



(Maryland State Department of Education)
Service-Learning
Special Education Unit
Anti-Bullying and Disability Awareness

Primary Subject: English, Language Arts

Grade Level: 7 (ALT-MSA)

Additional Subject Area Connections: Health, Art

Unit Title: Anti-Bullying and Disability Awareness

Type(s) of Service: Direct, Indirect and/or Advocacy

Students participating in service-learning projects have a wide range of abilities, challenges, and needs. Teachers and parents may provide a greater amount of guidance and assistance before, during, and at project completion. Procedures and steps described in the unit may be enhanced, modified, or excluded, as dictated by the needs of the students. Various assistive technologies may be used to meet the individual needs of students in order to complete the project.

Unit Description: Students will read and analyze fiction selections for bullying, teasing, and disability awareness themes. Students will then research and present social skills and techniques to end bullying and promote disability awareness. This will be done in both special and general education classrooms.

Potential Service-Learning Action Experiences:

- Students (special or general education or a partnership of both) offer disability awareness activities (an assembly, PSAs, announcements, posters, sponsor a Disabilities Awareness Day – DAP Day, etc.) for the entire school. (*advocacy*)

Maryland Curriculum Standards Met

English/ Language Arts:

- 1.D.3 Understand, acquire, and use new vocabulary
- 1.E.1.a Listen to critically, read, and discuss texts representing diversity in content, culture, authorship, and perspective, including areas such as race, gender, disability, religion, and socio-economic background.
- 1.E.2 Use strategies to prepare for reading
- 1.E.3 Use strategies to make meaning from text
- 1.E.4 Use strategies to demonstrate understanding of the text
- 3.A.6.d Reflect on and explain personal connections to the text
- 3.A.6.e Explain the implications of the text for the reader and/or society

Health

- 1.A.1.c Demonstrate ways to communicate respect for diversity, including mental and physical disabilities, culture, and race/ethnicity
- 1.B.1 Establish how emotions influence behavior

Art

- 3.2.a Identify sources for ideas and describe the processes used to create artworks based on those sources

- Students conduct an anti-bullying, disability awareness, and diversity appreciation campaign (posters, announcements, PSAs, skits, etc.) for the school. (*advocacy*)
- Students travel to a nearby elementary school and share information about anti-bullying, diversity appreciation, disability awareness, etc. Students may choose to perform short role-playing scenarios to demonstrate appropriate and inappropriate behaviors and reactions. (*advocacy*)
- The school participates in the “Spread the Word to End the Word Campaign.” (*advocacy*)
- A conflict mediation program is created at the school. (*direct*)
- Students raise funds for items needed by organizations that promote diversity appreciation and anti-bullying (Association of Retarded Citizens - ARC, Special Olympics, etc.). (*indirect*)



Alignment with Maryland's Best Practices of Service-Learning: *Anti-Bullying and Disability Awareness*

1. Meet a recognized community need

This project provides an opportunity to plan and conduct disability awareness, diversity appreciation, and anti-bullying campaigns. Middle school students often need help with these issues.

2. Achieve curricular objectives through service-learning

Students will: read and analyze fiction to identify disability awareness and anti-bullying themes; analyze word choice and how it contributes to tone; create presentations and posters advocating anti-bullying and disability awareness; and practice communication skills through augmentative communication devices, speech, or sign language.

3. Reflect throughout the service-learning experience

Students will keep reflective journals that contain written personal reflections, artistic reflections, comic strips, photos, and other personal reflections.

4. Develop student responsibility (Students have opportunities to make decisions about the service-learning project.)

Students will have many opportunities to demonstrate and increase their understanding of responsibility and sharpen their leadership and decision-making skills. Special and general education students can determine: which advocacy activities would best reach and impact their peers; which topics will be presented and who will present them; which partnerships will be created with elementary schools, businesses, and community agencies; the subject matter of their advocacy posters; etc.



5. Establish community partnerships

Feeder elementary schools could benefit from the anti-bullying and disability awareness presentations since these issues also affect elementary school students. Local business owners can also be contacted and asked to display the anti-bullying or disability awareness posters. Guest speakers can be invited from the local community to promote disability awareness and diversity appreciation.

6. Plan ahead for service-learning

Students will: contact local elementary schools to schedule visits from the middle school; research *Operation: Respect*, *Spread the Word to End the Word*, and *Darius Goes West* to understand disabilities and the importance of respecting everyone; brainstorm ideas to decide which media they will use to present; and send letters to parents to describe the aspects and goals of the project.

7. Equip students with knowledge and skills needed for service

Students will: become familiar with specific disabilities and their characteristics; learn what bullying looks like and how good friends behave; practice public speaking; and explore the concepts of citizenship, civic responsibility, and service-learning.



Procedures with Resources:

Anti-Bullying and Disability Awareness

These procedures represent an example of a service-learning lesson on this specific topic, but can be changed to meet individual classroom interests or varying community needs. You are encouraged to adapt this unit to fit your unique classroom and community and to solicit student input in planning and decision making.

1. Introduce the service-learning project by discussing service-learning and citizenship with students and engaging in activities to explore those themes. A resource to support this topic can be found at [Bringing Learning To Life](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o2-eoEi6FCo) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o2-eoEi6FCo>).
2. General education students will read and analyze *Flowers for Algernon* and begin their reflective journals. Special education students will read *Words are Not for Hurting* and *How to Take the Grrrr Out of Anger* and decide how to present their anti-bullying and disability awareness message to the general education classes.
 - a. [Operation Respect](https://operationrespect.org/) (<https://operationrespect.org/>)
 - b. [Simon's Hook](https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/simons-hook-a-story-about-teases-and-put-downs-karen-g-burnett/1102871534) (<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/simons-hook-a-story-about-teases-and-put-downs-karen-g-burnett/1102871534>)
 - c. [Just Kidding](https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/just-kidding-trudy-ludwig/1102302262#/) (<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/just-kidding-trudy-ludwig/1102302262#/>)
 - d. [Words Are Not for Hurting](https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/words-are-not-for-hurting-elizabeth-verdick/1104219264#/) (<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/words-are-not-for-hurting-elizabeth-verdick/1104219264#/>)
 - e. [How to Take the Grrrr Out of Anger](https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/how-to-take-the-grrrr-out-of-anger-elizabeth-verdick/1103775181#/) (<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/how-to-take-the-grrrr-out-of-anger-elizabeth-verdick/1103775181#/>)
 - f. [Darius Goes West](http://www.dariusgoeswest.org/) (<http://www.dariusgoeswest.org/>)
 - g. [Spread the Word: Inclusion](https://www.specialolympics.org/stories/news/spread-the-word-inclusion) – Special Olympics (<https://www.specialolympics.org/stories/news/spread-the-word-inclusion>)
 - h. Contact the local Safe and Drug Free Schools Coordinator for more information

Additional Interdisciplinary Connections



Math – Students can create surveys and collect data on bullying and disability awareness

Teachers may adapt specific books with a tool such as Boardmaker.

3. Special education students will create their presentations and practice their public speaking. An option would be to pair general and special education students together to present their information. Then, they will present their projects to the general education students. At this point, special education and general education students will compose reflective journals. Presentations may include sign language, assistive technology, and augmentative communication devices. Journals may include pictures or photos.
4. Students will then create groups combining the special education and general education students to create posters (and or announcements, PSA, etc.) with the anti-bullying and disability awareness message. Select groups can also create a coloring book that will be used in the elementary school presentations. Other groups can hang their posters around the school or throughout the community as decided by the students.
5. Select groups will create and practice a presentation for the elementary schools on anti-bullying and disability awareness.
6. The selected groups will then travel to the elementary schools to promote their messages of anti-bullying and disability awareness.
7. General education students will reflect and evaluate the effectiveness of the project by reviewing their reflective journaling and interaction with their same age peers in order to compose an original children's book on their experiences. The general education students will then read their children's books to the special education students that will precede a reflective discussion on everyone's shared experience. Adapted books may be read by special education students.
8. Upon completion, analyze the plan to evaluate the successful completion of the objective and overall success of the project. Also, reflect on the project using various reflection activities and evaluate the effectiveness of the project by completing the [Rubric for Assessing the Use of the Maryland's Seven Best Practices of Service-Learning](http://marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Documents/Service-Learning/rubric_best.pdf) (http://marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Documents/Service-Learning/rubric_best.pdf).

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[Maryland Public Schools Service-Learning Website](http://www.mdservice-learning.org) (www.mdservice-learning.org)

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