

Inclusiveness

This week students will explore inclusiveness from a personal perspective. While they have been taught over the years how to be inclusive of others, they may not have been taught how to work on including themselves, even if they feel things are unfair or exclusive to them. Students will identify the choices they have in a variety of hypothetical situations to turn something that feels exclusive into something that makes them feel strong, included, and inclusive.

Begin the unit with the whole class lesson and then aim to complete at least two of the mini lessons with your students throughout the week. Each mini lesson is designed to present elements of the main lesson in new and engaging ways.

Main Lesson

Whole Class Lesson
30 minutes



Finding Your Voice

In this primary lesson, students discuss how to find their own voice when it comes to inclusiveness. When they feel excluded, how do they create their own opportunities for inclusion and happiness? (See page 3 for lesson details.)

Mini Lessons

For Small Groups
15 minutes



Whose Voice do you Follow?

Who are some voices you follow? Are they coaches, teachers, parents, celebrities, athletes, and/or siblings? Whose voice do you hear when you are faced with making a decision? Do you feel kids' voices are heard in our society? Consider referencing student groups that tend to have a strong voice; a student council, if applicable to your school, might be a good example.

How do these voices encourage you to raise your own voice? How do they encourage you to include yourself in important activities or to include others?

For Partners
15 minutes



What Matters to Me

With a partner, discuss a topic that you feel passionately about. How have you raised your voice for this issue in the past? If you have not raised your voice, how could you do so now or in the future? What, if anything, prevents you from including yourself regarding things you care about?

For Individuals
15 minutes



Inclusiveness Inventory

How likely are you to create new opportunities for yourself when you feel excluded? Think back to the primary lesson and about some of the answers you gave to the situations presented. Set 3-5 goals for yourself for finding and raising your voice so that you are engaged in life around you and giving yourself opportunities to be included as well as to include others. Make sure your goals are SMART: Specific, Measurable (meaning, you will be able to tell when you've reached your goal), Attainable (something you can actually do),

Relevant to your life right now, and Time-bound (have a date by which you want to achieve your goals!).

Technology-Focused
15 minutes



Using Technology to Raise Your Voice

What are some social media platforms or digital communication tools you use? How do you use those tools to express yourself? Do you share your ideas, pictures, successes, and failures with others? What voice are you putting out into the world? Is it one of inclusiveness, fairness, and kindness? Pick a social media platform (like SnapChat, Facebook, Instagram, text, or game device) and draw or write about the image you project through that platform. Reflect on if that image is positive, negative, or neutral and if it truly represents who you are in real life.

Finding Your Voice

In this primary lesson, students discuss how to find their own voice when it comes to inclusiveness. When they feel excluded, how do they create their own opportunities for inclusion and happiness?

Lesson Timeframe

30 minutes

Required Materials

- ☐ If you are experimenting with [backchannel chat](#), see the links provided in the lesson and ensure there are enough computers or devices for at least a small group of students who will be discussing in the background; ideally the group would be split into two even groups (real-time discussants and backchannel discussants).
- ☐ If you are not experimenting with backchannel, then no additional materials are required.

Standards Map

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

Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Explore inclusiveness from a personal perspective
- Identify ways to create opportunities for self-inclusion that can also lead to including others

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

There is a lot of pressure on teachers: pressure to have students who pass their state tests, pressure to close the achievement gap, pressure to make sure everyone is at or above grade level, and pressure to be the best. Sometimes the pressure we feel is positive and it propels us toward improvement, it challenges us to grow in our craft, and it inspires us to try new things. Sometimes the pressure we feel is negative and it makes us become self-critical, induces self-doubt, or leads us toward poor choices.

When you feel pressure, identify a few things:

1. Is the pressure you feel positive or negative?
2. Does the pressure lead you to grow or improve?
3. Does the pressure challenge you in a way that feels good or bad?
4. Does the pressure you feel lead toward greater inclusiveness?

Identifying how the pressure makes you feel or where it will lead you is the first step in knowing how to respond. Sometimes we will need to reject the pressure outright, and sometimes we will need to accept its challenge. Sometimes you can reframe negative peer pressure so that it serves you in a positive way. Regardless, you are in control of how you respond!



Share

5-7 minutes

This is our last week of the inclusiveness unit, and you may have noticed that we haven't talked a lot about specific strategies to go out and include people in what we are doing. That is because, by 7th grade, you know that you should include others and you know the typical ways we can do that: invite someone to eat with you at lunch who doesn't always have someone to sit with or, pair up with someone new in class when you have to do partner work. You could invite everyone to your party rather than just a select few. We know already how to include people. But, if we are insecure about ourselves or if we think things are unfair or if we don't realize that not everyone has the same opportunities that we have (or maybe we assume everyone has good opportunities but us), then we will not be able to include others very well. We maybe don't feel included ourselves so why include others?



Inspire

15 minutes

We are going to end this unit by working through how we can have more confidence in who we are and in what we have to say. We are going to work on finding our voice.

Let's start with a brief discussion about what it feels like to be left out. (Invite student responses.)

What do you often do when you are left out of something? (Invite student responses; some may suggest doing their own thing, having their own party, etc.)



Empower

15 minutes

Today, as a group, let's brainstorm some things that we can do when we feel excluded that can help us find our voice, feel or be more included, and be more inclusive. I will provide different situations and we will talk through a typical response first and then a more inclusive response second.

(You can complete this activity in several different manners.)

- Large group activity, taking notes on the board or having an oral discussion
- Individual activity first and then return to whole group sharing
- Small group discussion
- [Backchannel chat](#) (if you have access to computers). You could use a core group of discussants for the first couple of questions while the backchannel group listens and posts their ideas to a classroom discussion forum. This works well if you have Google Classroom or some other kind of online LMS platform that accommodates online discussions. There are also [free online tools](#) that are designed for educational backchannel chat. Utilizing backchannel chat allows for quieter students to participate who might not otherwise and for students to listen/observe and respond in real time to a live discussion. After a question or two, have the groups switch.

Situation #1:

You didn't make the team you tried out for.

Typical Response:

Inclusive Response:

Situation #2:

You weren't invited to the birthday party that a lot of kids are going to.

Typical Response:

Inclusive Response:

Situation #3:

You are new in school and haven't really met a good friend yet.

Typical Response:

Inclusive Response:

Situation #4:

You aren't good at math but it seems like everyone else is. There is a big test on Friday that is making you feel anxious.

Typical Response:

Inclusive Response:

Situation #5:

You feel that other kids have nicer clothes, shoes, phones, and just better stuff in general than you do.

Typical Response:

Inclusive Response:



Reflect

5-7 minutes

We all have typical responses when we feel excluded and usually that makes us feel sad and even more excluded than we felt before! But, as we learned today, we have choices. We can choose to be more inclusive of ourselves, first, so that we can be more inclusive than others. We talked about [insert comments that are specific to the classroom discussion you had]. Think about these things this week as you approach different situations. First, evaluate if it is fair and equitable, and then remember you have a choice in how you respond. How can you be inclusive of others and also find your own voice?