

## LESSON IV-3: Understanding Others Who Are Differently-abled

### Student Learning Objectives:

IV-5. Students will describe the challenges and abilities of differently-abled individuals.

IV-6. Students will describe appropriate ways to interact with differently-abled individuals.

### Preparation

- Gather the needed materials.
- Determine which book is available for your use in Activity 1.
- Given the length of the book *It's Your Turn at Bat* (25 minutes to read), you may wish to complete the reading at two different times.
- Personalize and then duplicate the Family Letter Introducing the Personal Safety Lesson to be sent home at the end of this lesson.

### Materials

#### Resources

- Book: *It's Your Turn at Bat -OR- Views From Our Shoes: Growing Up with a Brother or Sister with Special Needs*
- Puppet Presentation: "Kids on the Block" (Integration Idea)
- Teacher Reference: Sample Family Letter Introducing the Personal Safety Lesson

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- Paper
- Pencils

**Time: 45 minutes**

## Lesson Procedure

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### Introduction: 1 minute

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Connect the former lesson on diseases with this lesson about people who are differently-abled.

1. Share with the students:

*We have been learning about diseases that affect the skeletal and muscular systems. If a person has a disease that makes his or her skeletal or muscular system weak, what might he or she have trouble doing? [moving around, standing or sitting up, walking, etc.]*

*How many of you have ever seen someone using crutches, a walker or cane, or a wheelchair? These aids help people get around when they have a problem with their skeletal or muscular system.*

*Today we will explore what it might be like to have a problem with the skeletal or muscular system.*

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**Activity 1: 30 minutes**

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Discuss what it is like to have a disease affecting the skeletal or muscular system.

Teacher's Note: You have one of the following books available for use with this lesson: *It's Your Turn at Bat* or *Views From Our Shoes: Growing Up with a Brother or Sister with Special Needs*. Using the book available to you, conduct one of the two options described below.

Option 1

1. Share with the students:

*Listen while I read a story to you about a boy who is just about your age.*

2. Read the book *It's Your Turn At Bat*.

Teacher's Note: It will take approximately 20-25 minutes to read the story and an additional 5-10 minutes to read the questions and answers at the end of the book. You may wish to read only a few chapters at a time.

3. Discuss the book using the following discussion questions:

- *What did Mark like?* [playing baseball, reporting about sports, Roberto Clemente, spring, etc.]
- *What didn't Mark like?* [the Slime box, writing about sewing machines (at first), when people feel sorry for him, etc.]
- *How was Mark challenged by his cerebral palsy?* [He had to work very hard to talk and use his muscles. He could only go to places with access—places where his wheelchair could go. He couldn't walk, etc.]
- *How did Mark want to be treated?* [like any other kid]
- *What was Mark able to do well?* [organize car washes, report sports events, be a designated hitter, talk to his friends]

Option 2

1. Share with the students:

*Listen while I read two short stories written by children who each have a brother with a disease that affects his ability to walk.*

2. Read the short story by Nick Pawelkiewicz on page 11 of the book *Views from our Shoes*.

3. Discuss the first short story using the following discussion questions:

- *What does Nick say about his brother, Brad, having cerebral palsy?* [He wishes Brad didn't have it, but he's glad he has a brother. Nick thinks Brad will be able to walk someday. He has to stay inside with Brad sometimes, so he doesn't feel left out.]

- *What did Nick learn because Brad has cerebral palsy?* [He learned to be patient.]
  - *How do you think Brad might feel about having cerebral palsy?* [He might feel excited when his family takes him fun places. He might feel left out when he can't play with other kids. He might feel frustrated because he can't move as quickly as he'd like. He might feel happy that his brother Nick likes to be with him, etc.]
4. Read the short story by Anne Meade on pages 75 and 76 of the book *Views From Our Shoes*.
5. Discuss the second short story using the following discussion questions:
- *What does Anne say about her brother, Michael, having cerebral palsy?* [She says there are good things and bad things about having a brother with cerebral palsy. She says it is sometimes frustrating when Michael can't tell people what he wants. She doesn't like having to spend her own money when her family spends so much on his equipment. She takes care of Michael and lets him watch the television show he likes. She doesn't want to be friends with anyone who doesn't like her brother and wishes people wouldn't stare, etc.]
  - *Anne says it's great when she can yell at Michael and he can't yell back. What could Anne do instead of yelling when she gets frustrated with Michael?* [She could practice being patient and count to ten before speaking. She could quietly repeat what she is saying until he listens. She could walk away until she settles down. She could ask her parents to help, etc.]
  - *How do you think Michael might feel about having cerebral palsy?* [He might feel excited when his family takes him fun places. He might feel angry or sad when his sister yells at him. He might feel frustrated when people don't understand what he is trying to say. He might feel happy that his sister Anne and her friends like to be with him.]
  - *How do you think Brad and Michael want to be treated?* [They would probably like to be treated like any other kid.]

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**Activity 2: 10 minutes**

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Write about the challenges of being in a wheelchair and appropriate ways to interact with differently-abled persons.

1. Share with the students:

*Mark was able to do a lot of things, even though he was in a wheelchair. He also had some challenges most of us don't have.*

*I'd like you to write a paragraph about a challenge you might have if you were using a wheelchair to get around and a second paragraph about how you would want other people to treat you.*

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**Closure: 4 minutes**

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- Summarize by reading the paragraphs or asking the students to volunteer to read them to the entire class or in small groups.
- Distribute the Family Letter for students to take home.
- State:

*Our next health lesson will explore another way the skeletal and muscular systems can be thrown out of balance—injuries.*

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**Integration Ideas**

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### Theatre and Media

- In some geographical areas, the “Kids On the Block” puppet presentation is available. Have the students participate in the puppet presentation with life-size puppets who have abilities different than the students may have.
- In some areas, the film *The Invisible Child* is available through the Regional Educational Media Center (REMC). Show the film and discuss the students’ reactions and what they learned.
- The March of Dimes also has a video about children with various disabilities. It is called *Lots of Kids Like Us*. The March of Dimes has a lending library.

### Art

- Ask the students to draw a picture of themselves in a wheelchair, doing something they enjoy.

### Language Arts

- Read additional short stories from *Views From Our Shoes* if the book is available. Have the students discuss or write about the perspectives and experiences of the children with special needs and their siblings.

**Sample Family Letter Introducing the Personal Safety Lesson****ON SCHOOL LETTERHEAD**

DATE

Dear Parent:

Our school is using a health education program called the Michigan Model for Comprehensive School Health Education. This program is based on the fact that families and schools need to work together to help youth.

At each grade level is a lesson on personal safety. This lesson teaches students how to protect themselves from inappropriate touch.

Unfortunately, sexual abuse of children occurs more frequently than we would like to believe. Recent counts show us that one out of four females and one out of six males is sexually abused in some way by the age of 18. These numbers have led us to look for ways to prevent these tragedies.

Children need knowledge and skills to protect themselves. Educational programs can effectively give children these skills. The lessons in the Michigan Model teach material on the child's level. Each idea is presented in a non-threatening way, along with the skills needed for self-protection. As a result of these lessons, students will:

- Develop the ability to judge between appropriate and inappropriate touch.
- Learn assertive self-protection skills.
- Know whom they should ask for help.

We will be teaching the personal safety lesson in the next few weeks. If you wish to look over the materials used in this lesson, please contact the school at phone.

Sincerely,

Principal's Name

