

**Title of Lesson:**

Learning from disabled authors—empowerment, anti-ableism, and understanding oppression

**Search terms:**

Nothing about us without us; reading; junior high; oppression, disabled perspective, disability; person vs. society

**Date of Creation:**

5-20-2020

**Creator of the Lesson:**

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**Grade Level:**

6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade

**Subject:**

Reading

**Time Duration:**

60 minutes; 1 to 2 days

**Summary of Lesson:**

This lesson teaches students about ongoing oppression and injustice that people with disabilities faced, experienced, or may face. The topic – ongoing oppression and injustice - applies to schools, classrooms, communities, and families. The phrase 'Nothing About Us Without Us,' which comes from the disability rights movement, reminds us that individuals with disabilities have the right to plan, express, and advocate for their individual and group needs and interests.

In this lesson, students will have the opportunity to evaluate, increase or correct their understanding of the disability perspective. They learn about the importance of empathy, respect, tolerance, compassion, and consistent ally support for their peers with disabilities in the classrooms. The students will engage with textual and media resources to learn about the struggles of the disabled community in the context - person vs. person, person vs. society, and lessons one can learn from the challenging life experiences with in society (Charlton, 2000).

## **DSE Alignment:**

DSE 1. Contextualize disability within political and social spheres.

- I can read, write, or speak about disability history.
- I can notice if my needs and wants are being heard along with my peers with disabilities' needs and wants (Dinaro, 2019).

DSE 2. Privilege the interests, agendas, and voices of people labeled with disability/disabled people.

- I can see myself or others I know with disabilities in the character or the perspective of the author of the book.
- I can listen and value the work of scholars and peers with disabilities

DSE 3. Promote social justice, equitable and inclusive educational opportunities, and full and meaningful access to all aspects of society or people labeled with disability/disabled people.

- I can select books about difference, diversity, or disability in my school and in my community.
- I can develop ideas to interrupt oppression and increase inclusive practices in my school.

DSE 4. Assume competence and reject deficit models of disability.

- I can view disability as natural.
- I can avoid judgement because it is not natural (Dinaro, 2019).

## **Standards**

Learning Standards:

- Writing: W.8.1a-d; W.8.2a-f, W.8.3, W.8.4, W.8.5; W.8.6. W.8.7. W.8.8. W. 8.9, W 8.10
- Reading: RL. 8.1, RL. 8.2, RL. 8.3, RL. 8.4, RL.8.5, RL. 8.7. RL. 8.8, RL., RL 8.9. RL.10
- Speaking and Listening: SL. 8.1, SL. 8.2, SL. 8.3, SL. 8.4. SL.8.5. SL.8.6
- Language: L.8.1 a-e, L. 8.2.a-b, L.8.3a-b, L.6.4a, L.6.5a-c, L.6.6.

## **Lesson Objectives and Assessments:**

### Objective 1:

- Students will learn, understand, and identify their individual attitude or feelings toward disability
- Students will have a basic understanding on what disability means from a disability perspective, to be excluded and/or oppressed based on disability
- Students will empathize with oppressed peers, including peers with disabilities in the classroom, school, and communities
- Students will compare struggles of person vs. person, person vs. society (i.e., oppression)

### Assessment 1:

Summative Unit Assessments. Culminating writing task, extension task

### Success Criteria:

- I can identify my attitude and feelings toward disability
- I can identify my attitude and feeling toward oppression of people with disabilities
- I can apply what scholars with disabilities say about how to address oppression with inclusive practices
- I can show empathy for all peers, including peers with disabilities in the classroom, school, and communities
- I can compare struggles of person vs. person, and person vs. society (i.e., oppression)

### **Teacher Guide:**

Anticipatory Set (Prior to beginning of the lesson):

- Write/display just the title of the book on the board “Nothing about Us Without Us”

Lesson Progression (Will the lesson unfold/develop?):

Instructional Activities: In this lesson, students will explore characters and themes as they apply to issues individuals with disabilities face in their schools, classrooms, and communities.

**STEP 1:** On the board “Nothing about Us Without Us” is written - instruct students to reflect and answer the following questions

- In your own words, how do you describe/understand the following phrase? [Instruct the students to brainstorm/write individually and then with a partner—paper or shared Google Doc]

- Follow Up Questions
  - Why do you think the author gave that title to his book?
  - What is the author James Charlton trying to tell us?

The interview video from “Nothing About Us Without Us,” and Chapter 7 of the text prepares students to understand the challenges individuals with disabilities face around the world, the need to empathize, and be a support to peers with disabilities in the classroom. This content enables students to reflect and evaluate their actions toward their peers with disabilities, empower themselves as allies, and support students with disabilities to take control of their education and lives (Charlton, 2000).

**STEP 2:** Review the following vocabulary words with the students:

- Disability [Use the Definition from Charlton’s book]
- Disabled
- Empowerment,
- Empathy
- Tolerance

Clarify the definitions of the vocabulary words with the students. Here is a variety of ways to engage:

- Have students write the word and definition in their notes.
- Multiple Choice, Fill-In Worksheet
- Example/Nonexample working Document
- Pre-Lesson and Post-Lesson Reflection

**STEP 3:** Video Discussion

- Watch a YouTube video Interview (Nothing About Us Without Us Interview Sept 10, 2016). [Captioned] [Length: 4:43 minutes]  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wsfuvqyW2M0>

- After watching the YouTube Interview, as a whole class, discuss the following questions: [Note: as the teacher, you may need to model how to respond]
  - How do these individual struggles actually show a bigger struggle [i.e., with societal barriers], and how does this relate to students with disabilities in the school, classroom, communities, and families?
  - Based on the text and video clip, we understand that individuals with disabilities “lack access to the basic resources, such as healthcare that they needed to survive.”
    - Can you think of any ways in the school or classroom that you feel a similar type of oppression or barrier? Do you recognize or think about it? Do you have to, or do you ‘get to’ ignore it (i.e., privilege, voice at the table/representation/being heard)? How so?
    - Here in the school who or what makes decisions about us, but we are excluded in that decision-making process? Give students a few moments [emphasize external barriers throughout discussion; differentiate between complaining and advocacy]
- After doing whole class discussion, shift to small-group activities:
  - How is the idea of school or classroom as an example of the system which might be “about us without us”?
  - Who established this system and why? In what ways could this system (school or classroom) improve your involvement better than it does now? (15 mins).
  - In the "system that is about us, with us", how should we start or begin to imagine different news ways of doing things [emphasize to be inclusive of all of us]? Each group will create a poster or anchor chart.

Closure (How will the lesson be wrapped up?):

To wrap up the lesson, there is a short YouTube video, and start connecting the dots between the discussions, YouTube Videos, text, and the phrase “Nothing About Us without Us”.

**STEP 4:** Play the following video – “Nothing about us without us”: Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Feb 1, 2017). YouTube video. [Captioned] [Length: 1:12 minutes] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qNMaAHcKcnw>

**STEP 5: Takeaway Discussion**

- Ask the students - Think back to our beginning thoughts—What is the author James Charlton trying to tell us? How did your understanding grow from your initial thoughts? What else needs to be done?
- Inform students that the purpose of the book is to bring awareness to the oppression individuals with disabilities (and groups as a culture) encounter daily even in school classrooms and communities. The book chapter is a starter to challenge an approach that excludes and denies access to their basic needs. Its purpose is to create an entire brand-new systems-approach that includes all classmates, including those with disabilities, and provides an opportunity for their voices to be heard and valued, as well as in our communities (Charlton, 2000).

**STEP 6: Application**

- Group presentations (multiple means of expression): recorded, written, artwork, live presentation, flyer, video, other
- Homework: How do you change the school or classrooms to be about us and with us? (1-2 pages and double spaced. Times 12 pt).
- Exit ticket

**Required Materials/Equipment:**

- Nothing About Us Without Us (2000) by James Charlton (photocopied pages, e-book version for access, Chapter 7. Have a copy in the classroom library to address copyright.)
- Smartboard and Smartboard markers
- Pen, pencils, notebook
- Chrome box
- Two YouTube video clips

**Extensions/Practice (Continuation of Engagement):**

Applying more thought on Charlton, 2000, Chapter 7.

- Compare Charlton quotes to other famous scholars or artists with disabilities. Explore Nothing About Us Without Us more, specifically by people with disabilities.
- Homework: How do you change the school or classrooms to be about us and with us? (1-2 pages and double spaced. Times 12 pts).
- Exit ticket

**References:**

Charlton, J. I. (2000). *Nothing about us without us*. University of California Press.

Dinaro, (2020, 2019, 2006). Lesson plan: *The wonderful life of a fly who couldn't fly* by Lozoff, B. 2002. Johnson Fellows Teachers for Inclusions Program Resource Development. University of San Diego.

*Nothing About Us Without Us Interview* (Sept 10, 2016). YouTube video.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wsfuvqyW2M0>

Nothing about us without us: Rights of persons with disabilities (Feb 1, 2017). YouTube video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qNMaAHcKcnw>