



The
Teach**Able**
Project

Lesson Plan



JK/SK, Early Years:
Realizing Differences



Learning Environment: Key Considerations

In organizing the learning environment for the topic of Accessibility Awareness, teachers and other adults in the classroom will provide children with a safe and healthy environment for learning where a wide range of opportunities to learn, practise, and demonstrate knowledge and skills in all areas of learning is available. A balance of exploration or investigation, guided instruction, and explicit instruction will offer children many opportunities to explore and investigate. These experiences will allow children to build on their existing knowledge, create and clarify their own new understandings, and experience a variety of approaches to a problem or question.

For this topic, the learning environment should include centres where children will be able to:

- learn about individual differences, special needs and special equipment used by a variety of characters while listening to and observing pictures in a variety of books.
- have the opportunity to respond to oral questions and share their experiences while listening and discussing a variety of stories about children who are unique and special.
- have the opportunity to respond to the stories in a variety of learning centres.
- have the opportunity to explore a variety of fiction and non-fiction books and make observations and comparisons about their own characteristics that make them unique or special.

Connections to Accessibility Awareness – Big Ideas

- Some students sometimes need special assistance, equipment or technology to learn.
- Accessibility Awareness includes information about the range of ability and individual strengths found in the classroom.
- Students need to help develop a school culture that fosters a sense of belonging for all students.
- The goal of Accessibility Awareness is to shape a society in which individuals are appreciated for their intrinsic worth.

Respect for diversity, equity, and inclusion are prerequisites for honouring children's rights, optimal development, and learning. See page 2, *2010-11 The Full-Day Early Learning - Kindergarten Program (Draft Version)*.



Important Considerations for Program Planning

In keeping with the inclusive nature of accessibility and research-based teaching practices, the learning environment must provide a continuum of supports for all students, including those with accessibility considerations and/or special education needs. The *2010-11 The Full-Day Early Learning - Kindergarten Program (Draft Version)* highlights elements to consider in program planning for the classroom, including Universal Design, Differentiated Instruction, equity and inclusive education, the perspective of First Nation, Métis and Inuit people, meeting the needs of English language learners and of students with special education needs. Please see pages 33 – 47 of *2010-11 The Full-Day Early Learning - Kindergarten Program (Draft Version)* for more information.

Community Connections

Connections with parents, members of the broader school community, agencies and institutions, social services, community organizations, corporations, and local businesses provide important opportunities for supporting accessibility awareness for students. Community partners can be an important resource in students' learning as volunteers, mentors, guest speakers, participants in the school's accessibility events or models of accessibility awareness in the life of the community. Modelling and mentoring can enrich not only the educational experience of students but also the life of the community. Schools should ensure that partnerships are nurtured within the context of strong educational objectives.

If the topic of a lesson is about a disability and a child in the classroom has that disability, it is important to discuss that lesson with the child, if appropriate, and his or her parents so that planning can be respectful and strengths-based in perspective.

Curriculum Document(s)/Grade

2010-11 The Full-Day Early Learning - Kindergarten Program (Draft Version).

Curriculum Expectations (as stated in the Ontario curriculum documents)

Social Development: Children can engage in activities that increase their awareness of others and foster respect for individual differences.

Big Idea: Children are connected to others and contribute to their world.

Overall Expectations: 3. demonstrate a beginning understanding of the diversity in individuals, families, schools, and the wider community.

Emotional Development: Through a variety of experiences, children begin to see themselves as unique.

Big Idea: Children have a strong sense of identity and well-being.

Overall Expectation: 1. demonstrate a sense of identity and a positive self-image

Language

Big Idea: Children are Effective Communicators

Overall Expectation:

1. communicate by talking and by listening and speaking to others for a variety of purposes and in a variety of contexts

Overall Expectation:

2. demonstrate understanding and critical awareness of a variety of written materials that are read by and with the EL–K team

Visual Arts

Overall Expectations:

V1: demonstrate an awareness of themselves as artists through engaging in activities in visual arts

V2: demonstrate basic knowledge and skills gained through exposure to visual arts and activities in visual arts

V3: use problem-solving strategies when experimenting with the skills, materials, processes, and techniques used in visual arts both individually and with others

V5: communicate their ideas through various visual art forms

Math Strand: Geometry

Big Idea: Young children have a conceptual understanding of mathematics and of mathematical thinking and reasoning.

Overall Expectation:

G3: describe, sort, classify, build, and compare two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional figures, and describe the location and movement of objects through investigation

Instructional Components and Context

Development of Goals

As a child's self-concept develops, he or she demonstrates autonomy in selecting materials, making choices, and setting goals for him or herself. Please see the *2010-11 The Full-Day Early Learning - Kindergarten Program (Draft Version)* (page 59) for more information.

Assessment of Overall Expectations

All program expectations must be accounted for in instruction, but evaluation will focus on the child's achievement of the overall expectations. Achievement of the overall



expectations is evaluated on the basis of the child's achievement of related specific expectations. The overall expectations are broad in nature, and the specific expectations define the particular content or scope of the knowledge skills referred to in the overall expectations. The specific expectations will assist Early Learning–Kindergarten teams in describing the range of behaviours, skills, and strategies that children demonstrate as they work towards achieving the overall expectations. Team members will use their professional judgement to determine which specific expectations should be used to evaluate achievement of the overall expectations and which ones will be the focus for instruction and assessment (e.g., through direct observation) but not necessarily evaluated. Please see the *2010-11 The Full-Day Early Learning - Kindergarten Program (Draft Version)* (page 28 – 31) for more information.

Differentiated Instruction and Assessment

The Early Learning–Kindergarten team uses reflective practice, planned observation, and a range of assessment strategies to identify the strengths, needs, and interests of individual children in order to provide instruction that is appropriate for each child (“differentiated instruction”). Please see the *2010-11 The Full-Day Early Learning - Kindergarten Program (Draft Version)* (page 8) for more information.

Readiness

To participate fully in these learning activities:

Children need to know how to sit to listen to a story.

Children need to know the expectations for answering questions in turn in a whole group lesson.

Children need to know the expectations for how to choose a learning centre and the expected behaviour while at the learning centre.

Terminology

Cane, differences, feeding tube, guardian, parent, special equipment, special needs, other terminology that might come up in discussion or from other instructional materials.

This terminology should be discussed and understood to help students be able to participate in the activities as a group or at centres.

Materials and Equipment

Picture of a book cover for a prediction activity (see Appendix A).

Book “*Different is Just...Different!*” by Karen Tompkins or interactive white board to show book. Link to <http://www.pageflip-flap.com/read?r=HJ72imTBtTrL0njupd#/24/view> to see the book.

(When you open the link the page will be blank. Use the arrows at the bottom of the link to move to the beginning of the book.)



Pictures of Shoo Bear (available on the website <http://www.ktompkins.com/Different>)

Arts and craft materials

Puppets, stuffed bears, dolls (variety of characters) to put at the drama or puppet centre

Three-dimensional solids and shapes for the construction centre

See Appendix B for a list of suggested books for the reading centre

Please see the *2010-11 The Full-Day Early Learning - Kindergarten Program (Draft Version)* for more information.

Assessment

Observation is the most important aspect of assessment in early learning and should be an integral part of all assessment strategies. Please see the *2010-11 The Full-Day Early Learning - Kindergarten Program (Draft Version)* (page 28 – 31) for more information.

Observations:

- Are children engaged in the topic and the learning activities?
- Do children have an understanding of what “different” means?
- Do children have an understanding of what it means to make a prediction?
- Do children have an understanding of the questions being asked?
- Are children able to answer the teacher questions to guide the discussion of the cover illustration?
- Are they able to answer the questions being asked about the story?
- Are children able to verbalize what differences there are among the bears on the cover of the book?
- Do children demonstrate interest in centre activities?
- Are children able to respond to early learning staff comments or questions about the centres?
- Are children able to answer what characteristics they have that are different from those of other children?

Activity: Whole Class Read-Aloud and Learning Centre Follow-Up Activities

This lesson will focus on the following Accessibility Awareness messages:

- Some students sometimes need special assistance, equipment or technology to learn.
- Accessibility Awareness includes information about the range of ability and individual strengths found in the classroom.
- Students need to help develop a school culture that fosters a sense of belonging for all students.
- The goal of Accessibility Awareness is to shape a society in which individuals are appreciated for their intrinsic worth.



Minds On

Show children the cover of the book *Different is Just...Different!* by Karen Tompkins. Available directly from the author at Karen Tompkins (differentisjustdifferent@gmail.com). This book is also available for use on an interactive white board at <http://www.pageflip-flap.com/read?r=HJ72imTBtTrL0njupd#/2/view>. (When you open the link the page will be blank. Use the arrows at the bottom of the link to move to the beginning of the book, and then start to flip the pages.)



Using the picture of the cover from Appendix A, read them the title and ask them to predict what the story might be about. Encourage many responses from a variety of children. Other questions to ask about the cover to generate discussion may include:

What do you notice about the bears? How are the bears different? Focus the children's attention on the specific parts of the bears. What do you notice about the bears' feet? What do you notice about the bears' hands? What do you notice about the bears' eyes? What do you notice about the bears' ears?

Any of the suggested books for the reading centre listed in The Reading Centre Activity or other similar literature can be used for this introduction with questions adapted to suit that book.

Action

Using appropriate read-aloud strategies for this age group, read the book to students. For more information on the read-aloud strategy, please see: *Early Reading Strategy: The Report of the Expert Panel on Early Reading in Ontario, 2003* (page 24) at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/reading/>.

Begin reading the story. Read the first two pages and ask the children to look at the illustrations. What do you notice about Shoo Bear? Ask them if they have ever seen a hat like that. What is your favourite kind of hat? Why? (Make a connection.) Do you like things that are different?

Read the next page. What is in the sandwich? Do you think a bear would like this kind of food? Have you ever eaten a sandwich like that? What kind of sandwich do you like? (Make a personal connection.)

Continue reading the next 2 pages. Can anyone tell me what kind of shoes these are? When do you wear these types of shoes? Which shoes do you wish you were wearing right now? Have you ever worn these kinds of shoes before?

Continue reading the next 4 pages. What kinds of shoes do we see on these pages? Do you have different kinds of shoes at home? Tell us about your favourite shoes.

Continue reading the next 2 pages. Do you know anyone who has different needs like the bears in the pictures?

Continue reading the next 2 pages. Does anyone here or anyone at your house wear glasses? What do you think the cane is for?

Continue reading the next 2 pages. Explain the picture of the feeding tube. When children are babies, they need help eating, so someone will feed them or cut their food for them. The bear in this picture can't swallow food at all so his parent/guardian is putting it right into his stomach.

Explain that some people cannot talk and use a computer or sign language to talk. Does anyone know any signs in sign language?

Continue reading the next 3 pages. Ask children how they are different? Is being different a good thing or a bad thing?

Allow for children to answer and share information with the group.

If another book is used, follow a similar process.

Learning Centre Activities – Small Group

Set up the following centres to include bears, people or characters from any of the other stories listed in Appendix B or other similar books. The purpose of the follow-up centre activities is to engage children in identifying and discussing how they and others are unique. These activities will introduce awareness of accessibility issues.

Retelling Centre: After reading the story *Different is Just...Different!*, place the book in the Retelling Centre. Leave pictures of Shoo Bear (available on the website www.ktompkins.com/different) at the retelling centre so children can retell the story in their own words. Have a variety of animals and people available at the retelling centre so any story the children hear or know can be retold.

Dramatic Play Centre: After reading the story *Different is Just...Different!* encourage children to use bears, stuffed animals, puppets and props to act out the story in the Dramatic Play Centre. Have a variety of puppets and props available so that the children can act out any favourite story or come up with their own.

Art Centre: After reading the story *Different is Just...Different!*, leave pictures of Shoo Bear (available on the website www.ktompkins.com/different) at the Art Centre. Outlines of children or other animals can also be made available. Children can then use paper to cut out by themselves different hats, shoes or outfits for a bear another animal or any other character, or one of the illustrations in the book. Children can also draw or paint their own bears, other animals or pictures of themselves or other children.

Building Centre: After reading the story *Different is Just...Different!* encourage students to use paper towel rolls, cardboard and 3-D shapes in the Building Centre to make a walker or a wheelchair or a cane to use as props in the puppet centre. Place books at the Building Centre containing pictures of equipment used by people with disabilities.

Reading Centre: Gather a variety of books that deal with being special or unique and include them in the reading centre. Try to find fiction and non-fiction books that depict a variety of people using assistive equipment. There are many books that deal with this topic, including those in the following list:

A Rainbow of Friends	P.K. Hallinan
Arnie and the New Kid	Nancy Carlson
Chrysanthemum	Kevin Henkes
I Like Myself!	Karen Beaumont
I'm Gonna Like Me	Jamie Lee Curtis and Laura Cornell
It's Okay To Be Different	Todd Parr
Lemon the Duck	Laura Backman
Let's Talk About Being in a Wheelchair	Melanie Ann Apel
My Friend Isabelle	Eliza Woloson
Special People, Special Ways	Arlene Maguire
Susan Laughs	Jeanne Willis
The Black Book of Colours	Menena Cottin, Rosana Faria
The Chick and the Duckling	Mirra Ginsburg
What I Like About Me! A Book Celebrating Differences	Allia Zobel-Nolan
Whoever You Are	Mem Fox
Zoom!*	Robert Munsch

*[Listen to this story read aloud by Robert Munch at <http://robertmunsch.com/book/zoom/>.]

Another resource that relates directly to this topic and may be of interest to some students is *Differences*, a colouring book from Parents Let's Unite for Kids (PLUK), 2005, available at www.pluk.org/Pubs/Differences.pdf

Writing Centre

Make **I am special because...** sentence starter strips available to children at the writing centre for them to complete. Children can draw a picture and add their own words if they choose to. Children's work can be made into a class book to be shared. This book can be added to the reading centre when completed.

Children can write and illustrate their own book about why they are special.

Teacher Reflection

Did I organize learning opportunities in keeping with philosophy of the *2010-11 The Full-Day Early Learning - Kindergarten Program (Draft Version)* in order to provide a safe playing-based environment that promotes the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of all children?

Did I incorporate student friendly teaching strategies to support research-based practices that incorporate accessible methods and materials to reach as many students as possible?

Are the resources I selected appropriate for the interest level of my students and varied to meet their needs?

If the resources I selected presented aspects of accessibility awareness, was the perspective strength based?

Did I use Differentiated Instruction and Assessment to meet the varying learning styles of my students?

Were all my students engaged at all steps of the lesson? How do I know?

Were my assessment procedures fair and equitable? Have I demonstrated best practices and met the individual needs of my students? Have I accommodated in fair and equitable ways for students with special learning needs?

How do I ensure that the concept of accessibility is not only discussed but embedded in all conversation topics taught in the classroom?

How could this lesson be improved in the future?

How can I improve my own teaching practice to better address accessibility awareness issues?

How do I help promote accessibility awareness across my school and school board and share the results with parents and colleagues?