

Fair + Equal + Equitable = Inclusive

In this lesson, students discuss the difference among fairness, equality, and equity. They will use real-life situations to help them think about the concepts of fairness, equality, equity, and inclusiveness. The lesson also helps them flex their muscles in empathy, thinking about certain challenging situations from the perspective of others.

Inclusiveness Sub-Concept(s)

Equity, Fairness, Kindness

Lesson Timeframe

40-45 minutes

Required Materials

- ☐ Print out of the Equality/Equity image or smartboard on which to project the image
- ☐ Smartboard or other computer screen to project the “homework gap” video.

Standards Map

This lesson aligns with CASEL Competencies, National Health Education Standards, and Common Core State Standards. Please refer to the [Standards Map](#) for more information.

Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Define fairness, equality, and equity.
- Apply problem-solving strategies to help make different situations fair, equal, and/or equitable for everyone involved.

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

Ask yourself this question each day this week: How can I treat people in a way that does not show favor for some and not others? Identify one action step you can take to move forward in your quest for fairness!

Tips for Diverse Learners

- Students can draw their responses to the situations instead of writing them down or students could role play.
- Read through each situation first and ensure each student/group understands the conflict.



Share

3-5 minutes

For this lesson, students need to build on their understanding of inclusiveness. Ensure students understand the definitions of the following terms (definitions provided but if you have other definitions that your school uses, feel free to use those instead):

Fair: Everyone gets what they need and that we are not favoring some people over others.

Equal: Everyone gets exactly the same thing.

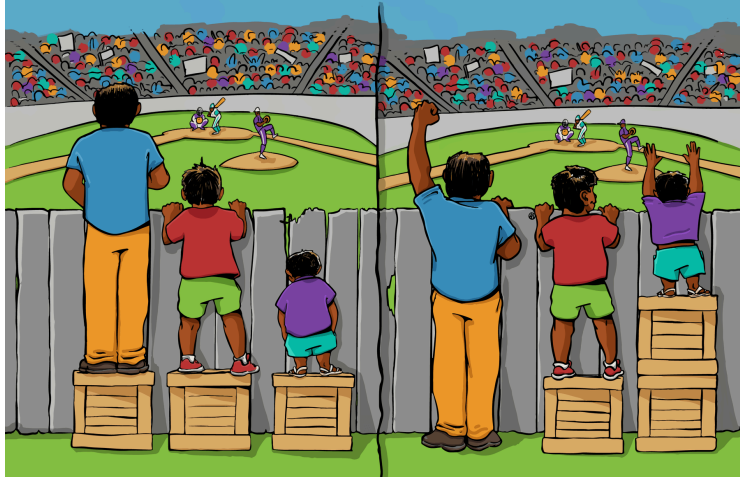
Equity: Everyone gets what they need to be successful, even if it's different for each person.

Ask students if they can give you some examples of fairness, equality, and equity.

Inspire

12-15 minutes

To help students visualize the differences between fair, equal, and equitable, have them examine the following picture:



(Image source: “[Interaction Institute for Social Change](#) | Artist: [Angus Maguire](#).”.)

Ask:

- What is “equal” in the image on the left?
 - **Answer:** Each person has a box to stand on.
- Does this make the image on the left “fair” for everyone trying to watch the game?
 - **Answer:** No. Even with a box, not everyone can see so the boxes only favor the taller people.
- How is the picture on the right different from the picture on the left?
 - **Answer:** The Boxes are stacked differently and so now everyone can see the game.

Explain that the picture on the right is an example of equity and fairness. It is not equal because not everyone has the same thing, but it is equitable and fair because everyone has what they need to see the same.



Empower

20-25 minutes

Equity is tricky. We often think that if everyone simply has the same things - if things are equal - then things are fair. We know, though, that sometimes things are equal but they are still not fair or equitable, like we saw in the baseball image.

Part 1:

The following activity requires video player capabilities (Smartboard would work well); if this is not an option, skip down to the second part of the Empower section.

Video: Homework Gap (4:14)

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

After the video, ask the following questions:

- Even though both teams got “additional resources,” why was this an unfair situation? Did they have the same types of resources?
 - No. One team got computers and the other had books.
- Why weren’t the book resources useful?
 - They weren’t able to look things up fast enough, compared to a computer, so that team was at a disadvantage.
- What was fair, equal, and equitable about this example?
- What was not fair, not equal, and not equitable about this example?

Part 2:

Students are now going to investigate some situations where things are equal but they are not equitable. Their job will be to figure out what to do to give everyone the same opportunity to succeed. These are going to be situations that students might see in their school or classroom; feel free to modify as needed. You can work through these scenarios as a whole class, in small groups, or independently. Do a whole class read out and discussion if you have students work in groups or independently.

Scenario 1:

1. Li moved to your town from South Korea. He speaks some English but he is still learning. During tests, Lee struggles to read all of the questions and answer them, and the teacher does not speak any Korean. Everyone is taking the same test so that is equal, but it is not fair or equitable for Lee. *What could be done to make the test more fair and equitable for Li?*

Scenario 2:

2. Sam isn’t able to walk. He is in a wheelchair. The computer lab is on the 2nd floor and your class has keyboarding once a week. Sam usually stays in the classroom and works on a laptop while the rest of the class goes upstairs. This works okay, but Sam misses out on the instruction from the keyboarding teacher. He has equal access to the computers but not to the instruction, so it’s not equitable. *What could be done to make this more equitable for Sam?*

Scenario 3:

3. Lara is 11 and her younger sister, Ava, is 6. At home, the girls each have chores to do. Lara has to wash dishes, clean their bathroom, and do laundry. Ava has to pick up her toys and put away her clothes after Lara does their laundry. Lara gets frustrated because Ava does so much less than she does. The situation isn’t equal. *Is it fair? Is it equitable? Explain why or why not.*



Reflect

5 minutes

Review the definitions of fair, equal, and equitable again, because they are all related but they are different.

- **Fair:** Everyone gets what they need and that we are not favoring some people over others.
- **Equal:** Everyone gets exactly the same thing.
- **Equity:** Everyone gets what they need to be successful, even if it's different for each person.

Ask: How do these concepts relate to our main concept of inclusiveness?

Invite student responses.

Remind students that when they see a situation that isn't fair, isn't equal, or isn't equitable, think about ways they can help if it is reasonable to do so. Also, if they are in Lara's situation, and they feel they do more than their younger siblings, invite them to think about whether that inequality is actually fair and equitable. If it is, they will need to adjust how they think about that situation. If it is not, perhaps they can talk to a parent or guardian about it. Remember, they should advocate for themselves just as they should advocate for someone else. Our mission if we see something that is not fair, not equal, not equitable, not *inclusive*, is to work to be inclusive and to give everyone what they need to succeed.



Extension Ideas

- You could write story problems for math that include concepts around fairness, equality, and inclusiveness (like the examples above).
- Students and parents can examine this issue at home, especially if there are siblings at home. In what ways are household rules fair but not equal, or both fair and equal.



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AS A RECOMMENDED
PROGRAM FOR SOCIAL
AND EMOTIONAL
LEARNING.

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has been reviewing evidence-based SEL programs since 2003. Kindness in the Classroom® meets CASEL's SElect Program and is included in the CASEL Guide to Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs.

Kindness in the Classroom® met or exceeded all of CASEL's criteria for high-quality SEL programming. Kindness in the Classroom® received CASEL's highest designation for high-quality SEL programming.

<https://casel.org/guide/kindness-in-the-classroom/>