Resources for Teachers About Disability Awareness, Accessibility and Inclusion



Slow down enough to listen and truly see each other.
Ask questions.
Connect.
Find a way to have fun.
Learn.

- Judith Heumann in *Being Heumann*



Author James Catchpole, at the back of his picture book *What Happened to You?* (see details in the "Recommended Picture Books" section list below), includes a letter to adults about dealing with children who want to know everything about disabled people. He recommends answering their questions "simply and generally: yes, some people have one leg, or use a wheelchair, or move and speak differently, and that's OK. Disability is normal."

To engage your students in activities and discussion about disability and inclusion, here are some recommended resources:

Online Resources

Stigma Against Disabled Youth: Holland Bloorview's "Dear Everybody"

The "Dear Everybody" position paper from Holland Bloorview contains key recommendations and actions for change to address the stigma faced by children and youth with disabilities:

http://deareverybody.hollandbloorview.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Dear-Everybody-Position-Paper_FA.pdf

Learning to be More Inclusive: *Demystifying Disability*

The book *Demystifying Disability: What to Know, What to Say, and How to be an Ally* by Emily Ladau (Ten Speed Press) is an excellent resource for understanding disability from the perspective of a disabled person and learning how to be more inclusive. Plain Language Summary and Translation, prepared by Emily Ladau and Becca Monteleone:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Nb0-Mc-SH3NmLRTBYR4GpqNFVJDAyIX7/edit#heading=h.sysoasvnjxu

Resources for Teachers About Disability Awareness, Accessibility and Inclusion

Paralympic FUNdamentals Resource

A free classroom resource to help teach fundamental movement skills and support inclusivity and integration:

https://paralympic.ca/fundamentals-resource

Stigma-Free Society

Diverse-Ability/Disability & Inclusion downloadable resources:

https://studentmentalhealthtoolkit.com/diverseability-and-inclusion-public/

Disability Awareness: To Be Like Me

A non-profit disability awareness program that seeks to break down barriers for those with disabilities and foster empathy, compassion and inclusion. In-person opportunities for students (in Dallas, TX), online lessons and virtual interactive sessions:

https://tobelikeme.org/about-us

A Learning Guide for *We Move Together*

A Learning Guide for We Move Together based on the book *We Move Together* (see details in "Recommended Picture Books" section below) – discussion questions and activities geared towards students in grades 1 to 4:

https://wemovetogether.ca/resources/WMT-LearningGuide-v01.pdf

Rick Hansen Foundation: Schools & Communities

Accessible Cities: On the Move

An animated video for kindergarten to grade five students about the adventures of two friends in their accessible city:

https://www.rickhansen.com/schools-communities/resource-library/move-digital-storybook?page=true

Accessible Classroom

How accessible is your classroom? School? Home?

https://www.rickhansen.com/schools-communities/resource-library/accessible-classroom-kindergarten?page=true

Resources for Teachers About Disability Awareness, Accessibility and Inclusion

Activities for Different Grade Levels

Experiential activities to give students an idea of how people with vision, hearing or physical disabilities overcome challenges and how to be helpful:

https://www.rickhansen.com/schools-communities/resource-library

Ambassador Presentations

Free school presentations about accessibility and inclusion:

https://www.rickhansen.com/schools-communities/ambassador-presentations

Disability Awareness: Similarities and Differences

Activity for kindergarten students to compare similarities between children, including those with disabilities:

https://www.rickhansen.com/schools-communities/resource-library/we-are-snowflakes-kindergarten?page=true

Supplementary Resources

Curriculum connections, strategies for an inclusive classroom, inclusive language, and being disability aware:

https://www.rickhansen.com/schools-communities/supplementary-resources

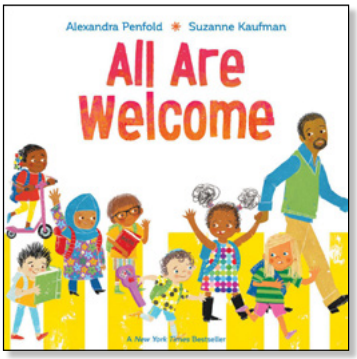
Note: These external web links provide additional information that is consistent with the intended purpose of this discussion guide; however, the external links are subject to change and not maintained by Scholastic Canada Ltd.

Recommended Picture Books

Books that encourage empathy and inclusion, featuring characters with disabilities:

Ali and the Sea Stars written by Ali Stroker and illustrated by Gillian Reid (HarperCollins Children's Books) – Ali loves to dance, sing and act (and happens to use a wheelchair) in this story about having the power to find and express ourselves through creative experiences like putting on a musical show.

"Turning your limitations into your opportunities."

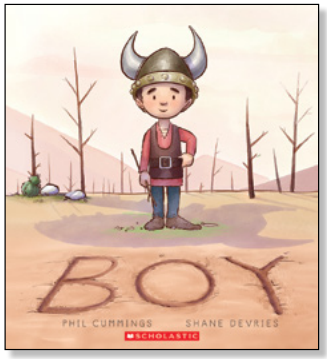


All Are Welcome written by Alexandra Penfold and illustrated by Suzanne Kaufman (Knopf Books for Young Readers) – About a school where diversity and inclusion are celebrated.

All the Way to the Top: How One Girl's Fight for Americans with Disabilities Changed Everything written by Annette Bay Pimentel, illustrated by Nabi Ali and foreword by Jennifer Keelan-Chaffins (Sourcebooks Explore) – The true story of lifelong activist Jennifer Keelan-Chaffins and her participation, without her wheelchair, in the Capitol Crawl. This story includes backmatter detailing her life and the history of the disability rights movement.

Best Day Ever! written by Marilyn Singer and illustrated by Leah Nixon (Clarion Books) – A story of enduring love between a dog and her boy when things go from best to bad to worst and back to best. The boy happens to use a wheelchair, so this is a great example of casual/incidental representation.

Bodies Are Cool by Tyler Feder (Dial Books for Young Readers) – "My body, your body, every different kind of body! All of them are good bodies! Bodies are cool!" An inclusive, positive book showing a wide variety of bodies, some with disabilities.



Boy written by Phil Cummings and illustrated by Shane Devries (Scholastic Canada) – Boy, who can't hear and speaks with dancing hands, convinces the king, dragon and knights how much better life would be if they stopped fighting. Then a wonderful first step of inclusion happens when everyone in the village learns to say thank you with dancing hands.

Recommended Picture Books

Books that encourage empathy and inclusion, featuring characters with disabilities:

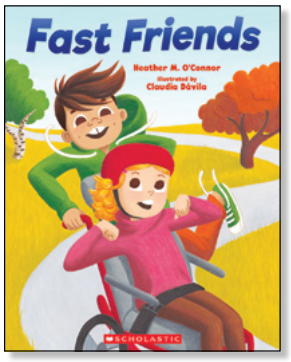
Brilliant Bea: A Story for Kids With Dyslexia and Learning Differences written by Shaina Rudolph and Mary Vukadinovich and illustrated by Fiona Lee (Magination Press) – A story in a dyslexia-friendly font about an imaginative girl with dyslexia experiencing the challenges of reading and writing who finally discovers a way to tell her stories.

"Learning differently wasn't something to be afraid of anymore."

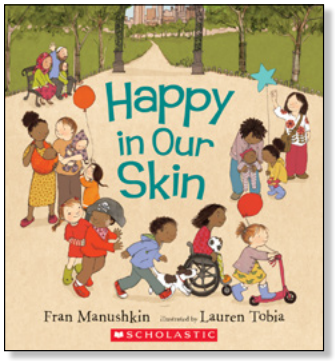
Can Bears Ski? written by Raymond Antrobus and illustrated by Polly Dunbar (Candlewick Press) – This lyrical sensory story features representation of a child (bear) experiencing deafness and wearing hearing aids for the first time.

Different: A Great Thing to Be written by Heather Avis and illustrated by Sarah Mensinga (WaterBrook) – Celebrating differences of all kinds and finding value in being unique.

Emmanuel's Dream: The True Story of Emmanuel Ofosu Yeboah written by Laurie Ann Thompson and illustrated by Sean Qualls (Schwartz & Wade) – The remarkable life story of a boy who was born with only one strong leg. But that didn't keep him from cycling 400 miles across Ghana to spread his message: "Being disabled does not mean being *un*able."



Fast Friends written by Heather M. O'Connor and illustrated by Claudia Dávila (Scholastic Canada) – With its lively, engaging text and action-packed, realistic illustrations, this story brilliantly shows how to build a friendship with anyone.



Happy in Our Skin written by Fran Manushkin and illustrated by Lauren Tobia (Candlewick Press) – A celebration of diversity of skin colour, integrating several characters with disabilities.

Recommended Picture Books

Books that encourage empathy and inclusion, featuring characters with disabilities:

Hello Goodbye Dog written by Maria Gianferrari and illustrated by Patrice Barton (Roaring Brook Press) – Zara's dog wants so much to be with her at school that he learns how to be a therapy dog so he can be her Class Reading Dog. A great example of casual/incidental representation, as Zara uses a wheelchair.

I Am Helen Keller written by Brad Meltzer and illustrated by Christopher Eliopoulos (Dial Books for Young Readers) – A powerfully engaging story written in first person. The reader can grasp what Helen experienced being blind and deaf, and the growth mindset required in her challenges to learn to communicate.

"I may not be able to see, but I have vision. I may not be able to hear, but I have a voice."

Just Ask!: Be Different, Be Brave, Be You written by Sonia Sotomayor and illustrated by Rafael López (Philomel Books) – Come along on a journey to discover what life is like for children who face a wide range of challenges. Note: While the book encourages asking people about their differences, not everyone with a disability wants to talk about their disability, so focus on being friends first.

Lucas at the Paralympics written by Igor Plohl and illustrated by Urska Stropnik Sonc (Holiday House) – A fantastic introduction to many Paralympic sports, both summer and winter, such as track, wheelchair fencing, goalball and Para ice hockey. Information boxes explain aspects of the individual sports and the games, including the meaning of the Paralympic Games symbol, history of the games and who can compete.

Midnight and Moon written by Kelly Cooper and illustrated by Daniel Miyares (Tundra Books) – A heartwarming story of a girl who does not speak and a horse that is blind finding acceptance and friendship, showing that differences are positives.

My Ocean is Blue written by Darren Lebeuf and illustrated by Ashley Barron (Kids Can Press) – A poetic look at all that a girl loves about her ocean. There is casual/incidental representation of disability, as the girl uses forearm crutches.



My Three Best Friends and Me, Zulay written by Cari Best and illustrated by Vanessa Brantley-Newton (Farrar, Straus and Giroux (BYR)) – Zulay, a blind girl, runs in the race on Field Day, surprising everyone. The Braille alphabet is included on the back cover.

Recommended Picture Books

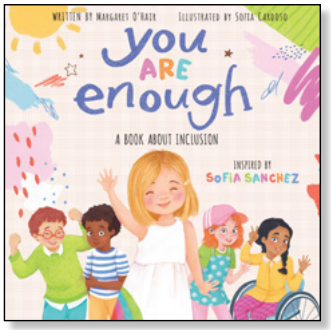
Books that encourage empathy and inclusion, featuring characters with disabilities:

We Move Together written by Kelly Fritsch and Anne McGuire and illustrated by Eduardo Trejos (AK Press) – A joyful exploration of disability community, culture and justice, as well as all the different ways we move together.

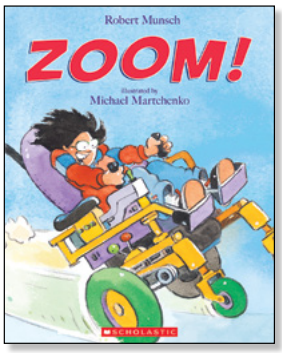
We're All Wonders by R. J. Palacio (Knopf Books for Young Readers) – A creative and thoughtful look at visible differences and how "the Earth is big enough for all kinds of people."

What Happened to You? written by James Catchpole and illustrated by Karen George (Faber & Faber) – A unique picture book exploring how a disabled child might feel about being seen as different and asked about their differences. Are these even questions they need to answer?

Why Johnny Doesn't Flap: NT is OK! written by Clay Morton and Gail Morton and illustrated by Alex Merry (Jessica Kingsley Publishers) – The narrator is a child with autism and thinks his NT (neurotypical) friend sometimes acts strangely, but he likes his friend and says, "NT is OK!" A unique, refreshing point of view for a picture book.



You Are Enough: A Book About Inclusion written by Margaret O'Hair and Sofia Sanchez and illustrated by Sofia Cardoso (Scholastic Inc.) – Inspired by Sofia Sanchez, a young model and actor with Down syndrome, this book celebrates being different because it's what makes you YOU.



Zoom! written by Robert Munsch and illustrated by Michael Martchenko (Scholastic Canada) – A timeless story with bold and fun illustrations. In speed-loving Lauretta's quest to find a new — and really, really, really fast — wheelchair, she ends up saving her brother.

More Book Recommendations:

https://a.storyblok.com/f/53881/x/6d6cca08de/table_of_contents_-_books_-1.pdf

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