



INTRODUCTION

Jewish Disability Awareness, Acceptance & Inclusion Month (JDAIM) is a unified national initiative during the month of February that aims to raise disability awareness and foster inclusion in Jewish communities worldwide.

In the Philadelphia area, Jewish Learning Venture's 'Whole Community Inclusion' initiative works to expand opportunities for families of students with disabilities. We're excited to share these comprehensive lesson plans with schools, youth groups, and early childhood centers in our area.

We hope that the children in our classrooms and youth groups will eventually become Jewish leaders and that thinking about disability awareness and inclusion will become a natural part of their Jewish experience.

We appreciate you making time for teachers to use these lessons during February—or whenever it's convenient for you. For additional resources, please email me at gkaplan-mayer@jewishlearningventure.org or call me at 215-320-0376.

Thank you to Alanna Raffel for her hard work on this project!

Sincerely,
Gabrielle Kaplan-Mayer,
Chief Program Officer, Jewish Learning Venture

NOTES FOR EDUCATORS

- We hope that you can make these lessons as inclusive as possible for all kinds of learners and for students with different kinds of disabilities. If you need any help in adapting these lesson plans, just get in touch!
- You may have students in your classroom who would like the opportunity to speak personally about their disabilities. Give students a heads up that you'll be doing this lesson so that they have a chance to think about whether they might like to share. Similarly, you may have students whom you know have an invisible disability but they may prefer not to share with the class. The most important thing is to let the student lead by their comfort.
- You may also want to consider how you present the materials in this lesson. All of the videos referenced in these lessons have captions, and the texts and activities can be accessed visually or by a teacher reading aloud.



Lesson Plan and Teacher's Guide for K-2 Lesson

This lesson should take 20-30 minutes to complete depending on size of class.

Objective:

- Students will identify Jewish values that teach about inclusion of people with disabilities and name ways to create an inclusive classroom.

Materials:

- You will need a copy of the book *In My Kehillah* which can be purchased at <https://jkidaccess.org/in-my-kehillah/>
- A tape measure or ruler
- Paper
- A variety of things to make art with including crayons, dot paints, stickers, etc.

Process:

Step One: Introduction

- Show the students the cover of *In My Kehillah*. Explain to them that in this book, we will read about children in a classroom. Some of the children have disabilities. Explain that sometimes we can tell a person has a disability by looking at them (like when they use a wheelchair) and sometimes disabilities are invisible like learning and cognitive disabilities. When we treat everyone with *kavod* and *chesed*—two Jewish values that we'll learn about in the book—we make sure that we are being respectful and kind to everyone—whether they have a disability or not.
- Tell students that they will learn some Hebrew words in the book. When they hear a Hebrew word, they can put their thumbs up.

Step Two: Read the book

Step Three: Discussion

- Invite students to share their favorite part of the book.
- Point out that kids with disabilities like to have fun and make friends just as much as other kids do and just like other kids, their feelings are hurt when people exclude them from a game or make fun of them. Ask the students to find a picture in the book of the children having fun together. Ask: “What are ways that you have fun with your friends? Can you think of a way that you could play with the characters we see in the book?”
- Explain that an accommodation means adapting or adjusting something so that everyone can participate. Ask: “Can you find an example of an accommodation in the illustrations?” You might point out the service dog, communication device, noise-cancelling headphones and ramps as examples.



Step Four: Art Activity

- Invite students to draw a picture of themselves welcoming the characters from the book to your classroom. Encourage the students to think about ways to be inclusive and include their inclusion ideas in their drawings.

Step Five: Classroom Inclusion

- If time allows, take your students on a tour around your classroom to look for what is accessible—and what is not. Use a rule or tape measure to see if entrances are 32 inches wide (standard for a wheelchair). Consider:
 - Is the door wide enough for a wheelchair?
 - Are there aisles between desks/tables to navigate a wheelchair?
 - Is there a quiet space in the classroom for people with sensory sensitivities? Or nearby? What happens if someone needs to take a break?
 - Are there different kinds of materials available in your classroom, such as different kinds of drawing and art supplies?
 - What else could you add to make your classroom more inclusive for all students?

Step Six: Wrap up

- Invite each student to share one thing that they've learned today.



Teacher's Guide to 3-6 Lesson

This lesson should take 30-40 minutes to complete depending on size of class.

Objective:

- Students will identify and describe Jewish values that teach about inclusion of people with disabilities and names ways to create an inclusive classroom.

Materials:

- You will need a copy of the book *In My Kehillah* which can be purchased at jkidaccess.org/in-my-kehillah
- A tape measure or ruler
- Paper
- A variety of things to make art with including crayons, dot paints, stickers, etc.
- Mural/butcher paper
- Sharpies

Process:

Step One: Introduction

- Show the students the cover of *In My Kehillah*. Explain to them that in this book, we will read about children in a classroom. Some of the children have disabilities. Explain that sometimes we can tell a person has a disability by looking at them (like when they use a wheelchair) and sometimes disabilities are invisible like learning and cognitive disabilities. When we treat everyone with kavod and chessed—two Jewish values that we'll learn more about in the book—we make sure that we are being respectful and kind to everyone—whether they have a disability or not.
- Tell students that there are Hebrew words for Jewish values in the book. When they hear a Hebrew word, they can put their thumbs up to identify it.

Step Two: Read the book

Step Three: Discussion

- Invite students to share their favorite part of the book.
- Point out that kids with disabilities like to have fun and make friends just as much as other kids do and just like other kids, their feelings are hurt when people exclude them from a game or make fun of them. Ask: "Can you think of a way that you could hang out with the characters we see in the book?"
- Explain that an accommodation means adapting or adjusting something so that everyone can participate. Ask: "Can you find an example of an accommodation in the illustrations?" You might point out the service dog, communication device, noise-cancelling headphones and ramps as examples.



Step Four: Art Activity

- Invite students to draw a picture of themselves welcoming the characters from the book to your classroom. Encourage the students to think about ways to be inclusive and include their inclusion ideas in their drawings. Invite them to create and add their own cartoon captions.

Step Five: Classroom Inclusion

- Take your students on a tour around your classroom to look for what is accessible—and what is not. Use a rule or tape measure to see if entrances are 32 inches wide (standard for a wheelchair). Consider:
 - Is the door wide enough for a wheelchair?
 - Are there aisles between desks/tables to navigate a wheelchair?
 - Is there a quiet space in the classroom for people with sensory sensitivities? Or nearby? What happens if someone needs to take a break?
 - Are there different kinds of materials available in your classroom, such as different kinds of drawing and art supplies?
 - What else could you add to make your classroom more inclusive for all students?

Step Six: Jewish Values Murals

- Divide students into small groups and give each group a long roll of butcher/craft paper, sharpies and other art materials. Assign each group one of the values (kehillah, chesed, kavod, adam yechidi nivra) in the book. Ask students to write the name of the value on their mural and add illustrations and words about what the value means.
- When the groups finish, each can share their mural.

Step Seven: Wrap up

- Invite each student to share one thing that they've learned today.



Teacher's Guide to Teen Lesson

This lesson should take 30-45 minutes to complete depending on size of class.

Objective:

Students will identify ways that places they go are or are not accessible for people with physical disabilities and will use an app called 'Access Earth' to discover and record accessibility within the synagogue building.

Materials

The accompanying slides for this lesson (can be shown on zoom or via a projector in the classroom)

Students will need a smartphone, tablet or computer to download the app Access Earth. Instructors should download the app ahead of time and become familiar with it.

Tape measures are also helpful.

If you would like to talk through the process ahead of time, please contact Whole Community Inclusion Specialist Alanna Raffel at araffel@jewishlearningventure.org.

Process:

Slide 1: Introduction

Slide 2: Check-in--How are you feeling?

- We encourage you to do some kind of 'mood meter' at the beginning of every class to see how students are feeling. Take a moment to invite them to share by color or number. You may want to close class with a similar check-in to see whether moods have shifted during the lesson.

Slide 3: JDAIM

- Explain what the acronym JDAIM stands for and share that people all over the world in the Jewish community are participating in programs and learning about disability inclusion during February.

Slide 4: Disability Inclusion definition

- This slide shares the definition of disability inclusion. Ask students: Can you think of an activity or setting you've participated in when people with disabilities were fully included? It could be school, a club, in your synagogue, sports team, etc.



Slide 5: What's Jewish about inclusion

- We can find guidance about how to treat all people, including those with disabilities in Jewish texts including the Torah. Invite students to share: This instruction seems very obvious about how we should treat people who are blind or deaf. Why do you think it needed to be written?

Slide 6: Thinking about Accessibility

- Students can make a list or work with a partner to consider the accessibility of the places that they have visited over the last month. Invite responses from the whole group about what students observe (note: we can expect that students may not remember whether places were or weren't accessible. Explain that this activity is about raising awareness so that we will notice in the future). Show the short video about the accessible restaurant.

Slides 7-9:

- Explain that today we are going to learn about and use an app that is used to rate accessibility. Show the short video featuring the app's creator.

Slides 10-16:

- Show the students the questions that are featured in the app.

Slide 17:

- Help students to download the app if they haven't done so in advance.

Slide 18:

- Divide students into pairs or small groups. They will use the app to report on entrances, restrooms and also to make note about accessibility in the sanctuary. Give each group a tape measure or ruler; accessible doors should provide at least 32 inches of clear width.
- Be sure to give clear directions about how much time students have for this activity and when to return to the classroom.
- As the students work, circulate to see if any group needs help.

Slide 19:

- When students return to class, engage in a discussion about their discoveries.

Slide 20:

- Go around the room for students to share one takeaway from the lesson.