

Title of Lesson: My Friend Isabelle
Date of Creation: October 2019
Creator of the Lesson: Ankit Shah, Graduate Student, University of San Diego, California
Grade Level: K to 3
Subject: Inclusive education
Time Duration: Approximate 30-45 minute.
<p>Summary of Lesson: This lesson is designed to strengthen inclusiveness in the classroom by introducing Isabelle’s story to the students. Isabelle is a child with Down syndrome. She is curious and enthusiastic to do many things.</p> <p>Through facts presented and a narrative picture book read aloud in which a young boy named Charlie describes activities he shares with his friend Isabelle, the students will gain an understanding that we all are different. Still, we all are part of the same world. There is no comparison or competition needed.</p>
<p>DSE Alignment: Demonstrate commitment to inclusion. Students with disabilities are embraced and included in the class, as a rule, no matter their level of ability.</p>
<p>Lesson Objectives and Assessments:</p> <p>Objective 1: Students will learn that differences are respected and valued in the classroom. Assessment 1: Observe student engagement in listening and discussing the concept.</p> <p>Objective 2: Students will understand that we all are different, and we all are part of the same world. Assessment 2: Observe students’ ability to find differences.</p>

Teacher Guide:Anticipatory Set (Before beginning of the lesson):

Activity: Write the word FRIEND on the board. Then ask students to share more about their friends. Option: Ask students to write down a few words/sentences about a friend or to draw a picture of them and their friend playing together.

Discuss: Let's look at each others' pictures. People have different thoughts and feelings about their friends. Some students have very detailed pictures of playing with their friends. Some show faces that are happy. Some are playing different games with their friends in the pictures. What do you see when you look at these?

Now let's ask some questions to each student:

- Who is taller between you and your friend?
- Who runs faster between you and your friend?
- Who laughs louder? Sings more softly?
- Do you both have the same eyes or hair? Etc.

Discuss: Let's look around the room at our classmates. We don't all look the same, do we? (note differences). But sometimes, we find similarities. We like a lot of different things and some of the same things. Some of us are very good at running, and some of us are very good at sitting still. (ask what they like to do.) It is so beautiful that everyone is so unique. Although we all are at the same age, we are never exactly like anyone else.

Ask students to find someone different from them in some way. "Find someone wearing a different color than you and give a high-five OR wave your hand to them." "Find someone who is shorter or taller..."

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

Now let's introduce the book about Charlie and Isabelle:

Discuss: Like you and your friend, Charlie also has a friend. Her name is Isabelle, and Charlie writes a book about their friendship.

Read aloud the picture book and connect Charlie and Isabelle's activities with the students' experiences that they have shared in the classroom or responding to the above questions in the classroom.

Help them understand, not only are you different, Charlie and Isabelle are also different. You, as a teacher, are also different from another teacher. Extend it to students' siblings, cousins, neighbors, etc....

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

Let's summarize the book: Charlie and Isabelle are friends. They both like to draw, dance, read, and play together. They both like to eat and cheers together. Both of them cry if they feel hurt. And like most friends, like all your classmates, they are also different from each other. And that is why their friendship is unique and that is how our differences make the world more enjoyable.

Required Materials/Equipment:

- The book, My Friend Isabelle
- Drawing paper

Note:

- Teacher may like to adjust this lesson plan according to the class interest and need.

Extensions/Practice (Continuation of Engagement):

1. Invite students to talk to or play with a classmate they don't know very well yet.
2. Take a chart paper and ask all the students to draw themselves and write their names in that chart paper. Title the picture 'My Classroom' and post it on the wall of the classroom. Use it in the future as a reference or reminder of our commitment to an inclusive community.

References:

- Woloson, E., & Gough, B. (2003). *My friend Isabelle*. Woodbine House, Inc.
- [Girl Tells the World That Down Syndrome Is 'Not Scary'](#)