



Discussion Guide: Stella Young TED Talk



Lesson title: Discussion Guide: Stella Young TED Talk

Subject and topic:
Social Studies

Grade level:
11-12 and college level

Duration:
Up to the individual educator (20-45 minutes)

Lesson summary:
Students will watch Stella Young's TED Talk where she breaks down society's habit of turning disabled people into 'inspiration porn' and process why disabled people are often thought to be inspirational for achieving very ordinary things. This inspiration is actually pity in disguise and they'll discuss the implications for that idea. Students will reflect on their own perceptions of disability and how it aligns with the thoughts shared in the TED video

Standards:

- **CC.1.5.9-10.A** Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions on grades level topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- **CC.1.5.11-12.B** Evaluate how the speaker's perspective, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric affect the credibility of an argument



through the author's stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone.

Objectives:

1. Students will learn to recognize inspiration porn around disability.
2. Students will be able to use appropriate language around disability.
3. Students will reflect on their own perceptions of disability and take corrective action.

Vocabulary:

- Disability
- Barrier
- Exceptional
- Inspirational
- Acceptance
- Social Model of Disability

Materials:

- Computer and projector or screen
- Stella Young TED Talk <https://youtu.be/8K9Gg164Bsw>
- [Discussion Questions](#) (below)

Lesson procedures

- Show the [video](#) (9:17) and split students into groups of 3. Display the questions below and ask students to discuss with each other and write their thoughts on flip chart paper.
- Bring students back to the larger group and have an overall discussion.



Related materials:

- Explore Access guide for the TED talk: [Portrayal of Disability: Disability as Inspiration](#)

Evaluation:

Ask your students these questions related to this lesson to gauge how much they learned. **Did this video challenge ideas you had about disability?**

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.



Discussion Questions

Themes: social model of disability, inspiration porn, ramp (wheelchair accessibility), body acceptance, disabled as identity, exceptional vs. not exceptional

Did anything surprise you in the TED Talk?

What kind of language does she use? Why does Stella use the term disabled people? (social model of disability)

What is inspiration porn? Why is it significant?

Why does inspiration porn potentially make life harder for disabled people?

Why do we think people with disabilities should be inspiring?

Is disability a bad thing? Why does this lead to inspiration?

What does it mean to objectify? And where do we see this in other parts of media?

Have you seen inspirational pictures of disabled people before? How have they been shared and why do you think they've been shared?

Have you shared them via social media?

