

Get To Know Me

Lesson Plan

(Grades K-2, 3-5)

Objective

Students will participate in discussion around inclusion and acceptance of children with Down Syndrome.

Materials Needed

- NDSS Get To Know Me Poster
- NDSS Questions & Answers About Down Syndrome for Kids Handout

Key Points

- Kids have more in common than they may realize. These similarities can't be identified based on how a person looks or acts, so kids should "get to know someone" before they judge him or her.
- Some children have Down syndrome. Down syndrome is a developmental disability that affects how a person looks and learns in school.
- All kids want to be included and have friends. Kids with Down syndrome may have similar interests as we do. Next time we meet someone with Down syndrome, we will "get to know him/her" by asking questions and finding out how we are similar.

**WE'RE ALL KIDS!
GET TO
KNOW
MIE**

I love playing soccer with my friend and reading to my little brother. My favorite food is pizza. I have Down syndrome.

My name is Alexander. Get to know me.

get to know someone with down syndrome

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The poster features a blue background with white clouds and a green grassy area at the bottom. Two children, a boy and a girl, are shown in a cutout style, smiling. The text is arranged in a friendly, approachable manner, with a large, bold title and handwritten-style text for the children's story.

Anticipatory Set : Launch-Off

This warm-up game aims to show students how other students in the class have the same interests as they do. Students remain seated at their desks or sit on the floor in a circle.

Teacher's Explanation

"I am going to read a question. If you answer "yes" to the question, silently launch-off from your chair and stand up tall. Look around to who else is standing up. These people share the same interests as you. Sit down at my direction and listen for the next question."

Potential Questions

(Teachers should tailor questions to grade level and known interests of class.)

- Do you like to play soccer?
- Is pizza your favorite food?
- Do you like to play games with your friends?
- Does your family have a pet?
- Are dogs the best kind of pet?
- Do you have brothers and sisters?
- Do you like to read with your brothers and sisters?
- Do you like drawing and painting?

Discussion

Teacher facilitates a class reflection on activity, driving towards the following key points:

- 1) We learned that some peers had the same interests as us. We didn't know how we were similar by just looking at them.
- 2) We make friends by getting to know people. We ask questions and talk to each other. We can't make friends by judging how a person looks or acts.

Sample Question Roadmap

- What did you realize about the other students who stood up with you? (We liked the same thing. We answered yes to the same question.)
- Can someone provide me with a specific example? (Jane and I both play sports.)
- Did you know that you and Jane both played sports? (No.)
- What could you do next to figure out more about Jane? (Ask her what kind of sport she plays or invite her to play basketball with me after school.)
- Can you tell that you and your classmates share these same interests by just looking at them? (No.)
- So how can we figure out if a person can be our friend or not? (We get to know them. We ask them what they like.)
- What did we learn from this discussion about friendship? (Teacher writes down key points in students' language on the board or chart paper to reference later in the lesson.)

Discussion Continued

Teacher references the poster and drives discussion towards the following key points:

- Alexander has Down syndrome. He has the same interests as his friends.
- Alexander's friends didn't judge him because he has Down syndrome. They got to know him and discovered their similar interests.
- When we meet a person with Down syndrome, we should find out how we are similar by asking questions and getting to know him or her as a person.

Sample Question Roadmap

- What do you notice about this poster? (Boys are friends. Boys are happy and smiling.)
- What do you think the boys in the poster enjoy doing together? (Playing soccer. Eating lunch together.)
- This boy is named Alexander. Alexander says he has Down syndrome. Down syndrome is a disability that affects how a person looks and learns. However, people with Down syndrome are just like everyone else.
- Why do you think these boys hang out together? (They like the same things.)
- Do you think it matters that Alexander has Down syndrome to his friend. (No.)
- What sort of things matter to his friends? (That they like the same things.)
- How did his friends find out that they had so much in common with Alexander? (They asked him questions and got to know him.)
- If a new student with Down syndrome came into our class tomorrow, what would you do? (Ask him or her questions about him or herself.)
- Does anyone have any questions about Down syndrome or what we spoke about today? (Teacher should encourage honest questions and dialogue to clear up any misperceptions about the conversation.)

Individual Student Reflection

K-2: Students draw a picture and write a short story about a new friend they made this year. Why are you friends? What do you both like? What matters the most in a friendship?

3-5: Students write an advice column for the school newspaper on the following prompt: A new student arrives in your class. The student appears to have Down syndrome. How should you treat the new student?

or

Describe a time when you felt that you were judged because of how you looked or acted. How did it make you feel? How do you want people to treat you and get to know you?

Name: _____

Draw a picture of you and a new friend you made this year.



Why are you friends? What do you both like? What matters the most in a friendship?