CELEBRATION IDEAS:

Activities and Resources for Schools, Classrooms, and Families



National Inclusive Schools Week™ highlights and celebrates the progress of our nation's schools in providing a supportive and quality education to an increasingly diverse student population, including students with disabilities, those from low socio-economic backgrounds, and English language learners. The *Week* also provides an important opportunity for educators, students, and parents to discuss what else needs to be done in order to ensure that their schools continue to improve their ability to successfully educate all children. The *Week* is being organized by the Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative and Education Development Center, Inc. as a way of acknowledging the hard work and commitment of teachers, administrators, students, and parents in making their schools more inclusive, and, thereby, significantly contributing to the development of a more inclusive society.

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INTRODUCTION

GREAT THINGS HAPPEN IN INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS!

Great things are happening in our nation's inclusive schools! The *6th Annual National Inclusive Schools Week*™ will be celebrated December 4-8, 2006. This year's theme, "Charting an Inclusive Journey through School, Work, and Life: Successful Transition Planning for All Students", highlights the effective practices that schools are engaging in to deliver more seamless transitions for students across school programs and to increase post-secondary outcomes for all students, including those with disabilities and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Inclusive schools and communities guide children and youth along a personalized and supportive path, which can ensure smoother transitions and, ultimately, more successful futures. The new supplemental publication, "Charting an Inclusive Journey through School, Work, and Life: Successful Transition Planning for All Students" provides information, resources, and ideas for addressing the many diverse issues around the inevitable transitions that occur throughout the school years.

National Inclusive Schools Week™ provides an opportunity to highlight and celebrate the progress our nation's schools have made in providing a supportive and quality education to an increasingly diverse student population. The *Week* also offers an important opportunity for educators, students, and parents to discuss what else needs to be done in order to ensure that their schools continue to improve their ability to successfully educate *all* children. Since the inaugural celebration in 2001, the *Week* has been celebrated by tens of thousands of students, families, and educators in schools and communities in every state in the U.S. as well as several foreign countries.

The goals of *National Inclusive Schools Week*™ are to:

- ***Celebrate the progress*** of schools in educating an increasingly diverse student population
- ***Acknowledge the hard work*** and commitment of schools, families, and communities in creating inclusive opportunities for all students, particularly those with disabilities and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- ***Encourage reflection*** on what still needs to be done to expand these opportunities
- ***Promote action*** toward increasing the capacity of schools and communities to serve and embrace a diverse population of students

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF OUR NATION'S STUDENTS

National Inclusive Schools Week™ promotes a national dialogue on the importance of building inclusive schools and communities, where *all* students have full access to educational, social, and vocational opportunities. We thank all of those who have supported the mission of the *Week* by hosting events in their local communities, bringing information about inclusive education to local and state policy makers, incorporating inclusive practices into their work, and promoting inclusive education in hundreds of different ways.

The following statistics reflect the significant national and international impact of the *Week:*

- Nearly 200,000 products and materials related to inclusion and inclusive educational practices distributed.
- Celebrations and reflective events reported in every state in the U.S., Canada, the United Kingdom, and South America.
- More than 100,000 copies of "Celebration Ideas: Resources and Activities for Schools, Classrooms, and Families" downloaded over the last five years.
- More than 150 organizational co-sponsors and school district partners formally committed to promoting the *Week.*
- Hundreds of Web links to http://www.inclusiveschools.org
- Coverage of the *Week* by several local and national newspapers, including *The Boston Globe, The Baltimore Sun, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, The Cincinnati Enquirer,* and *The Washington Post.*
- Endorsements of the *Week* by the White House and the U.S. Department of Education.
- State and local government declarations supporting the *Week.*

Even more important are the benefits that these activities have had on families, schools, and communities. We have received hundreds of emails, phone calls, and letters from across the nation describing the impact that the *Week* has had on their local schools and communities.

SHARE YOUR STORIES

How will you celebrate the *Week*? We encourage you to share your ideas, photos, and stories with us by emailing nisw@edc.org. We will do our best to post artwork, stories, and ideas on http://www.inclusiveschools.org for others to read and enjoy.

National Inclusive Schools Week™ is more than just a one-week celebration. It provides an opportunity to promote activities that bring about awareness and knowledge of inclusive practices throughout the year.

GETTING INVOLVED

There are many ways to get involved in *National Inclusive Schools Week*™. The following materials are available to support your celebration and continuous efforts to promote and develop inclusive education practices in your community.

- ***National Inclusive Schools Week*™ Web site** is both the source of information and resources about the *Week* and for promoting inclusive practices throughout the year. For updates, new ideas, and events, we encourage you to visit often at http://www.inclusiveschools.org.

- **A Celebration Kit,** available on http://www.inclusiveschools.org, contains everything you need to participate in the *Week:*

    - **Celebration ideas:** Dozens of examples of actual celebrations from participants across the country are available to help you plan your own celebration.
    - **Theme-based resources:** "Bridging the Gap: Achievement for All" is a collection of activities and resources focused on this year's theme.
    - **Support materials:** Publications, a sample proclamation, press releases, and other materials help you spread the message about the *Week*.
    - **Promotional materials:** Posters, stickers, pencils, and other materials help you promote your celebration of the *Week* and serve to highlight your school's commitment to inclusive education. The purchase of these items also assists in underwriting the costs of supporting the *Week* as an annual event.

- ***National Inclusive Schools Week*™ Poster & Essay Contest**: We invite you to participate in a poster or essay contest reflecting the theme "Great things happen in inclusive schools." For further details please see page 14.

CELEBRATION IDEAS

"Celebration Ideas: Activities and Resources for Schools, Classrooms, and Families" serves as a practical guide for facilitating the inclusion of all students in the general education setting. As the diversity of learners within our nation's classrooms continues to grow, the need to structure curriculum, lessons, and activities that not only meet the needs of all students, but celebrate the diversity among those learners, becomes critical.

Whether students in your school and community are already sharing a common learning environment or you are just beginning to pave the way for an atmosphere of accessibility and acceptance for all, these resources will help to encourage and inspire movement toward a more inclusive community. The updated "Celebration Ideas" 2006 includes new activities, lesson plans, and other resources for educators, families, students, and community leaders who are committed to embracing diversity and providing access to learning for all students. This year, we also are organizing our first annual national poster and essay contest for students (grades K-12+) and adults. Please see page 14 for more information.

CELEBRATION IDEAS (CONT'D)

To assist you in planning for the *Week*, we have categorized the activities into three levels of implementation:

1. **Activities that Promote Awareness:** Activities in this section can help create awareness of the benefits of inclusive education. Awareness is the first step in promoting positive change. Once people are able to recognize the promise of inclusive education, they can begin to seek the knowledge and skills necessary to make change happen.
2. **Activities that Build Knowledge and Skill:** Activities in this section reflect the importance of taking awareness to the next level…Action! Building the knowledge and skills of students, families, school staff, and members of the community increases the likelihood that inclusive practices will become integrated into the framework of the community.
3. **Activities that Influence the System:** Activities in this section reflect the importance of using knowledge and newly acquired skills to promote changes within the system. By changing the policies, procedures, and culture of our communities, it is more likely that positive advances in inclusive education will become institutionalized.

"Celebrations Across the Nation" highlights what other schools and districts have done to celebrate the *Week* since 2001. There are also several links to Web sites that have fun and educational activities that may be helpful in your celebration planning. This year you will find information on how you might host your own inclusive education teaching expo. Several school districts across the nation have celebrated the *Week* with their own resource-sharing events for general and special education teachers. Here you will find details about how the Florida Inclusion Network planned and implemented their innovative and successful "Share Fair," which includes over 150 schools from the Miami-Dade County School District.

INCLUSIVE CELEBRATIONS

As you prepare for district, school, and classroom celebrations, it is important to ensure that the materials and activities are accessible to all members of the school and community. You may want to encourage a faculty member trained in special education or bilingual education to participate in the planning process to help make suggestions for providing access and accommodations.
Examples of adapting materials and events include:

- Interpreter services for programs and events
- Printed material available in Braille and other languages spoken in the community
- Wheelchair accessibility to all events
- Assistive technology devices available
- Peer support or support provides for those people with disabilities who need physical and/or other kinds of assistance in order to participate.

The classroom activities and lesson plans included in this document can be adapted for use with a diverse group of participants. For additional information on adapting curriculum, please consult the resources section.

CELEBRATIONS ACROSS THE NATION

Each year we receive hundreds of emails, faxes, phone calls, and pieces of mail describing *National Inclusive Schools Week*™ celebrations in communities across the nation.

COMMUNITY- AND STATE-WIDE CELEBRATIONS

Entire states and communities have chosen to celebrate *National Inclusive Schools Week*™, contributing to the development of a more inclusive society. Below are some examples of the ways the *Week* was celebrated in 2001-2005 on a broad scale:

- A group of parent and advocacy organizations in New Jersey rallied together to obtain an annual statewide proclamation of *New Jersey Inclusive Schools Week*

A GRASSROOTS EFFORT TO BUILD INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS & COMMUNITIES IN NEW JERSEY

In 2001, under the leadership of the New Jersey Coalition for Inclusive Education, a coalition of organizations (Statewide Parent Advocacy Network/New Jersey's federally funded Parent Training and Information Center, the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities, and Family Voices-New Jersey, among others) wrote to the New Jersey Governor, the Commissioner of Education, the Director of the state's Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs, and several legislators, requesting that the governor identify the first week of December as *New Jersey Inclusive Schools Week.* Follow up phone calls were made to the Governor's proclamation office to ensure that the proclamation was issued on time.

In addition to the gubernatorial proclamation, the New Jersey State Legislature also issued legislative proclamations for *Inclusive Schools Week.* An *Inclusive Schools Week* proclamation has been issued each year since 2001. The gubernatorial proclamations are featured on the Web sites of the organizations who are part of the coalition, and are disseminated to local school districts along with sample daily public service announcements for school PA systems, local School Board resolutions, and the activities packets developed for *National Inclusive Schools Week.*

Diana Autin
Executive Co-Director
New Jersey's Statewide Parent Advocacy Network

- The Florida Inclusion Network holds an monthly community forum on inclusive education at a local bookstore, with recognition of the *Week* in December. Below you will find more information on how they do it.

NEED A LITTLE TLC?

Everyone needs a little Tender Loving Care now and then. So gather up your colleagues and others interested in inclusive education and begin a support forum at your local bookstore, library, or coffee shop. The forum is a great way to meet others who are interested in inclusive education, and is also a way to build capacity through networking. You might want to ask your local bookstore if you can hold a discussion group at their store (try to give them a month or so notice of your plan). Let them know that you will be bringing business into the store—this is a great way to build a business partnership (I hold mine at Barnes and Noble on a monthly basis). Our TLC Support Forums are evening events (7:00 pm – 8:30 pm), and open to anyone who is interested. Parents, teachers, university students, and administrators typically attend mine.

The evening's agenda looks like this:

- five minutes of introductions
- 10 minutes of celebrations regarding inclusive practices
- 30 minutes of a topic of interest (instructional strategies, home-school connections, peer supports, etc.)
- 30 minutes of focused problem solving (participants present specific problems, and the group provides solutions)
- 15 minutes of literature reading

Facilitation of the TLC is led shared by a different member of the group each month. The bookstore provides the chairs—and often some cookies or treats. We also throw in some other freebies. This is a relaxing informal forum that is meaningful to all involved.

Cathy Orlando
Facilitator
Florida Inclusion Network: Miami-Dade

COMMUNITY- AND STATE-WIDE CELEBRATIONS (CONT'D)

- Superintendent of Hartford Public Schools Robert Henry issued a proclamation declaring the first week in December *Inclusive Schools Week* in this district. The community also held a special celebration dinner to honor the nominees and recipients of the "Inclusive Person of the Year" awards to educators and parents who are providing exceptional leadership in creating inclusive schools and classrooms. The Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative's Executive Director and *National Inclusive Schools Week* founder Dr. David Riley attended the awards ceremony and introduced the keynote speaker, Bill Henderson of Boston Public Schools.

- The Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council organized a poster and essay contest titled "Celebrating disAbility: Open Up Your Mind and Your Community." Winners were presented with certificates from the Governor's Office and the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council.

- The state of Pennsylvania's Bureau of Special Education held a state-wide poster contest "to encourage all students to recognize how their schools support inclusive practices...."

- The New York state legislature proclaimed December 5-9, 2005 *Inclusive Schools Week.*

- In 2004, Clark County School District in Las Vegas, NV, the National Institute for Urban School Improvement, the Mandalay Resort Group, and the Nevada Partnership for Inclusive Education presented "Inclusive Education: From Benevolence to Belonging," a one-hour panel discussion and follow up interview with Dr. Howard Gardner, Professor, Harvard University. The program was videotaped and made available on the Web.

- Kyrene School District in Tempe, AZ, kicked off the *Week* with a celebration for district personnel that included food, games, and literature about the diversity of its community. Many of this district's staff, who also work and volunteer for various disability and community organizations, shared information about these agencies, including those that support children and adults who are visually or hearing impaired and others that support the Hispanic and American Indian communities.

- In celebration of *National Inclusive Schools Week*™ 2003, the Cooke Center for Learning and Development, New York City Parent to Parent, and Parents for Inclusive Education, and others held a kickoff breakfast to celebrate the *Week*, followed by a panel discussion, "Inclusion: Moving from Benevolence to Belonging." All those in the New York area were encouraged to attend.

- Mayor Jere Wood of Roswell, GA, issued a proclamation designating Dec.1-5 *Inclusive Schools Week*™ in Roswell.

- In 2002, the Arc of Maryland, Inc., sponsored an essay contest for all middle schools in the state, with the theme "Together We're Better." Students wrote essays that explained why inclusive schools are so important and how students with disabilities contribute to their communities in a positive way. Winners were honored at a special legislative reception where a sixth grader from Pine Grove Middle School in Baltimore won first prize. In 2003, the Arc of Maryland expanded the contest to include a poster contest for elementary school students.

COMMUNITY- AND STATE-WIDE CELEBRATIONS (CONT'D)

- Canada celebrates its own *National Inclusive Education Week* in November. The Canadian Association for Community Living launched the *Week* after learning about our inaugural celebration of the *Week* in 2001. In 2003, Canada's Governor General Adrienne Clarkson supported the November 2-8 celebration of *National Inclusive Education Week*.

- The Indian River School District in Vero Beach, FL has celebrated the *Week* for four consecutive years by providing all schools with a Celebration Kit, holding a Gallery Walk to display posters, videos, pictures, stories, and projects supporting inclusive practices and other celebrations throughout the district that celebrate diversity.

- The New Jersey State Legislature declared the *Week* of December 2-6, 2002, *New Jersey Inclusive Schools Week*™, and planned to issue a proclamation annually.

- In partnership with the Arc of Maryland, Inc., the South Cumberland, Maryland, Branch Library held an evening program, "Using Children's Literature to Build an Inclusive Community." Students, parents, grandparents, teachers, friends, and others were invited to bring their favorite books that had inclusive themes.

DISTRICT-WIDE CELEBRATIONS

- School districts that choose to celebrate *National Inclusive Schools Week*™ send a positive message to the community about the philosophy and climate of their schools. Involving district-level personnel in the celebration serves to empower the school-based staff, families, and students to move forward towards creating a more inclusive school community. Below is a list of examples of district-level celebrations:

NATIONAL INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS WEEK™ POSTER & ESSAY CONTEST

In recognition of *National Inclusive Schools Week*, you are invited to participate in a poster or essay contest reflecting the theme "Great things happen in inclusive schools." We are asking students and adults to write an essay or create a poster that explores why inclusive schools are so important and how students of all abilities and cultural backgrounds contribute to their schools and communities in a positive way. How can we make all who come to our school feel welcome and supported? What can we learn from those who are different from us? This contest presents an opportunity for students, parents, educators, and others to think about the importance of individuality and diversity, and how their school communities are enriched by students with and without disabilities and those of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

You may participate at the following levels:

- **Grades K-3**
- **Grades 4-5**
- **Grades 6-8**
- **Grades 9-12+**
- **Adults**

Please note: An individual may submit a poster or a group, class, or school may work together on one poster.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: DECEMBER 15, 2006

WINNING ENTRIES/PRIZES:
Winning entries will be displayed at Education Development Center, Inc., posted on the Web site: www.inclusiveschools.org, and included in future publication of the Celebration Kit. Winners will receive certificates from *National Inclusive Schools Week* and prizes donated by our sponsors.

For complete contest rules and entry form, please visit
www.inclusiveschools.org

DISTRICT-WIDE CELEBRATIONS (CONT'D)

- Miami-Dade held its fifth annual Share Fair in December of 2005. The Share Fair is a professional development event with general and special educators. See the box below for ideas and information on how you can host a similar event in your school district!

SHARE FAIR: A TEACHERS' EXPO ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The teachers' expo is a celebration of the collaborative partnerships of general and special educators. Collaborative classroom teams show off their inclusive classrooms through poster displays, videos, photographs, student work, successful instructional strategies, family-school partnerships, and data targeting student achievement. Building capacity across your school, region, or district is the of with this event. Celebrate the success of teacher teams while building networking opportunities between families, teachers, administrators, and community members.

The expo is like a "home show" for inclusive practices. This event can be as small or as large as you would like it to be. If you are just beginning, provide incentives to teacher teams and invite them to show off their classroom practices by creating a poster board, which highlights their classroom. It can have photos, student work, lesson plans, etc. Provide the team with a table at the expo. Ask them to bring in student work samples, create a brochure about their classroom, and be on hand to answer questions, as other teachers, parents and administrators browse through. The event will look like a "science fair."

The expo needs to be an exciting event to attend…so hype it up! You may use a school cafeteria to stage your event. Choose a theme, like The Wizard of Oz. Teacher teams incorporated this theme into their displays, "Oh, ToTo, I don't think we're in 'self-contained' anymore." In one corner of the space, you can have on-going presentations. Ask teachers to share some strategies and invite students to speak, and parents and administrators to share their perspectives. These are short 5-10 minute presentations. Don't forget to ask your family agencies to set up a table and share information. You may ask publishers to join in (as long as they offer free giveaways). In another corner, have a game about inclusive education—use it as an opportunity to increase awareness and knowledge. The game offers participants a chance to win tickets for giveaways. Offer light snacks, especially if your guests are coming right after work.

Our event last two hours. Try starting the event about one hour after school ends (ours runs 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm). Give yourself plenty of time to set up—there is always more work than you think! But this has been one of the most rewarding events that I do during *National Inclusive Schools Week*. I started with 6 schools presenting in a cafeteria…and now over 150 schools are represented and I have to use a double ballroom at a local hotel. But it is a great way to promote inclusive education, build capacity, and give teacher the kudos that they deserve!

Cathy Orlando
Facilitator
Florida Inclusion Network: Miami-Dade

DISTRICT-WIDE CELEBRATIONS (CONT'D)

- Los Angeles Unified School District recognized schools that have met outcomes (of their modified consent decree) for reducing suspensions and increasing opportunities for students with disabilities to be in general education.

- The Special Education PTA at Penfield Central School District in Penfield, NY held its annual book fair to kick off the *Week*. The PTA also purchases books related to special needs and donates them to every school library in the district.

- Plymouth-Canton Community Schools, Plymouth, MI held its first annual celebration of the *Week* by sharing inclusive schools posters and inclusion strategies with each school in the district, hosting a teleconference on Accessing the General Education Curriculum: Universal Design and Technology, and soliciting newspaper coverage.

- In 2005, Clark County School District in Las Vegas, NV held a variety of student activities, including the following:
  - Hands Across the School: In each classroom, students were given paper cutouts of hands. They were instructed to write a few sentences explaining what "inclusion" means to them on their paper hand for display around the school.
  - Plants: Students selected a plant that represents their class, discuss or write about how it is a metaphor for their class, and then planted it in the courtyard next to a stake with their room numbers.
  - Poster Contest: Students created posters of "What Inclusion Means to ME!" Each class voted on the best poster from their class.

- In 2004, Capital Area Intermediate Unit (CAIU)—24 school districts and five charter schools in Central Pennsylvania—celebrated the *Week* with the theme, "Working Together to Celebrate and Educate All Learners." CAIU received official support of the *Week* from its school board, and organized various regional meetings of special educators, superintendents, principals, and curriculum coordinators throughout November and December. CAIU runs an annual contest in which they solicited educators, families, and administrators' ideas for classroom or building level inclusive practices. The contest highlights the use of universal design, team building activities, strategies for bullying prevention, and children's literature as ways to increase inclusion, and was now timed to coincide with the *Week*.

- In 2003, Houston Independent School District distributed Celebration Kit materials to all 500 schools in the district and held special celebrations in four schools. The district gave each of the 1,200 students a keepsake related to the week (bookmark, bumper sticker, pen, or magnet).

- Clark County School District in Las Vegas, NV, completed a video for parents, "Inclusion: Yes, We Can!" The video tells four students' stories and was presented on educational television to show students and families how Clark County supports inclusion.

DISTRICT-WIDE CELEBRATIONS (CONT'D)

- The special education director of Saint Paul Public Schools in Saint Paul, MN, wrote a letter to all principals and assistant principals encouraging them to "talk about inclusion everywhere": at staff meetings, parent meetings, holiday concerts, and student assemblies. The scope of the *Week* was described as including many types of diversity, including special needs, language, ethnic, gender, religion, and more. Each schools' site council focused on the question: "What can you do over the next year to make your school more inclusive and welcoming?"

- Chautauqua Lake Central School District's Board of Education in Mayville, NY, declared the first week in December *Inclusive Schools Week*™, noting that the district "strives every day to make sure each student feels welcome and is learning...."

- Denver Public Schools in Denver, CO, adopted an official proclamation from its school board designating the first week in December *Inclusive Schools Week*™.

- Socorro Independent School District in El Paso, TX, promoted the *Week* in its parent newsletter, at a district-wide parent group meeting, on school and district marquis, and on the local community cable channel.

- Fairfax County Public Schools in Fairfax, VA, aligned its in-service calendar to coincide with the *Week* and held several meetings throughout the district that focused on the topic of inclusive practices. The School Board also passed a resolution to recognize the efforts of staff and underscore the importance of inclusive schools.

- Chicago Public Schools in Chicago, IL, created window displays about inclusive practices in central office buildings.

SCHOOL-WIDE CELEBRATIONS

Schools are often considered the heart of the community. They are a wonderful place to celebrate diversity and bring about awareness and acceptance of differences among community members. Thousands of schools across the nation chose to celebrate *National Inclusive Schools Week*™ from 2001-2005. Here are some examples of how they participated in the *Week*:

- At the Patrick O'Hearn School in Dorchester, MA, "inclusion is a way of life" and the arts are central to their approach. Their celebration featured a music and dance program in the African Malinke Tradition.

- A high school in Jersey City celebrated with journal entries and class discussions on various biases.

- Concord-Carlisle High School in Concord, MA, honored its staff during a luncheon.

- Middle and elementary schools in Denver Public Schools in Denver, CO, developed a school book that honors the diversity of their students, wrote a school song, and created school displays.

- The Hartranft Elementary School in Philadelphia, PA, in conjunction with the Institute on Disabilities at Temple University, celebrated with a Diversity Carnival where students created poems, performed dances, sang songs, and dined on a multicultural feast.

- Fairfax County Public Schools in Fairfax, VA, had school-wide celebrations including presentations on inclusive practices, staff sharing sessions, awards of certificates and appreciation letters, literary readings, poster and banner displays, and celebrations with cakes and cookies.

- Montclair State University in Upper Montclair, NJ, showed videos on various aspects of inclusion and had discussions with students and faculty in the teacher education programs.

- New Sarpy Kindergarten Center in Destrehan, LA, created art projects, such as "I Am Special" buttons that the children wore during the *Week*. A guest speaker with a disability spoke about her experiences of life on wheels.

- Spring Valley Schools in Spring Valley, CA, students created "ME" bags, life-sized paper dolls, the “best thing about you” notes, and name histories.

CLASSROOM, SCHOOL, AND DISTRICT-WIDE CELEBRATION IDEAS

ACTIVITIES THAT PROMOTE AWARENESS

The activities in this section serve to create an awareness of the benefits of inclusive education. Awareness is the first step in promoting positive change. Once people are able to recognize the promise of inclusive education, they can begin to seek the knowledge and skills necessary to make change happen.

CLASSROOM LEVEL

- Design a classroom mural to depict the students' perception of what an inclusive school and community looks like.
- Assign students to write an essay describing how to be a good friend. Have each student share their thoughts on kindness, acceptance, and friendship.
- Read and discuss poetry that focuses on creating and maintaining unity among different groups of people.
- Establish a "Five Minutes for Friendship" ritual each day. Have students pair up with classmates on a rotating basis. Provide a topic for the pair to discuss for five minutes. Ask a few pairs to share their conversation with the class.
- As a classroom teacher, invite students who are not included in general education into your classroom for one of your daily lessons. Try to expand these opportunities in your room and throughout the school.
- Expand your morning circle activity to include various modes of communication. Use sign language, foreign languages, and augmentative communication supports (including photos, pictures and assistive technology devices, etc.) to support those students whose communication systems might not include spoken English and to expose other students to the variety of ways that people can communicate.
- Have students develop a list of the variety of ways that people can communicate. Help them expand the list by discussing different forms of communication including sign languages, foreign languages, assistive technology devices, etc.
- Ask related service personnel (occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech-language therapists, etc.) to include typically developing peers in the activities that they do with children who have disabilities in your classroom. Fun games that target the therapy goals of some students while including peers promotes the inclusion of all students.
- Develop a morning greeting routine so that all children, including those with disabilities and English Language Learners, have the opportunity to communicate with each other at the beginning of the day.

CLASSROOM LEVEL (CONT'D)

- Assign all classroom tasks/jobs in pairs so that children who aren't able to complete a task independently don't feel that they always need a "helper." This encourages children to collaborate with each other to get a job done.
- Decorate your classroom with items that support academic development for all children. This can include learning supports such as pictures, large print letters, and clear directions to complete assignments. If there are children who cannot access this information from a distance due to a visual, physical, or other disability, make small copies of these items to be used at the child's desk.
- Have students work in groups to come up with a "blueprint" or plan for an inclusive school. They can focus on areas including physical access, curriculum ideas, support strategies, etc. A poster session can be held during the *Week* for each team to highlight their ideas.
- Ask students to write about a time that they didn't feel "included" in a group. Talk about how it made them feel. Ask them how their experience relates to anyone who is perceived as different and what challenges they might face in a school setting.
- Have students keep a journal to regularly record their contributions to an inclusive school environment.
- Model ways in which students can approach and interact with others who may be different than they are in some way. Role-play hypothetical situations in which the students may have the opportunity to interact with a person in a wheelchair, a person who is blind, someone who speaks another language, or an individual from another religion or culture.
- Create art projects, such as "I am special" or "Great things happen in inclusive schools" buttons that the students can wear during the *Week*.
- Invite a guest speaker with a disability to speak about his or her experiences. Be sure to include a question-and-answer time for students.
- Invite students to write a list of all of their unique characteristics under a picture of themselves. Display student work during the *Week*.
- Have the class plant a celebration garden including flowers and plants with different characteristics. Ask students to describe how each is beautiful in a unique way. Students can write an essay or journal entry on the ways the garden reflects the diversity of their community.
- Ask students to write and perform a play about accepting differences in others.
- Encourage students to write to Congress or a local elected official about inclusive education issues that concern them.
- Develop a class motto or mission statement that highlights the inclusive nature of the classroom.
- Implement a slogan contest: "I feel included when…", "I feel included because…".
- Involve support staff (e.g., counselors, nurses, office staff, janitors, related service staff) in classroom-based activities to create an awareness of their role in the school community.
- Variations on a theme: Have students vote on a theme or issue related to inclusive schools that they would like to address during the *Week*. Integrate the theme into the major curriculum areas.

SCHOOL LEVEL

- Create an inclusive school portrait to display in the school lobby. Have each student bring in a small photo of themselves for display in a large collage during the *Week*.
- Make an inclusion quilt. Have each classroom design a square of material with words or a design that celebrates the *Week*. Ask one volunteer from each class to help put the quilt together. Display in the school lobby during the *Week* and throughout the year.
- Ask students to contribute to a list of "100 Things that Make our School Inclusive". Place a large bin in a common area of the school and have students write their ideas on paper and drop into the bin. When the count reaches 100 choose some of the contributions to share with the students during an assembly. Give prizes (e.g., pencils and posters) to the students whose ideas were chosen.
- Ask families, school personnel, and students to contribute their ideas to the slogan "Great things happen in inclusive schools." Have a book or a box at the entrance of the school prompting people to answer the question "What are some great things that happen in our inclusive school?" Share the contributions with members of the school community during the *Week* through a newsletter or during a planned celebration.
- Have a poster contest and/or essay contest using the theme "Great things happen in inclusive schools." Display the art and literature work throughout the school and community.
- During a staff meeting or professional development day, ask teachers to evaluate their rooms for accessibility. Have wheelchairs, blindfolds, white canes, earplugs, and other simulators available for them to use during this assessment. Provide a form for teachers to record their findings and allow them to share their plans to improve their classrooms with the group.
- Develop an "Inclusive Practices Manual" for the school. Ask teachers to contribute ideas, strategies, and tools that they have found successful in promoting inclusive practices in their classroom and throughout the school.
- Highlight an "Inclusive Practice of the *Week*" in the faculty room.
- Honor school faculty and staff committed to inclusive education at a luncheon.
- Make a daily PA announcement on a particular topic or theme that relates to the *Week.*
- Make a school book that honors the diversity of your students. Have the book on display at the front office.
- Write a school song that highlights the inclusive nature of the school.
- Create school displays that promote the principles of the *Week.*
- Have all students and staff read a common book with an inclusive theme. Have school-wide or grade-level discussions about the book.
- Make a video for families that highlights how your school celebrates diversity. The video can be shown during parent-teacher conference night.
- Promote the *Week* via a parent newsletter, the local newspaper, school marquis, and the local community cable channel.
- Write a letter to school staff encouraging them to address inclusion at staff meetings, parent meetings, holiday concerts, student assemblies, and any other appropriate situations.

SCHOOL LEVEL (CONT'D)

- Display student artwork and projects around the school. Projects might include life-sized paper dolls, the "what makes me special" essays, name histories, or family trees.
- Hold school-wide celebrations that might include presentations on inclusive practices by staff and other experts, poster and banner displays, awards for inclusive practices at the school or in the community, student displays, and celebrations with food from many countries.
- Invite faculty and families of neighboring districts to your celebration activities.
- Ask each grade level to choose a different topic relating to inclusive education to focus on during the *Week*. Share resources, photos, books, and activity ideas in the school lobby and faculty lounge.

DISTRICT AND COMMUNITY LEVEL

- Create a DVD or video about your school district and community highlighting diversity and the commitment to inclusive education. Provide copies to new families entering the school district and to realtors who are encouraging new families to move to town.
- Showcase materials around the slogan "Great things happen in inclusive schools" in local public buildings and community gathering places (library, town hall, community center, etc). Photos, posters, essays, and other artifacts can serve to highlight the achievements of the district and its work toward being more inclusive.
- Approach a local television station with ideas about how they can highlight the events of the *Week*, such as interviews with district personnel, family members, and students; video tours of schools that promote inclusive education; or coverage of specific activities you have planned.
- Present the school board with materials that promote the *Week* including stickers, posters, and pencils.
- Look for opportunities to highlight your school or district's inclusive practices at community events such as town meetings, holiday concerts, art exhibits, local religious events, etc. Have students make buttons, posters, or other items to sell that will remind the community of the inclusive nature of the school while raising money to support events promoting inclusive education.
- Create window displays about inclusive practices in central office buildings.
- Encourage district-level personnel to volunteer in a school classroom to read a book about diversity or facilitate a discussion about inclusive communities.
- Sponsor a community essay contest using the theme of the *Week*. Have students write essays that explain why inclusive schools are important and how students with disabilities contribute to their communities in a positive way. Honor winners at an awards banquet.
- Organize an evening program inviting students, families, teachers, and community members to read their favorite books with inclusive themes.

DISTRICT AND COMMUNITY LEVEL (CONT'D)

- Show videos on various aspects of inclusion and hold discussions with students and faculty in local teacher education programs.
- Promote the *Week* to community organizations (after school programs, senior centers, recreation centers, boys and girls clubs) and/or invite these groups to participate in the *Week*'s activities to further build an inclusive community.

ACTIVITIES THAT BUILD KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Activities in this section reflect the importance of taking an awareness of inclusion to the next level….Action. By increasing the knowledge and skills of students, families, school staff, and members of the community, inclusive practices will be more likely to become integrated into the framework of the community.

CLASSROOM LEVEL

- Encourage students to use graphic organizers as a tool to write an essay/story/project conveying their thoughts and ideas about inclusive education. See the Resources section for links to sample graphic organizers.
- Take time out to explore your students' interests. Ask students to identify topics that interest them and activities that occupy their non-school time. Try to incorporate some of their interests and likes into your classroom.
- Make a commitment during the *Week* to try some new teaching strategies aimed at improving outcomes for all kids in your class. Incorporate active learning into your language arts lesson, take the students for an observation walk during science class, or act out the events in history that you are studying. Your hard work will pay off, because the students will embrace learning while having fun.
- Incorporate the teaching of study skills into the classroom curriculum. These supports serve to increase the achievement levels of all students.
- Ask students to complete a Learning Style Assessment. Host a classroom discussion about the various ways that people learn and why it is important to know how each individual learns the best.
- Allow students to make a choice of how they will demonstrate their learning on a specific topic. Encourage students to be creative and to be able to explain why they chose to be assessed in their respective ways.
- Assign a research project on culturally responsive educational practices. Ask students to make the connection between these practices and building an inclusive school.
- Each morning introduce students to a new word in American Sign Language. Encourage them to use the word at least five times during the school day.
- Teach students the proper way to provide a sighted guide to a person who is blind or visually impaired. They can take turns practicing on each other using a blindfold.

CLASSROOM LEVEL (CONT'D)

- Have the class study the use of "person first" language when talking about people with differences in language, culture, and ability. The lesson includes a discussion of what personal characteristics you want people to emphasize when they refer to you. Each student can sign a contract committing to using person first language in their conversations and sharing this information with others in their family and community.
- Have students study the demographics of the school and community. Do the services provided adequately serve the needs of the community? What recommendations can be made to community leaders and local government?
- Ask the class to design a chart outlining the features of a store, restaurant, or other public place that would make it more accessible to people with disabilities. Collect data on local businesses that have these accessible features. At the conclusion of the project, present an award to the business that has the most accessible features.
- Have students research federal and state laws that protect human and civil rights. Research disability laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. How do they apply to our schools and communities?
- Instruct students to work in groups to assess the accessibility of the school and community for people with disabilities. What modifications can be made? Do the public buildings in our community offer access to people with disabilities? How many restaurants in the community offer menus in Braille? Is there a Text Telephone or TTY in the school (also known as a TDD, which stands for Telecommunication Device for the Deaf)?
- Ask student groups to study the elements of Universal Design, a principle of architectural design that focuses on accessibility for all people. How do the concepts apply to your school and community? How can the concepts of Universal Design assist in fostering an inclusive environment?
- Encourage students to study how the fields of science and technology have contributed to the lives of people with disabilities. Some examples are cochlear implants, assistive technology, wheelchairs, TTY, etc.
- Have individuals build a model (either three-dimensional or on graph paper) of a classroom, school, or community that provides access for all people. List the features that contribute to it being an inclusive environment.
- Have students investigate the laws that protect people with disabilities in our country. Compare the findings to those of other countries.
- Ask students to research what the education laws state about inclusive practices.

SCHOOL LEVEL

- Host a professional development day focused on having teachers work together in pairs or small groups to brainstorm new and different instructional delivery methods. Ask each teacher to commit to trying out these new instructional strategies.
- Host a brown bag lunch for community leaders and teachers to help educate the school staff about the different cultures represented in the community. Ask each community leader to come with some ideas about how the school can better contribute to the values and traditions of the community.
- Create a Web site that highlights the inclusive nature of your school. Have students and teachers work together to design the site, develop content, and act as Web masters. Make sure that the Web site is fully accessible and "Bobby approved."
- Celebrate the life of Martin Luther King during the *Week* (you don't need to wait until his birthday in January!). Host school forums and discussions about his mission of unity and peace. Ask students to contribute essays or speeches using his famous staring phrase "I have a dream…." relating to their dream about building a more inclusive school and community
- Pair general education and special education teachers into teaching teams. Encourage each team to implement at least one lesson together during the *Week*. Challenge the teaching teams to continue this strategy on a regular basis throughout the school year.
- Dedicate a school professional development day to instructing faculty on topics such as differentiating instruction, culturally relevant curriculum, and providing accommodations for learners with disabilities.
- Ask each grade level in the school to "Adopt an Area" of the school building to make it more accessible. Areas can include the cafeteria, mail lobby, gym, art room, main office, principal's office, etc. Students are encouraged to be creative in finding adaptations that are creative and monetarily feasible. Hold a mid-year celebration to highlight progress and share solutions.
- Offer American Sign Language to meet the foreign language requirement or as an elective.
- Bring together grade level and content specific teachers to re-design curriculum to meet the needs of all learners. This includes looking at the accessibility of materials and developing accommodations and modifications to the curriculum.
- Invite school faculty to attend a monthly book club meeting with the goal of discussing literature about inclusive education, community building, and diversity.
- Have school faculty and staff watch instructional videos on inclusive practices during their lunch hour or after school one day per week.
- Ask teachers to invite their colleagues into their classrooms to observe and provide feedback and ideas about additional ways to reach diverse learners.
- Encourage related service providers (speech pathologist, teacher of the visually impaired, occupational therapist, school nurse, etc.) to share information about their area of expertise and provide instruction on how to incorporate strategies to support children receiving special services in the classroom.

DISTRICT AND COMMUNITY LEVEL

- Encourage local service and non-for-profit agencies to host an Open House Day to encourage community members to become involved in local efforts through volunteerism and/or financial support. Recruit students to assist in the planning and implementation of this event.
- Invite a disability services coordinator from a local college or university to speak at a school or community event about the supports that are available to students with disabilities who are considering or ready to enter college.
- Encourage a local bookstore to highlight books that promote inclusive education during the *Week*. Invite an author or an avid reader to speak at a store hosted event on the principles and benefits of inclusive education.
- Organize a meeting between school faculty and community after school program staff to discuss ways both programs can share ideas and strategies to become more inclusive.
- Encourage school faculty who have been successful in implementing inclusive practices to contact a local college or university to share information about classroom strategies as a guest lecturer.
- Ask school district personnel to attend professional development workshops on topics related to inclusive education. Have each faculty member develop an action plan to incorporate lessons learned into his or her own practice. Educators share their ideas and the outcomes later in the year.
- Hold a symposium for the school board to provide information about the management and administration of inclusive schools. Invite school board members from area schools that are moving ahead with inclusive education to share their knowledge and experiences.
- Host a community meeting to educate local employers and other community leaders about how they can support transition-age students with disabilities by providing summer and long-term employment opportunities.
- Host a community forum to spotlight city or town amenities that are accessible to all. Invite the recreation department, local Girls and Boys Clubs, YMCA, YWCA, and other youth organizations. Ask the organizations to highlight the accessible features of their space and the activities that they host.

ACTIVITIES THAT INFLUENCE THE SYSTEM

Activities in this section reflect the importance of taking knowledge and skill to the next level…Change within the system! By changing the policies, procedures, and culture of our schools, it is more likely that positive advances in inclusive education will become an integral part of the community framework.

CLASSROOM LEVEL

- Instead of creating a unit or lesson plan for a new subject area, ask your students how they would like to learn a particular topic. Have them work in groups to create a plan for learning and practicing the new content.
- Create a "Grab and Go" box that contains after-school ideas that encourage learning, volunteerism and good will projects. Each day upon dismissal children have an opportunity to pick a surprise suggestion out of the box. Set up a reward system (pencils, posters, and stickers promoting the *Week* are a great idea!) for students who successfully complete their task.
- Develop a list of ways that your classroom can be more inclusive. Set goals throughout the year towards realizing your ideal classroom.
- Incorporate a lesson(s) that highlights the work that UNESCO is doing toward promoting inclusive education around the globe. Find more information at http://www.unesco.org.
- Pilot a co-teaching model in one or more classrooms, pairing a general educator and special educator.
- Label items in the classroom with pictures, object cues, Spanish words, Braille, or any other symbol system that will support the learners in the class.
- Differentiate instruction to target the learning styles of the children in your class. Identify learner outcomes on various levels so that all children can be successful.
- Organize the classroom to accommodate diverse learners. Consider lighting, placement of furniture, proximity of workspace to distractions, and availability of a broad range of materials, and manipulatives (e.g., Braille books and books on tape).
- Develop a new lesson plan format to highlight the strategies you will use to meet the needs of diverse learners.
- Embed lessons on diversity and disability into already established units and lesson plans.
- Provide accommodations for all children in the class, not only those with disabilities. For example, during a pre-school circle time make adaptive chairs and positioning equipment available to all of the students whether they require the adaptation or not.

SCHOOL LEVEL

- Host a post election celebration at the school to honor elected officials who support diversity and acceptance in the schools and community. Ask selected officials to address the students on the importance of inclusive communities.
- Appoint several teachers and students to be "Inclusive Schools Ambassadors". Identify other schools in the district or surrounding communities who are on the road to becoming more inclusive. Have your ambassadors meet with students in these schools to encourage their movement toward more a more inclusive school environment.
- Introduce a new high school course or graduation requirement that involves students performing community service activities. Encourage or require students to define how their chosen activity promotes inclusive practices in the school and/or community.
- Set aside time during the month for teachers to observe classrooms in the school/district that have been successful in incorporating inclusive practices.
- Provide opportunities for co-teaching teams to mentor other prospective co-teaching teams through classroom visits, observations, sharing of resources, and informal planning meetings.
- Develop a position within student government to represent issues related to building a more inclusive community.
- Develop a Welcome Center in your school where new students and visitors can learn about the mission and features of the school, including its dedication to educating all students.
- Reserve common planning time each day for teachers to plan ways to differentiate their instruction to meet the needs of all learners.
- Have information about the school and community available in a variety of accessible formats including Braille and languages spoken within the community. Have sign language and foreign language interpreters on call for visits with families.
- Institute a required new staff training session that focuses on introducing new staff to the inclusive environment at the school and offers strategies and resources on inclusive practices.

DISTRICT AND COMMUNITY LEVEL

- Create a volunteer Diversity Council comprised of school and community leaders including student leaders. Begin by hosting a community forum to gather and prioritize ideas about how to make the community more inclusive. The Diversity Council can lead the campaign to address the issues outlined by the community.
- Develop an after-school program for youth focused on gaining work experience. Students volunteer their after-school time to do internships at local businesses, especially non-for-profit and volunteer organizations. While gaining valuable work experience, students will be contributing to the local community. Ask local business leaders to act as mentors.
- Adopt a Self Determination/Self Advocacy Curriculum for middle and high school students. See "Charting an Inclusive Journey Through Schools, Work, and Life: Successful Transition Planning for All Students" for resources and ideas.

DISTRICT AND COMMUNITY LEVEL (CONT'D)

- Develop a formal partnership between the local school system and a local youth organization committed to inclusive education such as the Boys and Girls Club, Girl and Boy Scouts, YMCA, and after-school programs. Highlight this partnership in the community as a way to share resources and to broaden the scope of inclusive community practices.
- Encourage your community newspaper to include a regular column titled "Great things happen in inclusive schools." Have school personnel, families, and students contribute to the column by sharing experiences and ideas about inclusive education.
- Develop a community resource guide that highlights local businesses and organizations that provide accommodations so that all people can access to their services. This resource may include restaurants that have Braille menus, museums that provide interpreter services, and businesses that are wheelchair accessible.
- Declare the first week in December as *Inclusive Schools Week*™ with an official school board or local government proclamation. Outline the activities that will be a part of the event.
- Implement a family-school partnership model in the district.
- Declare it a formal district priority to move toward educating all children within the school district at their neighborhood school.
- Create or review the district's mission and values statement to ensure that ALL children are represented.
- Encourage the state legislature to declare the first week in December *National Inclusive Schools Week*™.
- Create a partnership with a local college or university to support student teachers with experience in inclusive education.
- Refine recruitment policies to focus on hiring new teachers who value and have experience in inclusive education.
- Present the results from a district-level assessment of the accessibility of the schools to community businesses and leaders. Develop a plan and identify funding sources to alleviate some of the physical and institutional barriers within the schools.
- Include information in all correspondence with families that interpreter services and Braille translation are available for all meetings and community activities.
- Include an update on the status of inclusive education in the district in all Board of Education meetings.
- State the district's commitment to inclusive education on the school Web site and other correspondence with the community.

GENERAL ACTIVITIES AND LESSON PLANS THAT CELEBRATE DIVERSE ABILITIES

The following is a collection of ideas and activities from a variety of sources that are included to inspire classroom, school, and community leaders to engage all students, family, and faculty members in thought provoking and unifying activities that serve to strengthen the message and mission of *National Inclusive Schools Week*™.

MULTI-CULTURAL CALENDAR

Find out how kids throughout the world are celebrating their country's holidays and festivals at http://www.kidlink.org/KIDPROJ/MCC. KIDLINK students and KIDLEADERs developed this resource as a way to share local customs among our world's children. You will find information on special customs and traditions, recipes for holiday foods, and the history behind specific celebrations. There is information about how to connect the information with classroom curriculum. Why don't you encourage your class to add *National Inclusive Schools Week* to the calendar?

MEETING THE COMMUNICATION NEEDS OF STUDENTS

Ensuring that all students in a classroom have access to information is a critical component of an inclusive environment. For information on developing augmentative and alternative communication systems for students with disabilities, log onto:
http://atto.buffalo.edu/registered/ATBasics/Populations/aac/index.php

MATHEMATICS FOR EVERYONE

Aplusmath.com is an online resource that provides teachers and families with tools to create math support materials. Print flashcards, games, and other items to help students learn basic math concepts. Go to http://www.aplusmath.com.

CULTURE AND CHANGE: BLACK HISTORY IN AMERICA

Meet famous African Americans, listen to jazz music, publish your own writing, and explore history through an interactive timeline. At http://www.teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/ students can participate in interactive activities that celebrate African American diversity and history.

EXPLORE THE WORLD OF READING

Books are a wonderful way to bring children, families, and schools together during *National Inclusive Schools Week* and throughout the year. Reading Planet is part of the Reading is Fundamental website designed to encourage children and familiesto enjoy reading. There are 1,000 children's books listed that are categorized by author, type of book, and age group.
http://www.rif.org/readingplanet/

GETTING READY TO READ

Is your preschooler ready to read? Go to http://www.readingrockets.org/families/recognizesigns/getready to access a simple 20 question screening tool for parents, caregivers, and teachers. This tool provides information on reading readiness and motivation.

GO GRAPHIC!

Graphic Organizers help students arrange and categorize their ideas to prepare for writing projects and other structured classroom assignments. Houghton Mifflin has a generous assortment of graphic organizers available for download on their Web site at http://www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer.

CONNECTING TEACHERS TO TECHNOLOGY

Differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all learners involves creating specialized learning environments and materials. At http://www.TheTeachersGuide.com you will find free educational software to help you develop thematic units and lesson plans that will inspire students to learn. The site has links to virtual tours of museums and historic sites and offers SmartBoard interactive teaching tools.

A-RHYME-A-WEEK

Rhymes are a wonderful way to teach early literacy skills and build classroom unity through the practice of repeating aloud. To find a year long list of rhymes to share with your young students, check out http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/go/wil/rimes_and_rhymes.htm#About

THE WORLD BEYOND OUR CLASSROOM

Inclusive schools celebrate diversity and encourage understanding about cultures and communities throughout the world. Voices of Youth, sponsored by UNICEF, is a project dedicated to promoting the exchange of information and ideas about current global events among our world's children. Children across the world can contribute their thoughts and ideas at http://www.unicef.org/voy

BUILD A "BOUNDLESS PLAYGROUND"

Did you know that most traditional playgrounds are not accessible to children with disabilities? Yet building a playground suitable for all kids is hardly impossible. Boundless Playgrounds™, a recently founded nonprofit organization, is dedicated to helping communities create extraordinary playgrounds where children with and without disabilities can develop essential skills for life as they learn together through play. Win a barrier-free playground for your community by entering an essay contest sponsored by Boundless Playgrounds and Playskool (entries must be postmarked by November 30, 2006 and received by December 7, 2006). Visit http://www.boundlessplaygrounds.org/ to find out how to help your community build a playground that all children can enjoy.

INCLUDING ALL WRITERS!

The Writer's Den at http://www2.actden.com/writ_den/ is a resource designed for students grades 6–12 who want to improve their reading comprehension and writing skills. The site provides support (including plugins) on three different levels: words, sentence structure and paragraphs.
For students who need support writing book reports, Random House sponsors an online guide at http://www.randomhouse.com/kids/bookreportnow/.

SCIENCE FOR ALL

Science can be a difficult subject for many learners in grades 4-8. Experiential learning allows students to grasp concepts that they would not otherwise be able to understand by lecture or reading. Find information and how-to instructions for 82 hands-on science experiments at The Charles Edison Fund Web site. The downloadable kit contains simple directions and a list of inexpensive materials for each experiment. Go to http://www.charlesedisonfund.org/Experiments/experiments.html for more information.

CIRCLE OF READERS

Successful inclusive schools support literacy in a variety of ways. Reader's Circles are a wonderful way to encourage reading and bring students together to discuss their favorite books. Learn how to develop a reading circle in your classroom or community by logging onto http://www.randomhouse.com/teens/readerscircle_howto.html**.**

RESEARCH RULES!

Even the word "research" can send middle and high school students running. Help all students make sense of the concept of research by accessing http://www.crlsresearchguide.org/. The site lists and explains 23 basic steps in the research process. Several links are available for more in-depth exploration of topics and additional resources.

CULTURAL EXPLORATIONS

Celebrate *National Inclusive Schools Week* by exploring different countries and cultures with your students. The African Studies Web at http://www.africa.upenn.edu/K-12/menu_EduBBS.html contains a wealth of information and resources about African countries aimed at students in grades K-12.

VIRTUAL FIELD TRIPS

Bring the word to your classroom and encourage your students to explore and learn through virtual experiences. Students can visit Paris, tour the solar system and dissect a frog without leaving their chairs. Log onto the Online Exhibits Hotlist at http://sln.fi.edu/tfi/jump.html and let the fun begin.

GIFTED AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

E-Ready at TeachersFirst provides resources for teachers and families on topics related to gifted and special education. Find detailed information about differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all learners. Learn about the implications of specific disabilities along with a host of web resources at http://www.teachersfirst.com/sped/prof/index.html.

WEBQUEST!

Inquiry-oriented models of teaching and learning can motivate students of all ages to succeed. Try the WebQuest model, an inquiry-oriented web-based activity, to teach a new unit or theme in your classroom. WebQuests are fun activities designed to help students locate, analyze and synthesize information. Go to www.webquest.org for information and examples.

DIVERSITY ACTIVITIES

The Diversity Council's mission is to create an inclusive and welcoming community through education. Details about the following activities that promote an understanding of diversity can be found at their Web site: http://www.diversitycouncil.org:

- Geneology: Research your ancestors and family tree
- Create a Family Flag or Quilt
- Make a Family Treasure Box
- Research family traditions

MEETING FRIENDS WHO HAVE DISABILITIES

Easter Seals offers a list of helpful hints for students who are meeting and socializing with friends with disabilities. Use this list of tips to spark a classroom discussion, for role playing scenarios, or as a basis for a brainstorming session about treating all people with respect and dignity. Find these helpful hints at http://www.easterseals.com.

IDEAS FOR TEACHING ABOUT DIFFERENT COUNTRIES & CULTURES

The Lesson Plans Page offers a variety of ideas for teachers and families focused on exposing students to cultures that are different from their own. Find a list of exciting activities that can be incorporated into classrooms, family activities, and community-based learning opportunities at http://www.lessonplanspage.com.
Some of the topics include:

- Connecting with pen pals from different countries
- Book lists containing literature about different countries
- Exploring cultural differences through cooking and decorating
- Entertainment and games from diverse cultures
- Holidays and traditions across the world
- Cultural norms around the globe
- Cultural versions of popular fairy tales

THE GOODWILL HOLIDAY PROJECT

Visit http://www.teacher.scholastic.com/holiday to create a goodwill message and tell how your favorite holidays compare with holidays celebrated by different cultures around the world. The online activities include:

- Tour Holiday Traditions: provides information about several holidays celebrated throughout the world.
- Classport Partner Classes: connect distant classrooms together to compare traditions with students from other nations and cultures.
- Holiday Gift Box: share your message with others.
- Peace and Understanding Certficate: after completing these activities, receive a certificate from the United Nations signed by Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

UNDERSTANDING KIDS WHO ARE DIFFERENT: ACTIVITIES FOR TEACHING ABOUT DISABILITIES

Education World highlights a variety of on-line resources for teaching students about the special needs and unique strengths of people with disabilities. Included in the resources that be found at http://www.educationworld.com are:

- **Informational sites** provide information to help all students understand what it's like to deal with a disability.
- **Activity sites** provide information about disabilities and illnesses. They also contain activities that can promote interaction and understanding between students with disabilities and their classmates.

COLLABORATING WITH PEERS AROUND THE WORLD

iEARN (International Education and Resource Network) provides on-line school linkages that enable students to engage in meaningful educational projects with peers in their countries and around the world. Log onto http://www.iearn.org to promote community building and multicultural understanding in your school or classroom.

ACCESSIBLE MATHEMATICS: PLANE MATH

Plane Math is a Web-based interactive site that encourages children with disabilities that affect their ability to manipulate objects (often used to promote understandings of math concepts) and their classmates to participate in a fun and exciting math-based activity. The site also serves as a resource to encourage children with physical disabilities to consider and be prepared for career possibilities in aeronautics and to understand the importance of mathematics in pursuing these careers. This program is available at http://www.planemath.com.

CELEBRATION IDEAS: EXCEPTIONAL EVENTS

Education World offers ideas for events that are focused on including students, families, and community members in fun learning experiences. These activities can be planned for the *Week* or anytime throughout the year. The following are some examples of the ideas you can find at http://www.educationworld.com:

- Family Fitness Night
- Graduation Day
- Field Day
- Sleepover Night
- Kindergarten Roundup
- Rhyme Time: A Night of Poetry
- Math Night
- Parents in Kids' Sneakers Day
- Learning Fest
- Arts Celebration Night
- Read Across America Day
- "Real-Life" Fair
- RAH! (Reading at Home) Night
- Winter-Time Pool Party or Beach Party
- A Night at the Movies
- Spaghetti Supper
- International Day or Multicultural Fair
- Interest Fair
- School Book Club
- Literature Night
- Native American Museum Night
- Harvest Fest
- Celebrate Students All Year Long
- Opening Day Parade
- Opening Day of School Events

ONE WORLD MURAL

Students from around the world are encouraged to add to an on-line collection of pictures and words celebrating tolerance and justice. What kind of world do you want this to be? What does "One World" mean to you? Have your students add to the mural during the *Week*. For more information, visit http://www.tolerance.org.

SOME WAYS THE SAME, SOME WAYS DIFFERENT: DISABILITY AWARENESS TEACHING KITS

The Boston Children's Museum offers a disability awareness series for elementary school students. One of a series of Museum Kits, the Disability Awareness Teaching Kit, contains curriculum to introduce students to disabilities and foster appreciation of similarities and differences. Based on the nationally known "What If You Couldn't?" series, the "Some Ways the Same, Some Ways Different" units have new activities, books, and videos that focus on the accomplishments and abilities of people who have disabilities. Visit http://www.bostonkids.org/educators/disability_awareness.html for information on renting a kit.

TEACHERS CONNECTING WITH KIDS FROM DIFFERENT CULTURES

Visit http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/instructor/connectcultures.htm for ideas on how to develop positive relationships with today's diverse families. These activities and resources can be used at a faculty meeting, teacher training session, or with a discussion group during the *Week*. Topics include:

- A Self Quiz: What are Your Assumptions?
- How Culture Affects Behavior
- How to Build a Buffer Against Biases
- Positive Communication with Parents

BRINGING STUDENTS TOGETHER AS CROSS-CULTURAL LEARNING PARTNERS AND FRIENDS

ePALS engages students from around the world in meaningful discussions through email partnerships. Following are some examples of the projects that ePALS promotes on it's Web site: http://www.epals.com:

- **No Two Snowflakes are Alike:** ePALS and UNICEF Canada engage students in an ongoing, collaborative learning project that promotes multi-cultural education for development and global citizenship. Six structured activities can be done independently of one another. This project runs throughout the year and is geared towards students aged 10 and up.
- **The Way We Are:** Produced in conjunction with teachers from different nations, this project aims to break down commonly held stereotypes about people in other regions of the world. Students exchange information and become personally familiar with an individual, a culture, and a community. This project also leads into discussions about international development issues and is a simple email project promoting tolerance and respect.

LESSON PLANS

The following lesson plans are summarized and can be accessed in full by following the links provided.

LESSON PLAN 1: ACCESSIBLE ALPHABET

Grade Level(s): Pre-K-K

Subject(s): Language Arts/Children's Literature

Class time: 20 Minutes per each letter of the alphabet over an extended period of time.

Materials:

- Alphabet book *Obvious LETTERS: The Associative Alphabet Every Child Will Remember* by Gisela Hausmann.
- One copy of the relevant letter page per child
- Crayons

Overview:

Young students will enjoy this activity-based introduction to the alphabet. The related activities are designed to address visual, auditory, and kinesthetic processes in order to increase learning and meet the needs of diverse learners. The author encourages teachers to make copies of book pages in order for each child to have a copy of the page for himself.

Objective(s): Students will be able to:

- Learn the alphabet letters via auditory, visual and kinesthetic methods.
- Incorporate language and motor skills into a pre-reading activity.

Lesson Source: The Educator's Reference Desk

To access the complete lesson plan, please visit:
http://www.eduref.org/cgi-bin/printlessons.cgi/Virtual/Lessons/Language_Arts/Alphabet/ABT0201.html

LESSON PLAN 2: HAPPY TO BE ME

Grade Level(s): K

Subject(s): Interdisciplinary, Language Arts/Writing

Class time: 2 hours

Materials: Several poems that promote positive self-image, copy of activity sheet, pencils, markers, copy of *Amazing Grace* by Mary Hoffman and paper dolls.

Overview: This lesson plan can be used to encourage students to sharing things about themselves. Sharing time is a wonderful occasion to discuss our similarities and the differences that make us unique.

Objective(s):

- "To develop a sense of pride in one's self and one's heritage."
- "To encourage positive language to describe one's heritage."
- "To recognize a children's home cultures through sharing of family traditions."

Lesson source: Newton Schools Foundation, Newton, MA

To access the complete lesson plan, please visit:
http://hastings.ci.lexington.ma.us/Library/Yes/Lessons/Happy/happy.htm

LESSON PLAN 3: SIMON SAYS "WHO ARE YOU?"

Grade Level(s): K–3

Subject(s): Interdisciplinary, Social Studies, Civics

Class time: 25-45 minutes

Overview: **"**Students play a variation of Simon Says that highlights their similarities and differences."

Lesson source: EducationWorld.com

To access the complete lesson plan, please visit:
http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/00-2/lp2061.shtml

LESSON PLAN 4: FRIENDSHIP QUILT

Grade Level(s): K-4

Subject(s): Interdisciplinary, Social Studies, Art

Class time: Several class periods

Materials:
- Sheets or squares of drawing paper
- Markers or crayons
- Large sheets of construction paper for background
- Glue

Overview: This activity encourages students to think about friendship and to illustrate their thoughts through art. The finished product is a depiction of the students collective thoughts and ideas about friendship.

Objective(s): Students will be able to:
- create a visual artifact to express their views on a particular topic
- experience the outcome of a collective project and the value of working together
- contemplate their understanding of friendship

Lesson Source: EduPlace

To access the complete lesson plan, please visit:
http://www.eduplace.com/activity/k_4_act1.html

LESSON PLAN 5: SOULFUL FESTIVAL

Grade Level(s): K-8

Subject(s): Interdisciplinary, Language Arts/Writing, Social Studies, Music

Class time: 2 hours

Materials: African American poetry, ingredients for spoon bread, recorded music, and player

Overview: Exploring poetry, music, and foods, children will enjoy the beauty of African American culture.

Objective(s): **"**Children will engage in a variety of activities to celebrate and learn about African American culture."

Lesson source: Scholastic, Inc.

To access the complete lesson plan, please visit: http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/ect/soulfest.htm

LESSON PLAN 6: AROUND THE WORLD

Grade Level(s): K-5

Subject(s): Interdisciplinary, Language Arts/Writing, Social Studies, Geography

Class time: Several class periods

Materials:
- World globe or map
- Printed and online reference materials
- Computer with internet access

Overview: The goal of this activity is to give students a good sense of some of the major geographical and cultural differences in the world.

Objective(s): Students will understand the following:
- "The world is made up of regions that are very different from each other in terms of climate, geography, animal life, and culture."
- "The United States itself contains a variety of climate zones and geographical features, abundant animal life, and many cultures."

Lesson source: Discovery Education

To access the complete lesson plan, please visit:
http://school.discovery.com/lessonplans/programs/storiesfromaroundtheworld/

LESSON PLAN 7: CULTURAL SHOW AND TELL

Grade Level(s): K-6

Subject(s): Interdisciplinary, Social Studies, Language Arts/Writing, Civics

Class time: Several class periods and homework time

Materials:
- Student access to family members who can help students learn about their ancestry and cultural heritage.
- Access to reference sources (internet, magazines, books, etc.)

Overview: Students will research their own cultural heritage and share with their classmates. They will learn about several cultures, including their own, through this inquiry-based project. This activity encourages family interaction and conversation, sharing among classmates and the development of research skills. Sharing of family artifacts is included in the activity which provides a hands-on component to the learning. The final presentation encourages students to be comfortable speaking in public and provides opportunities for classmates to ask questions.

LESSON PLAN 7: CULTURAL SHOW AND TELL (CONT'D)

Objective(s): Students will be able to:

- Gather information from a variety of sources including books, magazines, web resources and personal interviews with family members.
- Organize facts into a presentation.
- Compare and contrast cultures represented within the classroom.
- Acknowledge the diversity represented by their peers.

Lesson Source: EduPlace

To access the complete lesson plan, please visit:
http://www.eduplace.com/activity/3_2_act1.html

LESSON PLAN 8: NOT 'INDIANS,' MANY TRIBES: NATIVE AMERICAN DIVERSITY

Grade Level(s): 3-8

Subject(s): Interdisciplinary, Language Arts/Writing, Social Studies, Civics

Class time: Several class periods

Materials:

- Copies of listed resources for students
- Copies of archival documents for Lesson 3
- Background information on the featured Native groups

Overview: **"**Students will heighten their awareness of Native American diversity as they learn about three vastly different Native groups in a game-like activity using archival documents such as vintage photographs, traditional stories, photos of artifacts, and recipes. One factor influencing Native American diversity is environment. Help your students study the interaction between environment and culture."

Objective(s): Students will be able to:

- "Discuss ways a particular archival document reflects the culture and environment of a Native American group."
- "List at least three differences among the Native American groups studied that relate to environment."
- "Gather data about a Native group using the Internet, if available."

Lesson source: EDSITEment

To access the complete lesson plan, please visit:
http://edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?id=324

LESSON PLAN 9: WHO I AM POEMS

Grade Level(s): 2-8

Subject(s): Interdisciplinary, Language Arts/Writing

Class time: One hour

Overview: **"**This activity begins active introspective process while continuing to provide opportunities for individuals to make connections with each other. Participants write short poems, starting each line with "I am," encouraging them to describe in their own words who they are and what's salient to their identity."

Objective(s):
"The "Who I Am" activity can provide a non-threatening starting point for encouraging self-reflective thought and introspection. It is a safe way for students to think about and share the influences that have shaped their identities. Also, it continues the connection-making process as students find unexpected similarities and differences between themselves and others in the group."

Lesson source: EdChange Multicultural Pavilion

To access the complete lesson plan, please visit:
http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/activities/poetry.html

LESSON PLAN 10: EXCHANGING STORIES – NAMES

Grade Level(s): 3-8

Subject(s): Interdisciplinary, Language Arts/Writing

Class time: One class period

Overview: "This activity works toward bringing the stories of individuals to the fore in the multicultural experience."

Objective(s):
- "To encourage students to be creative through poetry, humor, stories, listed adjectives describing themselves, etc."
- "To encourage sharing their stories, cultures, traditions, etc. with the rest of the class."
- "To recognize the similarities and differences that make each student unique."

Lesson source: EdChange Multicultural Pavilion

To access the complete lesson plan, please visit:
http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/activities/name.html

LESSON PLAN 11: SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS

Grade Level(s): K-8

Subject(s): Primary subject: Language Arts
Secondary subjects: Math, Science, Social Studies, Music, Art, Language Arts, Health/Physical Education, Computers/Internet

Class time: The time required for this activity will depend on the size of the class or participant group.

Materials: Each student needs a pen and sheet of paper.

Overview: Students interview each of the other students individually, writing down the one special characteristic, interest, or hobby each student wants to be recognized for. Then the teacher calls out the special characteristic of each student and the other students have to call out the student's name that matches the characteristic.

Objective(s): **"**This lesson allows students to become familiar with one another."

Lesson source: Lesson Plans Page.com

To access the complete lesson plan, please visit:
http://ww.lessonplanspage.com/OGettingToKnowStudentSpecialCharacteristicsBeginSchoolIdeaP12.htm

LESSON PLAN 12: CINCO DE MAYO

Grade Level(s): 3-8

Subject(s): History, Culture

Class time: Several class periods

Materials: For a complete list of materials, see the complete lesson plan.

Overview: This is a collection of different activities on the history and culture of Latin America with a focus on Mexico.

Objective(s): Students will become familiar with different aspects of Hispanic history and culture. These activities are especially useful in celebrating the Mexican holiday, Cinco de Mayo.

Lesson source: Scholastic, Inc.

To access the complete lesson plan, please visit:
http://teacher.scholastic.com/lessonrepro/k_2theme/cinco.htm

LESSON PLAN 13: THE POWER OF FRIENDSHIP

Grade Level(s): 4

Subject(s): Interdisciplinary, Language Arts, Social Studies

Class time: Several class periods

Materials: For a complete list of materials, see the complete lesson plan.

Overview: This is a set of several activities that includes reading and discussing the story, *Elijah's Angel* by Michael Rosen, and themes related to it; creating a story map graphic organizer; doing role plays; and painting with watercolors.

Objective(s):

- "To discuss and define *friendship* between individuals who differ in *religion, age,* and/or *race*."
- "To analyze and interpret the main character's feelings about his devotion to his own religion and his ability to have a friendship with a person of another faith."
- "To learn how an author uses *flashbacks* to convey the characters' feelings. To use a story map to link these *flashbacks* to the conflict and resolution of the story."
- "To learn about the value of *symbols* to reflect a person's cultural and religious traditions."

Lesson source: Newton Schools Foundation, Newton, MA

To access the complete lesson plan, please visit:
http://hastings.ci.lexington.ma.us/Library/Yes/Lessons/Friendship/elijah.htm

LESSON PLAN 14: CULTURAL CONNECTIONS: THE TAPESTRY OF LIFE

Grade Level(s): 3-5

Subject(s): Geography, Social Studies, Language Arts, Science, Math

Class time: 3-5 hours

Materials:

- World atlases
- Blank Xpeditions outline maps, available at the Xpeditions atlas
- *National Geographic* magazines, National Geographic *Traveler* and *Kids* magazines
- Picture books or early-reader books that show cultures around the world
- Drawing paper and markers
- Fabric for making banners and quilts
- National Geographic Picture Pack—*Cultural Geography of the World* (optional)

LESSON PLAN 14: CULTURAL CONNECTIONS: THE TAPESTRY OF LIFE (CONT'D)

Overview: **"**Students will use a variety of media to explore culture as the sum of learned patterns of behavior, institutions, values, and belief systems. They will learn how to identify, compare, and appreciate the cultural characteristics of different regions and people."

Objective(s): Students will become familiar with at least one foreign culture and versed in many aspects of others.

Lesson source: National Geographic Xpeditions

To access the complete lesson plan, please visit:
http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/lessons/10/g35/tapestry.html

LESSON PLAN 15: CULTURE SHOCK

Grade Level(s): 6-8

Subject(s): Geography, Social Studies, History, Art

Class time: 2-3 hours

Materials:
- Computer with Internet access
- Construction or poster paper
- Markers or colored pencils

Overview: **"**This lesson asks students to think about how cultural customs differ throughout the world."

Objective(s): Students will:
- Discuss the topics they would include in a *Culture Shock!* book for the United States
- Research other cultures and take notes on their customs
- Discuss what they have learned from their research
- Write stories pretending they are on a trip with a friend from the country they have researched, visiting a country that neither person is familiar with and describing their reactions to the new culture.

Lesson source: National Geographic Xpeditions

To access the complete lesson plan, please visit:
http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/lessons/04/g68/cultureshock.html

LESSON PLAN 16: UNDERSTANDING STEREOTYPES

Grade Level(s): 9-12

Subject(s): Interdisciplinary, Social Studies, Behavioral Studies

Class time: 3 class periods

Materials:
- Writing paper
- Flip chart and/or large sheets of paper
- Magic markers
- Art supplies (construction paper, scissors, tape, glue, magazines to cut up, etc.)
- Take Home Activity Sheet: Identifying Stereotypes in the Media (see printable version)

Overview: This activity uses discussion, brainstorming, writing about personal experiences, and creating a class collage to help students understand the concepts of stereotype, bias, race, and ethnicity.

Objective(s): Students will understand the following:
- "Assumptions can lead to stereotypes and unfair judgments about individuals and groups."
- "Stereotypes and biases affect our lives."

Lesson source: DiscoverySchool.com

To access the complete lesson plan, please visit:
http://school.discovery.com/lessonplans/programs/stereotypes

LESSON PLAN 17: MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

Grade Level(s): 9-12

Subject(s): Interdisciplinary, Behavioral Studies

Class time: 1 class period

Materials:
- Computer with Internet access (optional but very helpful)
- Copies of Classroom Activity Sheet: Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences
- Copies of Classroom Activity: Short Biographies of Eminent People
- Copies of Take-Home Activity Sheet: A Personal Look at Multiple Intelligences

Overview: This activity uses large and small group discussion to help students understand that interactions among learning, inheritance, and physical development affect human behavior.

LESSON PLAN 17: MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES (CONT'D)

Objective(s): Students will:

- "Understand Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences."
- "Compare the theory of multiple intelligences with traditional theories of intelligence."
- "Explore the implications of the theory of multiple intelligences for schools and society."

Lesson source: DiscoverySchool.com

To access the complete lesson plan, please visit:
http://school.discovery.com/lessonplans/programs/multipleintelligences

LESSON PLAN 18: GESTURES, SIGNALS, AND SIGN LANGUAGE

Grade Level(s): 9-12

Subject(s): Geography, Social Studies, Language Arts

Class time: 2-4 hours (may require more time for study, preferably as homework)

Materials:

- Computer with Internet access
- Writing materials
- Chalk and chalkboard or markers and flip chart

Overview: This lesson is designed to broaden students' appreciation not only for how humans communicate, but also for how we circumvent obstacles to communication. The lesson focuses on systematic uses of hands to communicate and how these hand sign systems relate to what are commonly thought of as "languages."

Objective(s): Students will:

- Distinguish between hand gestures, standardized hand signals, and formal sign languages
- Identify groups of people who routinely use hand signals or sign languages and the reasons why

Lesson source: National Geographic Xpeditions

To access the complete lesson plan, please visit:
http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/lessons/06/g912/gasign.html

LESSON PLAN 19: COLOR BLIND: CREATING A MUSEUM EXHIBIT THAT CELEBRATES THE DIVERSITY IN THE CLASSROOM

Grade Level(s): 6-12

Subject(s): Fine Arts, Geography, Language Arts, Social Studies

Class time: 1 hour

Materials:
- Student journals
- Pens/pencils
- Paper
- Classroom blackboard
- Copies of the article "A Child's Eyes Don't Focus on Obvious Differences" (one per student)
- Resources for researching the diversity of students in the class and community (optional; computers with Internet access)

Overview: **"**In this lesson, students consider the concept of "identity" and the various ways a person defines himself or herself. They then individually create displays for a museum exhibit about diversity in their classroom."

Objective(s): Students will:
- "Explore aspects of their identities through the words they use to describe themselves."
- "Learn about a diversity-related exhibit at the Boston Children's Museum by reading and discussing the article 'A Child's Eyes Don't Focus on Obvious Differences.'"
- "Identify various elements that comprise their cultural identities; consider the diversity of students in their class; individually outline presentations to be part of a class museum exhibit celebrating diversity among the students."
- "Create and present displays for the exhibit."

Lesson source: New York Times Learning Network

To access the complete lesson plan, please visit:
http://www.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/lessons/20040723friday.html

LESSON PLAN 20: CITIZENSHIP AND DISABILITY

Grade Level(s): 9-12

Subject(s): Interdisciplinary, Social Studies

Class time: Each of the eight lessons takes one class period.

Materials: For a complete list of materials, see the complete lesson plan. The video and worksheets, as well as the lesson plans, are all available on the Web site.

LESSON PLAN 20: CITIZENSHIP AND DISABILITY (CONT'D)

Overview: This set of eight lessons—using a video, discussion, and worksheets—actively engages students in thinking about their roles and responsibilities in society and how they can help make their community a better place for themselves and people with disabilities. Students think about how they live, learn, and work alongside people with disabilities. They also look at how society works, the role of government, and the laws shaping society.

Objective(s): Students will:

- "Understand what it means to be a citizen."
- "Become familiar with the experiences of people with disabilities."
- "Have insight into their own and others' attitudes towards people with disabilities."

Lesson source: Disability Rights Commission

To access the complete lesson plan, please visit:
http://www.drc-gb.org/citizenship/index.asp

LESSON PLAN 21: CREATE CHANGE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Grade Level(s): 4-12

Subject(s): Interdisciplinary, Social Studies, Civics, Language Arts/Writing

Class time: Several class periods

Materials: Classroom email and Internet access

Overview: This lesson plan can be used to encourage students to spread the word about *National Inclusive Schools Week*™. Students are introduced to civic responsibility through responding to newsworthy events. Students are also introduced to persuasive writing.

Objective(s):
Students will:

- "Identify newsworthy events/individuals."
- "Utilize Internet news sites to identify newsmakers."
- "Write a 100-200-word letter to a newsmaker."
- "Report to class the responses."

Lesson source: Educator's Reference desk

To access the complete lesson plan, please visit:
http://www.eduref.org/cgi-bin/printlessons.cgi/Virtual/Lessons/Interdisciplinary/INT0139.html

LESSON PLAN 22: STUDENT FISHBOWL

Grade Level(s): Professional Development for Teachers and School Personnel and can be adapted for all grade levels.

Subject(s): Interdisciplinary Professional Development

Class time: 60-90 minutes

Overview: **"**A student fishbowl gives pre-service and in-service educators an opportunity to hear the experiences, ideas, and critiques of current students while giving the students an opportunity to be active in the dialogue on multicultural education and education transformation."

Objective(s):
"Fishbowl activities force participants to actively listen to the perspectives of a specific group of people."

Lesson source: McGraw-Hill Multicultural Supersite by Paul Gorski

To access the complete lesson plan, please visit:
http://www.mhhe.com/socscience/education/multi_new/activities/fishbowl.html

LESSON PLAN 23: CLASSROOM INCLUSION AND LEARNING NEEDS

Grade Level(s): 5–12

Subject(s): Interdisciplinary

Class time: 25-45 minutes

Overview: **"**Having students identify their own learning style is important in teaching self advocacy. Promoting students understanding that others may have different styles of learning is a critical component in creating an inclusive learning environment. Teachers are also encouraged to reflect on their own teaching style."

Objective(s):
Participants share their own experiences as students, exploring different ways people are made to feel "included" in the learning process. The existence of different learning needs and the necessity for a wide range of teaching styles emerges.

Lesson source: McGraw-Hill Multicultural Supersite by Paul Gorski

To access the complete lesson plan, please visit:
http://www.mhhe.com/socscience/education/multi_new/activities/inclusion.html

PLANNING FORM

National Inclusive Schools Week™ 2006

PLANNING AND RECORD FORM

School District:_____

Contact Name: _____

Contact E-mail: _____

Instructions: Use this planning sheet to record the activities planned and implemented during *National Inclusive Schools Week*™ 2006. We encourage you to share your ideas and accomplishments with us by mailing or faxing us a copy of this form following the *Week*. We will include your celebration ideas in the Celebration Ideas 2007 publication.

Activities that Promote Awareness	Activities that Increase Knowledge and/or Skill	Activities that Influence the System

*Please mail completed form to: *National Inclusive Schools Week*™ ● Education Development Center, Inc. ● 55 Chapel Street ● Newton, MA 02458
or fax it to: 617-969-3440

PLANNING FORM

National Inclusive Schools Week™ 2006
PLANNING AND RECORD FORM

School District:_____

Contact Name: _____

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Instructions: Use this planning sheet to record the activities planned and implemented during *National Inclusive Schools Week™* 2006. We encourage you to share your ideas and accomplishments with us by mailing or faxing us a copy of this form following the *Week*. We will include your celebration ideas in the Celebration Ideas 2007 publication.

Activities that Promote Awareness	Activities that Increase Knowledge and/or Skill	Activities that Influence the System
Students examine their school and research the accessibility of the school. Students write a letter to the principal or a local elected official(s) providing a summary of the research, and provide recommendations for improvement. Involve support staff (counselors, nurses, office staff, janitors, related service staff) in classroom-based activities to create an awareness of their role in the school community. Sponsor an essay contest using the theme of the *Week*. Have students write essays that explain why inclusive schools are important and how students with disabilities contribute to their communities in a positive way. Honor winners at an awards banquet. (Send us the winning essays, and we'll post them on our Web site: www.inclusiveschools.org).	Students research federal and state laws that protect human and civil rights. Include research on disability laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Students write an essay on how they apply to the local schools and community? School professional development day is dedicated to instructing faculty on topics such as differentiating instruction, culturally relevant curriculum, and providing accommodations for learners with disabilities. Hold a symposium for the school board to provide information about the management and administration of inclusive schools. Invite school board members from area schools that are moving ahead with inclusive education to share their knowledge and experiences.	Pilot a co-teaching model in one or more classrooms pairing a general educator and special educator. School administrators agree to set aside common planning time each day for content or grade level teachers to work on adapting their lessons to meet the needs of all learners. Declare the first week in December *Inclusive Schools Week™* with an official school board or local government proclamation.

RESOURCES

BOOKS & ARTICLES FOCUSING ON INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS

Allen, K. E. & Cowdery, G. E. (2005). *The exceptional child, inclusion in early childhood education.* Clifton Park, NY: Thomson Delmar Learning.

Bauer, A. M. & Brown, G. M. (2001). *Adolescents and inclusion: Transforming secondary schools.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Ferguson, D. L., Kozleski, E. B. & Smith, A. (2001). *Transformed, inclusive schools: A framework to guide fundamental change in urban schools.* Denver, CO: National Institute for Urban School Improvement.

Ferguson, P. M. (2001). *On infusing disability studies into the general curriculum*. Denver, CO: National Institute for Urban School Improvement.

Fisher, M. (2001). *At the end of the day: Lessons learned in inclusive education.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Hanlon, G. M. (2001). *A new IDEA for special education: Understanding the system and the new law.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Lipsky, D. K., & Gartner, A. (2001). *Standards and inclusion: Can we have both?* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Lipsky, D. K., & Gartner, A. (2001*). Inclusion and school reform: Transforming America's classrooms.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

McNight, J. (2001). *Everyone has a gift: Building communities of capacity.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Meyer, L. H., Park, H. S., Grenot-Scheyer, M., Schwartz, I. S. & Harry, B. (1998). *Making friends: The influences of culture and development.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Miller, N. B., & Sammons, C. C. (1999). *Everybody's different: Understanding and changing our reactions to disabilities.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing.

Montgomery, W. (2001). Creating culturally responsive, inclusive classrooms. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 33*, 4-9.

National Institute for Urban School Improvement (2001). *Improving education: The promise of inclusive schooling*. Denver, CO.

Nisbet, J., & Hagner, D. (Eds.). (2000). *Part of the community: Strategies for including everyone.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Nolet, V., & McLaughlin, M. J. (2000). *Accessing the general curriculum: Including students with disabilities in standards-based reform.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

Pijl, S. J., Meijer, C. J. W. & Hegarty, S. (Eds.). (1997). *Inclusive education: A global agenda.* New York, NY: Routledge Publishing.

Ryan, J. J. (2003). *Learning Diverse Schools, Series: Studies in Educational Leadership, Vol. 2.* New York, NY: Springer Berlin Heidelberg.

Ryndak, D. L. & Fisher, D. (2004). *The foundations o f inclusive education: A compendium of articles on effective strategies to achieve inclusive education.* (Rev. ed.) Baltimore, MD: TASH.

Sands, D. J., Kozleski, E.B. & French, N. K. (2000*). Inclusive education for the 21st century.* Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Thomas Learning.

Tashie, C., Shapiro-Barnard, S., Dillon, A. D., Schuh, M., Jorgensen, C. & Nisbet, J. (1998). *Changes in latitudes, changes in attitudes: The role of the inclusion facilitator*. Concord, NH: New Hampshire State Department of Education.

Utley, C. A., & Obiakor, F. E. (Eds.). (2001). *Special education: Multicultural education and school reform: Components of quality education for learners with mild disabilities.* Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas Publisher, LTD.

Villa, R. A. & Nevin, A. I. (2002). *Creativity and Collaborative Learning*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Wade, S. E. (Ed.). (2000*). Inclusive education: A casebook and readings for prospective and practicing teachers.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Williams, K. A. (2000). *Disability awareness: 24 lessons of the inclusive classroom.* Portland, ME: J Weston Walch Publishing.

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FREE DIVERSITY RESOURCES

Teaching Tolerance makes copies of several of its educational materials available to educators free of charge at http://www.tolerance.org. Materials include:

Teaching Tolerance Magazine
Published twice a year, our magazine profiles educators, schools and programs promoting diversity and equity in inspirational and replicable ways.

Starting Small: A Training Tool for Early Grade Educators
Designed for in-service programs, this training tool for early grades educators profiles exemplary pre-K through 3rd grade classrooms in which peace, equity and justice are guiding themes. VHS and 250 page text.

Documentary Films for Children and Youth:
A Place at the Table
American's Civil Rights Movement
Mighty Times: The Legacy of Rosa Parks
Might Times: The Children's March

Music:
I Will Be Your Friend: Song and Activities for Peacemaking (CD)

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