



Ability Privilege Lesson



Lesson title: Ability Privilege Lesson

Subject and topic:

Diversity and Equity

Grade level:

11th-College

Duration:

30 minutes

Lesson summary:

This activity is designed for students to reflect on their own lives and their privilege status. Unfortunately in our society certain groups can navigate with ease, while others must fight for their basic rights. Students will reflect on how their ability (able-bodied or disabled) affects their lives and how they can use their privilege to help others.

Instructors should feel comfortable discussing disability in a group context. DEE is happy to provide support if requested. .

Standards:

- **CC.1.4.11-12.C** Develop and analyze the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic; include graphics and multimedia when useful to aid comprehension.
- **CC.1.4.11-12.I** Distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims; develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.



- **CC.1.5.11-12.A** Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions on grade-level topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Objectives:

SWBAT

- Engage in conversations surrounding disability and privilege.
- Recognize and understand from various perspectives.

Essential Questions:

- EQ1: How can I use my privilege to help others?
- EQ2: Am I aware of how my privilege benefits others?

Vocabulary:

- Ability
- Disability
- Social model of disability
- Privilege

Lesson procedures:

Pre-lesson procedures: (feel free to develop your own group agreements)
Begin the class with a review of group agreements. Write each of them on a piece of flipchart paper as you review them. Once they are all reviewed and understood, ask students if anything is missing so they can add to the list.

Sample Group Agreements:

1. Respect
 - a. Respect the speaker. Give undivided attention to the person who has the floor (permission to speak).
 - b. Respect each other's opinions, especially if you don't agree.
2. Confidentiality
 - a. You can talk about the content of what we discussed, but please do not "out" your classmates or guest speakers.
 - b. Be conscious about what you discuss outside the classroom.



3. Use “I” statements to claim your opinions.
 - a. I feel upset about this because....
 - b. I think
 - c. I don’t like...
4. Only one speaker at a time.
 - a. Please raise your hand unless otherwise directed.
5. Laugh with anyone and laugh at no one!
6. Participate actively.
7. Right to pass- if a student doesn’t want to disclose they can choose to stand still and not move on any of the privilege points.
8. Have fun and do your best!

Lesson activity:

1. Discuss ability and privilege to review background information if needed.
2. Go through each of these questions/statements to discuss.
 - i. When I am told about our national heritage or about civilization, I am shown that people of my [ability status] made it what it is.
 - ii. I am never asked to speak for all the people of my [ability] group.
 - iii. I can turn on the television or open to the front page of my internet browser and see people of my [ability group] widely and positively represented.
 - iv. Whether I use checks, credit cards, or cash, I can count on my [ability] not to work against the appearance of financial reliability.
 - v. I can curse, or dress in second-hand clothes or not answer emails without having people attribute these choices to the bad morals, the stability, or the illiteracy of my [ability].
 - vi. I can do well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to my [ability group].
 - vii. I can easily buy posters, birthday cards, children’s books, dolls, toys, and magazines featuring people of my [ability group].
 - viii. I can go home from most meetings or organizations I belong to feeling somewhat tied in rather than isolated,



out of place, outnumbered, unheard, held at a distance, or feared.

- ix. I can be sure that if I need legal or medical help my [ability status] will not work against me.
- x. When I decided where to live, I didn't have to consider whether there were steps or any specific accommodations to the bathroom and I had many options that I could consider based on my ability to enter the home and use all aspects of the bathroom as the only criteria.
- xi. When I am interested in attending an event or going out to a restaurant, I don't have to make any phone calls or do research to find out if the space is accessible to me.
- xii. I've never been called a faker when I'm having a good day and can socialize and walk without assistance.
- xiii. I don't worry about how people will treat me differently if/when they find out about my disability that isn't obvious when they first meet me.
- xiv. I get invited to participate in activities regularly because my friends and family don't have to make any special considerations about places or spaces that I can access.

Related materials:

- Discussion questions are embedded in the lesson activity and the evaluation.

Evaluation:

Students will engage in post reflection questions below and discuss how this can be applied in their lives.

Ask your students this question related to this lesson to gauge how much they learned. **Did this lesson help you understand what privilege is?**

Thank you for bringing the conversation about disability into your classroom.



Help us evaluate this lesson plan by visiting [our evaluation page to assess this lesson](#). You will find an evaluation both for you and your students to complete there.

Post activity reflection questions:

- How did this activity make you feel?
- Consider where you are standing right now. If you were someone who used a wheelchair, how might that have changed your responses? If you were Autistic, how might that have changed your responses?
- What are some things that you hadn't considered before participating in this activity?
- How can you take what you've learned from this and apply it in your own life, even in one small way?

