minutes):**



Have students discuss their reaction to the PowerPoint, encouraging them to share their personal stories and experiences about people with disabilities.

Sample questions to ask:

1. Did it surprise you to learn that some of the famous people in the slides have a disability?
2. Can you think of some things that may have helped these people overcome their personal challenges (for example, family support, determination, personal spirit)?
3. Can you think of other people with disabilities who have accomplished great things?
4. Do you know anyone with a disability who has been able to accomplish something other people thought he/she could not?
5. Did learning all of the people in the slideshow have a disability make you think differently about what it means to have a disability?

Do an oral assessment of a couple, tricky to recall, disabilities and their characteristics (tricky to recall meaning not to cover visual or hearing disorders, but disabilities such as epilepsy, dysparaxia, or any others that test augmented knowledge).

1. For example, from the popular people discussed in the lesson, ask students to recall peoples name, ability or accomplishment, and disability.

### Disability Definitions Matching Activity

Match the correct definition to each of the disabilities listed below:

<u>Disabilities</u>	<u>Definitions</u>
1. _____ Cerebral Palsy	A. A brain disorder that may cause a person to have a blackout or sudden seizure or seizures.
2. _____ Hearing Impairment	B. A disorder causing inappropriate or impulsive (to act before thinking) behavior and hyperactivity.
3. _____ Epilepsy	C. Disability affecting a person's ability to understand written or spoken language. Has difficulty with reading, writing, listening, and/or speaking. IQ level is generally average or above average.
4. _____ Visual disability	D. Disability caused by damage to the brain that affects body movement and muscle coordination.
5. _____ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)	E. Disability affecting a person's ability to move the lower part of their body.
6. _____ Learning Disability	F. A disability that makes it difficult to process information (think). The brain has trouble "letting go of" a thought (for example: fear of germs or checking something repeatedly).
7. _____ Cognitive Disability	G. Limited or complete loss of sight/vision.
8. _____ Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)	H. Disability affecting a person's ability to think, problem-solve, or take care of him/herself. IQ level is below average.
9. _____ Paraplegia	I. Limited or complete hearing loss.

### Disability Definitions Matching Activity Answer Key

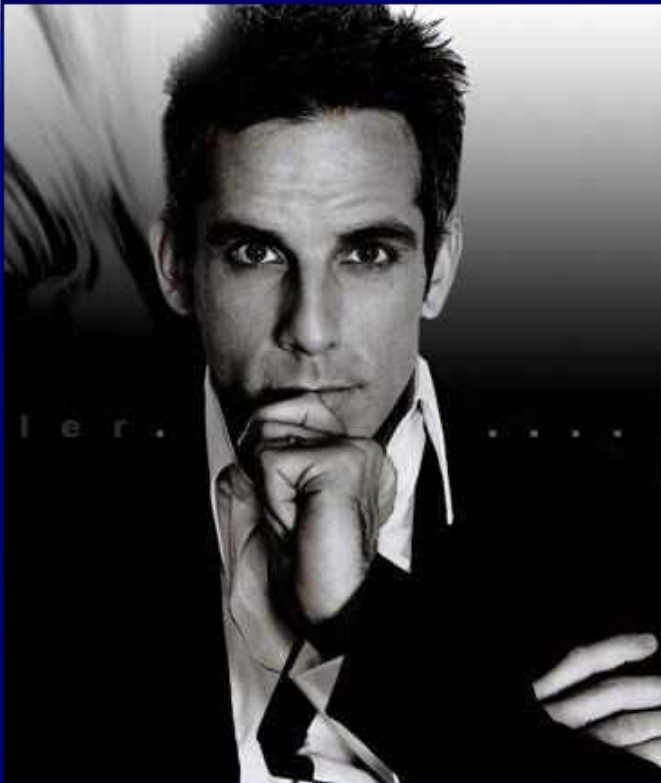
All correct definitions are listed to the right side of the corresponding disability.

<u>Disabilities</u>	<u>Definitions</u>
10. <u>D</u> Cerebral Palsy	<b>D.</b> Disability caused by damage to the brain that affects body movement and muscle coordination.
11. <u>I</u> Hearing Impairment	<b>I.</b> Limited or complete hearing loss.
12. <u>A</u> Epilepsy	<b>A.</b> A brain disorder that may cause a person to have a blackout or sudden seizure or seizures.
13. <u>G</u> Visual disability	<b>G.</b> Limited or complete loss of sight/vision.
14. <u>B</u> Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)	<b>B.</b> A disorder causing inappropriate or impulsive (to act before thinking) behavior and hyperactivity.
15. <u>C</u> Learning Disability	<b>C.</b> Disability affecting a person's ability to understand written or spoken language. Has difficulty with reading, writing, listening, and/or speaking. IQ level is generally average or above average.
16. <u>H</u> Cognitive Disability	<b>H.</b> Disability affecting a person's ability to think, problem-solve, or take care of him/herself. IQ level is below average.
17. <u>F</u> Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)	<b>F.</b> A disability that makes it difficult to process information (think). The brain has trouble "letting go of" a thought (for example: fear of germs or checking something repeatedly).
18. <u>E</u> Paraplegia	<b>E.</b> Disability affecting a person's ability to move the lower part of their body.

# Breaking Down Stereotypes



# Ben Stiller



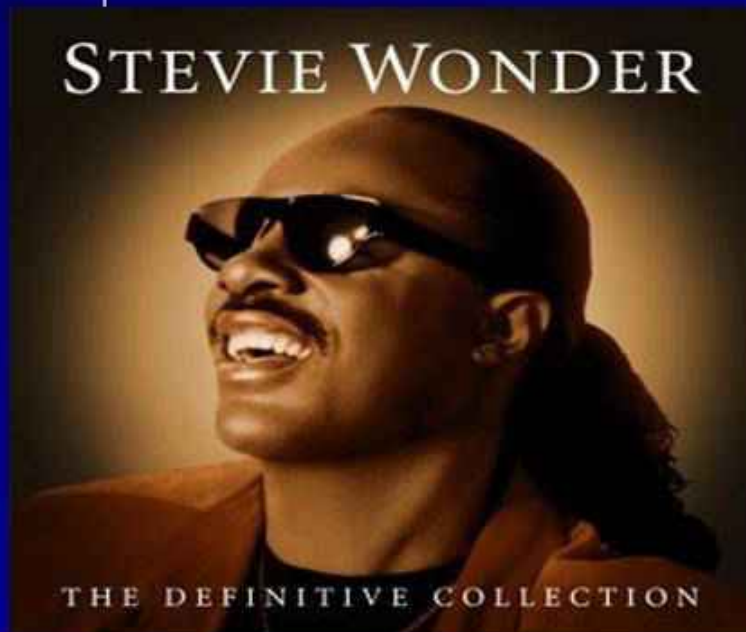
- Actor
- Listed number 28 in *Forbes* magazine's Celebrity 100 of 2007

# Bethany Hamilton



- Surfer
- In 2004, Bethany won the ESPY Award for Best Comeback Athlete of the Year

# Stevie Wonder



- Musician
- *I Just Called to Say I Love You* is Motown's biggest selling single ever in the UK

# Christopher Reeve



- Actor, director, producer, and writer
- Most famous for his role as Clark Kent/Superman



# David Beckham



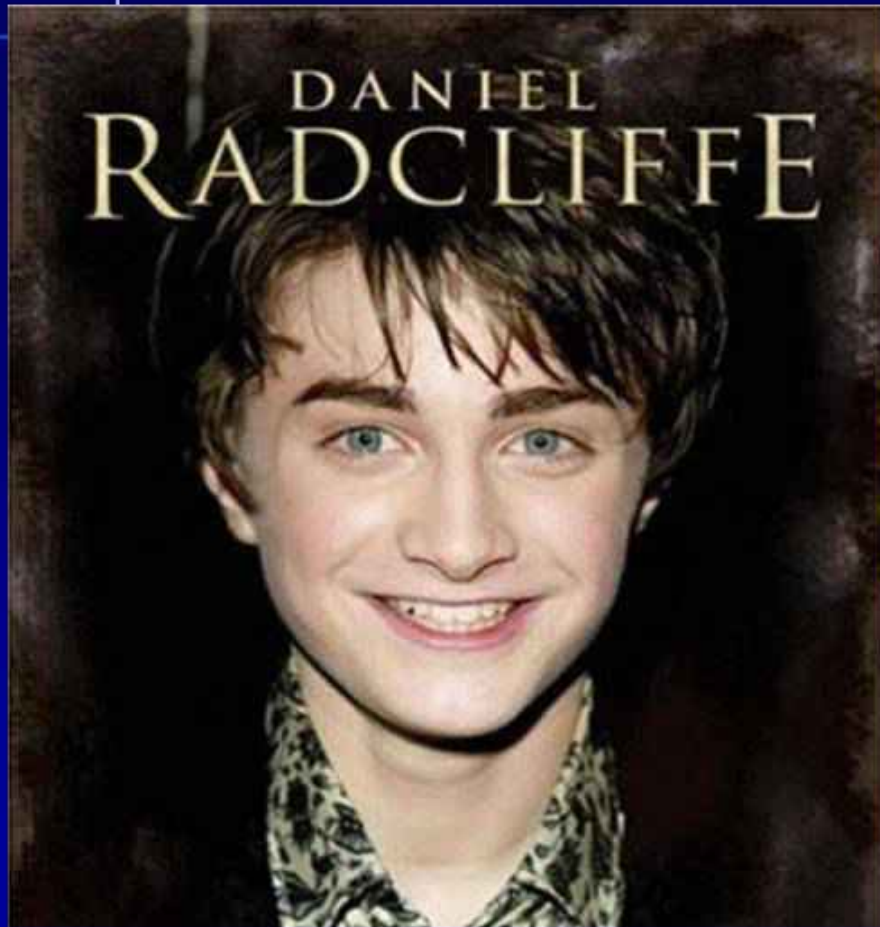
- Professional soccer player
- He is the first Englishman to score in three separate World Cup tournaments

# Foxy Brown



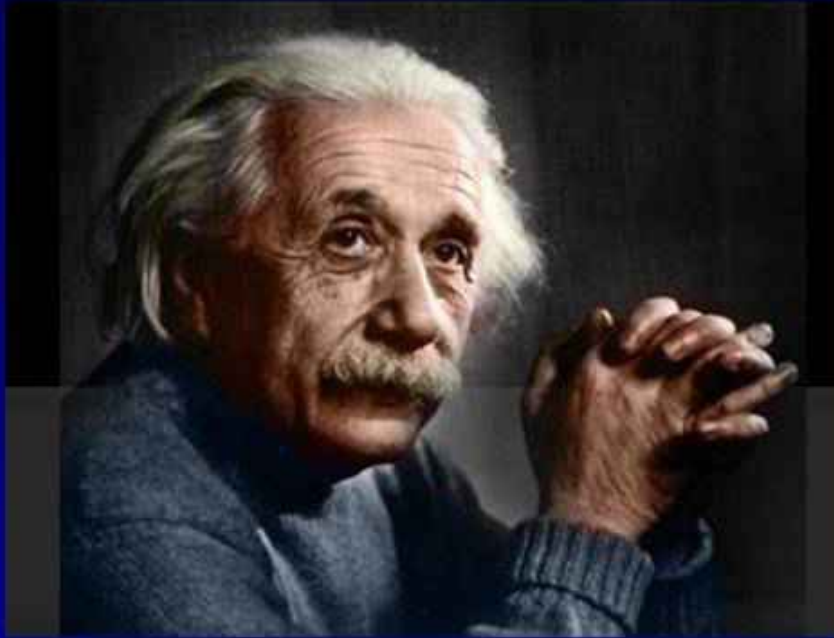
- Rapper
- At age 16, this American rapper sold a million copies for her song *Ill Na Na*

# Daniel Radcliffe



- Actor
- Starred in *Harry Potter* films
- In 1997, he was considered the richest teenager in Britain

# Albert Einstein



- Scientist
- Won the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1921

# Tiger Woods



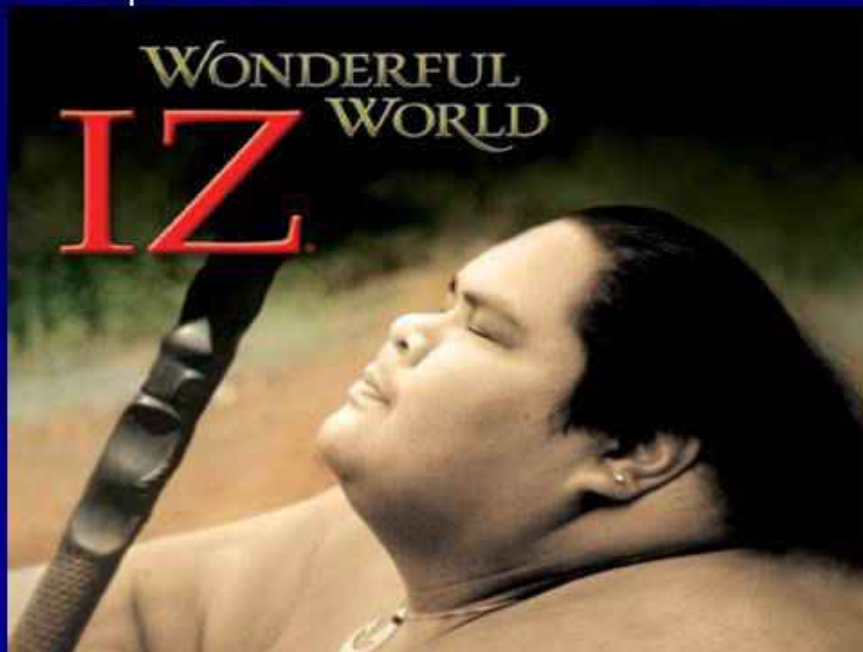
- Professional golfer
- He is ranked as the number 1 golfer in the world

# Jessica Alba



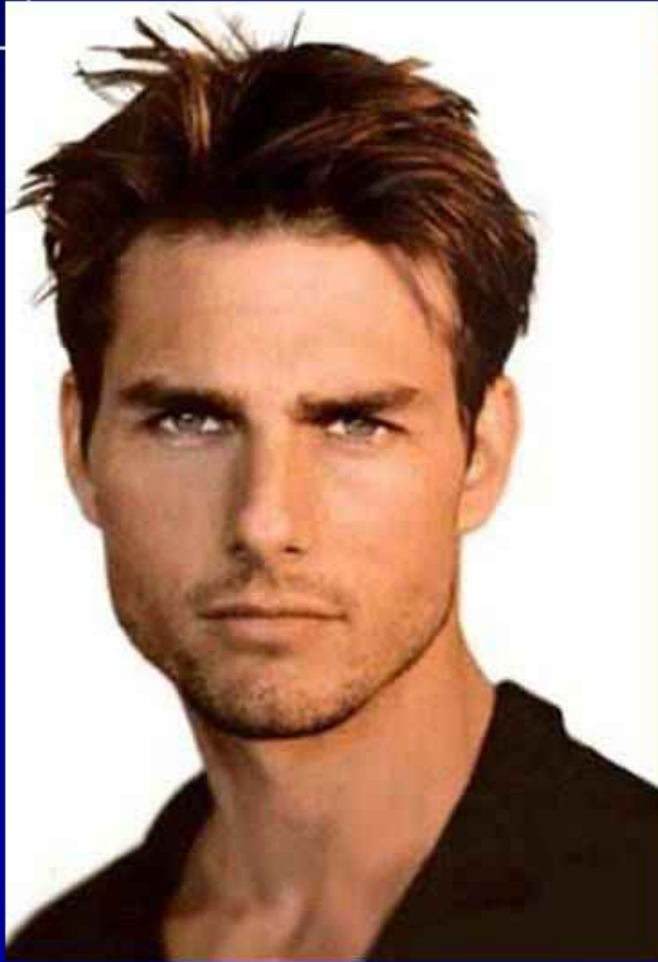
- Actress
- She is developing her own videogame called *X-Game Sports*, which is being launched on mobile phones in Korea

# Israel Kamakawi'ole



- Local Musician
- "Bruddah IZ" was born on the island of O'ahu, Hawai'i
- His medley *Somewhere Over the Rainbow/What a Wonderful World* has been used on many TV shows and movies

# Tom Cruise



- Actor
- Has been nominated for 3 SAG, 3 Oscar, and 7 Golden Globe Awards



# Michael Phelps



- Olympic Swimmer
- He won 8 gold medals, first time in the history of Olympics, in 2008 Beijing Olympics and broke 7 world records

# Ray Charles



- Musician
- Famous for his talents as a pianist, songwriter and singer
- His song *What'd I Say* is ranked #43 on VH1's *100 Greatest Songs of Rock & Roll*

**STOP!**

**Discuss your answers**

**YES, Ben Stiller has a disability.  
- Mood Disorder -**



# **YES, Bethany Hamilton has a disability.**

## **- Physical Disability -**



- Bethany Hamilton lost her left arm in a shark attack

# **YES, Stevie Wonder has a disability.**

## **- Visual Impairment -**



- In addition to being blind, Stevie also lost his sense of smell due to being in a car crash in 1973

# YES, Christopher Reeve had a disability. - Paraplegia -



- Was paralyzed in a horse-riding accident

**YES, David Beckham has a disability.  
- Ataxaphobia -**



- Ataxaphobia is a fear of disorder or untidiness



# **YES, Foxy Brown has a disability. - Hearing Impairment -**



- Brown, in 2005, experienced sudden sensory-neural hearing loss in both ears
- After undergoing surgery she recovered her hearing and continues to work as a music artist

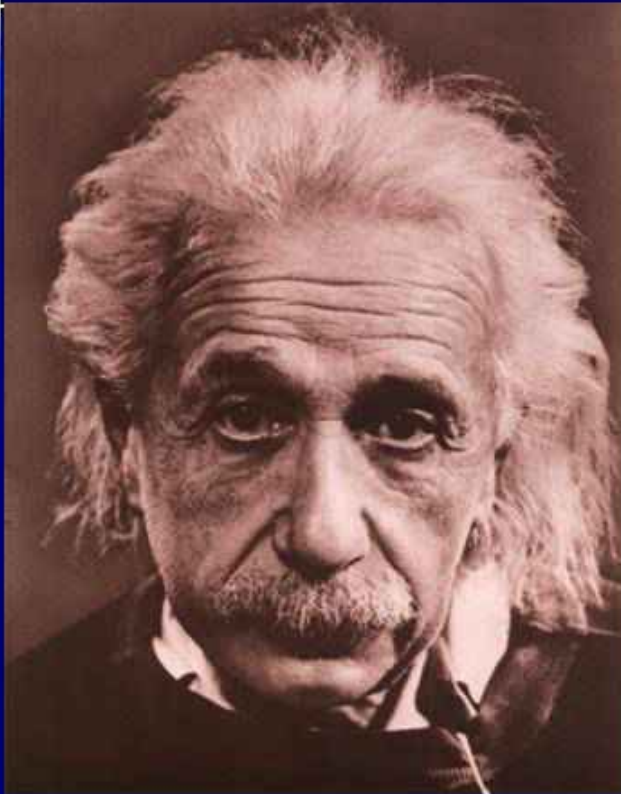
# YES, Daniel Radcliffe has a disability -Dyspraxia -



- Dyspraxia causes difficulty in speech and movement (muscle coordination)

# **YES, Albert Einstein had a disability**

## **-Speech Difficulties-**



- He had speech difficulties that made learning difficult for Einstein
- He did not speak until age 3
- It was very hard for him to express himself through writing

## **YES, Tiger Woods has a disability -Speech Disorder-**



- He stuttered as a child
- Stuttering is considered a speech disorder

# YES, Jessica Alba has a disability -Obsessive Compulsive Disorder-



- Obsessive  
Compulsive  
Disorder

**YES, Israel Kamakawiwo'ole had a disability.  
-Morbid Obesity-**



- He died in 1997, at age 38 of breathing problems brought on by his obesity

# **YES, Tom Cruise has a disability. -Learning Disability-**



- He has dyslexia – a type of learning disability

# YES, Michael Phelps has a disability. -ADHD-



- ADHD stands for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder



# **YES, Ray Charles has a disability. -Visual Impairment-**



- Became blind at age 7

# References

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## Breaking Down Stereotypes (Part II) PowerPoint Activity

For each celebrity listed below, check either Yes or No. You cannot check both. Check Yes if you think the person does have a disability. Check No if you think they do not have a disability.

Famous Person	Does this person have a disability?	
	YES	NO
1. Ben Stiller		
2. Bethany Hamilton		
3. Stevie Wonder		
4. Christopher Reeve		
5. David Beckham		
6. Foxy Brown		
7. Daniel Radcliffe		
8. Albert Einstein		
9. Tiger Woods		
10. Jessica Alba		
11. Israel Kamakawiwo'ole		
12. Tom Cruise		
13. Michael Phelps		
14. Ray Charles		

## Lesson 4 The Power of Words

**Purpose:** To illustrate how words can be used to build positive and negative images.

### Lesson Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Perceive how labeling can affect attitudes and actions.
- Understand how people with disabilities may feel when faced with forced choices.
- Identify words that carry negative connotations for disability status.

### Materials:

- Lesson 4 Activity Questions sheet
- “The Power of Words” Handout

### Background (10 minutes):

1. Ask students to think of a time when someone hurt their feelings and why. (Was it something they said? Something they did? Something they didn't do?)
2. Have students take a minute or so to think or write about how name-calling makes people feel.
3. Have students discuss whether what you call someone affects how you treat them. (For example, do you treat someone you call sir or miss with more respect? If someone is labeled “special”, does it change how you treat them?)

### Activities (10 minutes):

1. Tell students you will be asking them a series of questions and they will have to sit or stand depending on the option they choose.
2. Explain that if they choose the first option they should sit down, if they choose the second option they should remain standing.
3. Ask students the sequence of questions from the Activity Questions sheet, having them sit or stand according to their choice, allowing them 5 seconds to choose.  
*<The intent is to have students make quick decisions and not allow time for contemplation>*
4. After the activity, explain to students people with disabilities are often forced to make choices where no option is desirable. Many times they have to deal with others who want to make their decisions for them.

### Reflection (10 minutes):

Explain to students that the words we use can bring up positive or negative images. The choices they made during the activity were based on their personal image of what those words meant. Have students engage in discussion about the activity.

Sample questions to ask:

7. How did it make you feel to have forced choices?
8. Were some choices hard to make?
9. How did it make you feel to know everyone else knew which option you chose?
10. Did the choices of being called this or that (like geek or dork, smart or strong, crippled or disabled) bring certain images to mind?

Distribute “The Power of Words” Handout. **Be sure to cover the statement at the bottom of the page.**



## The Power of Words Activity Questions

### **Purpose of Activity:**

The questions are designed to start off innocuously to get students engaged in the activity, familiarized with the stand and sit options, and make students feel comfortable with making quick decisions. Each question is intended to demonstrate the impact of having forced choices and have students think about how words can bring up different images (both positive and negative).

### **Would you rather...:**

1. Have bad breath or stinky feet?
2. Have a huge booger hanging from your nose that you can't get rid of or have a medical condition that makes you fart every five minutes?
3. Have a tiny butt on your forehead or little feet that dangle from your chin?
4. Be smart or strong?
5. Be called unique or determined?
6. Be good looking with no friends or unattractive with many friends?
7. Be called geek or dork?
8. Never be able to get your driver's license or never go out without a chaperone?
9. Believe in yourself or have someone believe in you?
10. Make your own decisions or have your parents choose everything for you?
11. Win no medals in the Olympics or win 5 gold medals in the Special Olympics?
12. Be called stupid for the rest of your life or use a wheelchair?
13. Be blind or deaf?
14. Cut off both your legs or not be able to read and write?
15. Be called lazy or weak?
16. Be called crippled or disabled?
17. Be called retard or mental?

## The Power of Words

Positive Words	Negative Words
Winner	Loser
Love	Hate
Pride	Shame
Fair	Unfair
Strength	Weakness
Enable	Disable
Allow	Restrict
Able	Unable
Unique	Handicapped
Choice	Forced
Possible	Impossible
Include	Exclude
Capable	Crippled
Potential	Confined
Support	Condemn
Talent	Deficit
Assist	Impair
Determined	Lazy
Empower	Control
Enduring	Suffering
Engage	Disengage
Accept	Reject
Befriend	Ignore
Embrace	Avoid
Care	Bother
Help	Dependent

**Words can make you feel a certain way. The words you use can affect how other people feel and how you act towards them. The positive words on this Worksheet can help you treat others in a more respectful way. YOU HAVE THE POWER TO CHOOSE HOW YOU USE WORDS.**

## Lesson 5 People First Language

**Purpose:** To increase awareness of People First Language.

### **Lesson Objectives:**

Students will be able to:

- Discuss how the words we use reflect our beliefs and attitudes about disability.
- Create sentences using People First Language.
- Use words to create positive images of people with disabilities.

### **Materials:**

- People First Language Handout (hard copy provided or may be printed from <http://www.disabilityisnatural.com/images/stories/freearticlespdf/pfl9.pdf>)
- People First Language Exercise
- People First Language Exercise Answer Key
- People First Sentences Activity
- People First Sentences Activity Word Sheets (These should be used to create word bags. You will have to make enough word bags to distribute one to each group when the class is separated into groups of four)
- Post-Test Survey

### **Background (10 minutes):**

4. Prepare People First word bags prior to implementation of lesson plan.
5. Distribute People First Language Handout and People First Language Exercise to students.
6. Go over introductory paragraphs on Exercise sheet with students.
7. Have students complete the People First Language Exercise.
8. Go over the correct answers, answering student questions if applicable.

### **Activities (10 minutes):**

5. Have students break up into groups (preferably four students per group).
6. Give each group a People First Sentence Activity word bag.
7. Explain the activity to the students.
8. Give students 5 minutes to create their “People First” sentence.
9. After each group has created their sentence, have a member from each group write their sentence on the board.
10. As a class, go over each sentence making corrections and revisions as necessary.

### **Reflection (5 minutes):**

Have students engage in discussion about the activity.

Sample questions to ask:

11. Was it difficult to create the sentence?
12. Was it easy to separate the words that brought up positive images from the negative ones?
13. Do you think you can practice People First Language when communicating with others?

**Conclusion (5 minutes):**

1. Write the following on the board:  
IMPOSSIBLE = I – M – POSSIBLE  
Explain statement to students. <*Whenever someone tells you something is impossible, remember it is spelled I – M (am) – Possible.*>  
DISABILITY = DISABILITY  
Explain statement to students. <*Remember that whenever you see disability, there is also ability. There is always ABILITY within DISABILITY.*>
2. Have students pick one of the statements and write a short reflective paper (i.e. journal) of what it means to them.
3. Have students complete post-test. **Be sure to have students use their previous ID number.**

**Lesson 5**  
**Additional Resources**

For more information on People First Language, please visit the “Disability is Natural” website at [www.disabilityisnatural.com](http://www.disabilityisnatural.com).

## **EXAMPLES OF PEOPLE FIRST LANGUAGE**

BY **KATHIE SNOW**

VISIT [WWW.DISABILITYISNATURAL.COM](http://WWW.DISABILITYISNATURAL.COM) TO SEE THE COMPLETE ARTICLE

<b>SAY:</b>	<b>INSTEAD OF:</b>
People with disabilities.	The handicapped or disabled.
He has a cognitive disability/diagnosis.	He's mentally retarded.
She has autism (or a diagnosis of...).	She's autistic.
He has Down syndrome (or a diagnosis of...)	He's Down's; a mongoloid.
She has a learning disability (diagnosis).	She's learning disabled.
He has a physical disability (diagnosis).	He's a quadriplegic/is crippled.
She's of short stature/she's a little person.	She's a dwarf/midget.
He has a mental health condition/diagnosis.	He's emotionally disturbed/mentally ill.
She uses a wheelchair/mobility chair.	She's confined to/is wheelchair bound.
He receives special ed services.	He's in special ed.
She has a developmental delay.	She's developmentally delayed.
Children without disabilities.	Normal or healthy kids.
Communicates with her eyes/device/etc.	Is non-verbal.
Customer	Client, consumer, recipient, etc.
Congenital disability	Birth defect
Brain injury	Brain damaged
Accessible parking, hotel room, etc.	Handicapped parking, hotel room, etc.
She needs . . . or she uses . . .	She has a problem with . . . She has special needs.

***Keep thinking—there are many other descriptors we need to change!***

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Excerpted from Kathie's People First Language article, available at [www.disabilityisnatural.com](http://www.disabilityisnatural.com).

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## People First Language

The words we use when talking to or describing others can be very powerful. Sometimes the negative words we use about disability causes us to see what the person cannot do before we see their abilities. For example, when you say handicapped, you automatically look at that individual's challenges. Instead, say someone with a disability...See the PERSON before the disability. People with disabilities are people like everyone else.

Disability is natural; it does not make a person less valuable to society. When we interact with people with disabilities we should focus on their unique personal characteristics instead of defining who they are based on their disability. Having a disability is not a "problem", it is a natural part of life. The words we use have the power to build positive images about disability.

### People First Language Exercise:

Thinking about the positive and negative words that you learned yesterday, re-create the following sentences so they bring up more positive images of people with disabilities. You may refer to the Examples of People First Language Handout for help.

<b>POSTIVE SENTENCE</b> <i>(Example: Sheila has a disability.)</i>	<b>NEGATIVE SENTENCE</b> <i>(Example: Sheila is handicapped.)</i>
1.	1. John is in the 5 <sup>th</sup> grade and he is crippled.
2.	2. Jane suffers from Cerebral Palsy.
3.	3. Dave is confined to a wheelchair.
4.	4. The disabled girl won 1st place in the Spelling Bee.
5.	5. He is retarded.
6.	6. Katie is brain damaged.
7.	7. Michael's walking is restricted because he uses crutches.
8.	8. The handicapped should be excluded from activities.
9.	9. Amy is a normal kid.
10.	10. George is disabled and unable to do things.

### People First Language Answer Key

The words we use when talking to or describing others can be very powerful. Sometimes the negative words we use about disability causes us to see what the person cannot do before we see their abilities. For example, when you say handicapped, you automatically look at that individual's challenges. Instead, say someone with a disability...See the PERSON before the disability. People with disabilities are people like everyone else.

Disability is natural; it does not make a person less valuable to society. When we interact with people with disabilities we should focus on their unique personal characteristics instead of defining who they are based on their disability. Having a disability is not a "problem", it is a natural part of life. The words we use have the power to build positive images about disability.

#### People First Language Exercise:

Thinking about the positive and negative words that you learned yesterday, re-create the following sentences so they bring up more positive images of people with disabilities. You may refer to the Examples of People First Language Handout for help.

<b>POSTIVE SENTENCE</b> <i>(Example: Sheila has a disability.)</i>	<b>NEGATIVE SENTENCE</b> <i>(Example: Sheila is handicapped.)</i>
1. John is in the 5 <sup>th</sup> grade and he has a disability.	1. John is in the 5 <sup>th</sup> grade and he is crippled.
2. Jane has Cerebral Palsy.	2. Jane suffers from Cerebral Palsy.
3. Dave uses a wheelchair.	3. Dave is confined to a wheelchair.
4. The girl with a disability won 1 <sup>st</sup> place in the Spelling Bee.	4. The disabled girl won 1st place in the Spelling Bee.
5. He has a cognitive disability.	5. He is retarded.
6. Katie has a brain injury.	6. Katie is brain damaged.
7. Michael uses crutches to assist his walking.	7. Michael's walking is restricted because he uses crutches.
8. People with disabilities should be included in activities.	8. The handicapped should be excluded from activities.
9. Amy does not have a disability.	9. Amy is a normal kid.
10. George has a disability and is able to do many things.	10. George is disabled and unable to do things.



## People First Sentences Activity

Each of the People First Sentence Activity word sheets is different. The best possible “People First” sentences that students can create are included on this sheet for your reference. There are a total of seven word sheets. You will need to divide students into groups accordingly.

### To Prepare for Activity:

1. For each of the People First Sentence Activity word sheets, cut out the word pieces for each group by cutting along the dotted line.
2. Put the word pieces for each group into separate bags (e.g. Ziploc) and label bags with group numbers. For example, all pieces from Group 1 word sheet go into a bag labeled “Group 1”.

### Remind Students of the following:

There are no punctuation marks (i.e. commas, periods) so it is their responsibility to put them in.

The sentences they create should NOT use negative words.

They should refer to the “Power of Words” handout they received from the previous lesson for help.

### Best Possible Sentences:

**Group 1:** Jackie is a talented student who uses a wheelchair because she has paraplegia.

**Group 2:** Karl has a learning disability which makes reading a challenge for him.

**Group 3:** Corrine assists her friend who has a visual impairment through the dark hallway.

**Group 4:** Stacey has Cerebral Palsy and uses an electronic device to communicate.

**Group 5:** Haylee has a cognitive disability and needs help with daily living skills.

**Group 6:** I know Jake has Obsessive Compulsive Disorder so I accept that he likes to clean things twice.

**Group 7:** Yuki has ADHD which makes it difficult for her to concentrate in class.

### Group 1

**Best Possible Sentence:** Jackie is a talented student who uses a wheelchair because she has paraplegia.

Jackie	is	a	talented	student
who	uses	a	wheelchair	because
she	has	paraplegia	handicapped	confined
is	crippled	restricted	lazy	loser

**Group 2**

**Best Possible Sentence:** Karl has a learning disability which makes reading a challenge for him.

Karl	has	a	learning disability	which
makes	reading	a	challenge	for
him	is	disabled	weakness	impossible
students	ignore	him	reject	learning

**Group 3**

**Best Possible Sentence:** Corrine assists her friend who has a visual impairment through the dark hallway.

Corrine	assists	her	friend	who
has	a	visual	impairment	through
the	dark	hallway	suffers	from
avoids	in	is	unable	to help

**Group 4**

**Best Possible Sentence:** Stacey has Cerebral Palsy and uses an electronic device to communicate.

Stacey	has	Cerebral Palsy	and	uses
an	electronic	device	to	communicate
is	crippled	relies	on	is
restricted	using	is	a	loser

**Group 5**

**Best Possible Sentence:** Haylee has a cognitive disability and needs help with daily living skills.

Haylee	has a	cognitive	disability	and
needs	help	with	daily	living
skills	is	mentally retarded	disabled	is
stupid	she	has	no	friends

**Group 6**

**Best Possible Sentence:** I know Jake has Obsessive Compulsive Disorder so I accept that he likes to clean things twice.

I	know	Jake	has	Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
so	I	accept	that	he
likes	to	clean	things	twice
feel	avoid	shame	when	doesn't

**Group 7**

**Best Possible Sentence:** Yuki has ADHD which makes it difficult for her to concentrate in class.

Yuki	has	ADHD	which	makes
it	difficult	for	her	to
concentrate	in	class	impossible	restricts
learning	is	a	weakness	handicap



### Post-Test Survey

ID number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Period: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

- |  |      |        |
|--|------|--------|
| 9. Gender:                                 | Male | Female |
| 10. Do you have a disability?              | Yes  | No     |
| 11. Do you know someone with a disability? | Yes  | No     |
12. What is the meaning of disability? (Circle one)
- Unable to complete life activities in a certain way
  - Can be physical
  - Can be invisible (you cannot see it just by looking at someone)
  - All of the above
  - Only a and b
13. People with disabilities (Circle all that apply):
- Always depend on other people to take care of them
  - Live successful and independent lives
  - Are nice, but not very smart
  - Don't have a lot of friends
  - Should be treated like everyone else
14. Which of the following are examples of disabilities? (Circle one)
- When letters appear jumbled, for example "read" looks like "raed"
  - Losing all or part of your hearing
  - A brain disorder causing a person to black out or have seizures
  - Both b and c
  - All of the above
15. Circle the statement that is NOT true about disability.
- Many people have some type of disability
  - There are actors, professional athletes, and inventors with disabilities
  - You can always tell when someone has a disability
  - It is ok to have a disability
  - Certain words about disability are more negative than others
16. Circle the sentence that discusses the person with a disability in the most appropriate way:
- The blind guy is in a wheelchair
  - The guy confined to the wheelchair suffers from blindness and is paraplegic
  - Jim uses a wheelchair and he is blind
  - All of the above are okay to say
  - None of the above

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