Peers as Partners in Learning - Middle School
Lesson Plan 2.2: Recognizing and Valuing Differences

Approximate time to allow: 80-100 minutes

Unit

Creating a School Culture of Belonging for Students with Disabilities

Lesson

Recognizing and Valuing Differences

Standards Supported in this Lesson	Rubric Essential Concepts
ELA.K12.EE.1.1 ELA.K12.EE.2.2 ELA.K12.EE.3.1	Belonging for Students with Disabilities Impact of Language

Essential Question

How can we recognize and value differences in others?

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Discuss how perceptions impact performance and interactions with others.
- Consider actions and perspectives of others in proposing responses.
- Formulate feedback that activates and promotes positive responses to differences.

Technology/Materials

- Projector, computer, internet, markers, index cards or scrap paper
- Different (5:17) DIFFERENT | Award Winning Short Film by Tahneek Rahman
- Respecting the Differences Between People (3:17) Respecting the differences between people | Mariana Chartier | TEDxYouth@BSCR
- We Are All Different – and That's Awesome! (4:39) We Are All Different - and THAT'S AWESOME! | Cole Blakeway | TEDxWestVancouverED
- Comparison chart
- Different and Awesome Pennant Template
- Inspirational Video – Be a Mr. Jensen (3:12) Inspirational Video- Be a Mr. Jensen- MUST WATCH!!
- MS Reflective Journal Prompts and Vocabulary

Lesson Steps

1. Why is it important to recognize differences?
    a. Purpose: To challenge and examine student perceptions of the influence that they have in recognizing and valuing differences in others.
    b. Directions: Students need to understand why differences are important. Start a class brainstorming session using the following question prompts. Do not comment on accuracy of answers. We will return to these questions later.
        a. How are people different?
        b. How can you recognize differences in others?
        c. Why does it matter if people are different? What are the advantages and disadvantages?
        d. What can you do to emphasize the value of differences?
    ii. Follow up the brainstorming session by watching the videos "Different," "Respecting the Differences Between People" and "We Are All Different – and That's Awesome!" For each video, ask students to jot notes on the comparison chart regarding their thoughts on the message that the video sends.
    iii. When students have watched all three videos, divide them into small groups. Each student brings their comparison charts about the messages from the videos.
        a. Students discuss in small groups the messages that they took from the videos, and each group comes to consensus about the main message for each video.
        b. Return to whole group and debrief. Were the messages received by students the same? Why or why not?
    iv. Using the Different and Awesome pennant template, each student creates two: one representing themselves, and one representing the peer they serve.
2. How can we recognize and value the differences in others?
    a. Purpose: To activate knowledge of actions that can be taken to show value in others' differences.
    b. Directions: We recognized that we are not all the same, and that our differences are what make us unique. Before we come back to the original brainstorm questions, we want to discuss some ways that we can show value toward each other while recognizing our differences.
        i. Watch "Inspirational Video – Be a Mr. Jensen" and debrief with students.
        ii. Finalize a class poster, or have students create personal posters for their journals to help them share the importance of recognizing and valuing differences in others.

Assessments

Formative:

- Comparison chart completion.
- Different and Awesome pennants completion.
- Student small group discussion.
- Guided beliefs discussion responses.

Summative:

- Class or individual poster.
- Reflection Journal entry.

Considerations

- Turn on captioning in videos.
- Dictation or speech-to-text may be used.