

Living with Disabilities

Lesson plans

Overview: Students practice all language skills while working with content related to disability awareness.

Student Learning Outcomes: By the end of the unit, students will be able to:

- explain how new technologies and ways of thinking are needed for ensuring universal access in cities
- describe how a change in perspective can help empower individuals
- demonstrate comprehension of an advanced text, both by recognizing main ideas and finding details
- demonstrate understanding of a high intermediate video, both by recognizing main ideas and details
- apply critical thinking skills such as paraphrasing, comparison, evaluation, application, etc.
- use content knowledge and vocabulary in the unit to write and present a project proposal

Time: 5 hours of class time, with additional time to prepare and present final project

Living with Disabilities

Day 1: Preview

Opener (10 min) Shoe-string shapes:

Before class, prepare a long length of rope or bring several sets of shoestrings and begin class by asking the students to tie them together into a circle. Ask all students to grab the string with at least one hand. Then, explain that *because it's Friday and the teacher is tired*, they may not use English or Arabic or any other language during the activity. They can use gestures, but cannot speak or write, and all students must hold the string all the time. Call out a letter or shape and ask them to move around the classroom to make that shape with the string. Once they have completed the shape, give them another. Begin easy with *heart* or *D*, and advance to *star* or *E*.

Variation: You can allow students to choose between no talking or no seeing. Or, you can allow students to prepare behind a set line – once they cross over the line and pick up the string, they must be silent.

Unit Preview (20 min) Think-Pair-Share

Ask students to look at chart in Preview section. Elicit meanings for some types of disabilities, and provide meanings if students are not able to extrapolate the meaning from other words they know.

Give students 5 minutes to work individually to write at least one challenge for each row. Then, give students 5 minutes to collaborate with a partner and add their lists together. Finally, collect responses from the whole class by either: asking student to add to a shared digital document, asking pairs to write their ideas on the board, or eliciting and collecting ideas for each row.

Vocabulary (15 min)

In pairs or small groups, ask students to choose the best synonym for the vocabulary words in the Reading section. Encourage them to find the words in the article to try to guess the meaning. To check answers, ask groups to vote on their choice – a, b, c – for each question. For difficult words, highlight the word in context in the reading and show how the synonym could be a substitute for the word.

Free-write (10 min)

Give students time to respond to the question prompt. If students are comfortable with the topic and each other, allow them time to share their ideas with classmates. *Optional:* Play music while students circulate around the room. When the music stops, students pair up with the nearest classmate and share. Repeat two or three times.

Closer (5 min) If class size allows, check each students' free-write before leaving class. Monitor understanding of the concept of *disability* and some awareness of accessibility challenges.

Day 2

Warm-up (10 min) Pictionary

Before class, prepare small cards with words from Preview and Reading Vocabulary. Divide class into two teams and ask one student from each team to take a random card and draw a picture on the board to illustrate it, without using any letters or numbers. The first team to guess the word gets a point, and new team members come to the board. Continue until all cards are used.

Before you read (10 min)

Ask students to discuss the questions and pictures in small groups or pairs. Elicit possible answers as a class.

Reading for main ideas (10 min)

Preview the article by looking at the title, pictures, subheadings, and reading the first sentence from each paragraph out loud, while the class follows along. Give students 3 minutes to match places to technology. Ask students to check their answers with a partner, while instructor monitors students' progress in understanding main idea. If there is a match that is problematic for the class, look at key words in the section together. *Note: Students should not try to read the whole article for this activity.*

Reading for details (20 min)

Elicit which section of the article (or paragraph in each section) students should use for each question. Either give students time to work quietly, or read the article out loud while students look for answers to questions. Compare answers with a partner and look more closely at difficult questions with the class.

After you read (10 min)

Ask students to discuss two or three of the questions. *Optional: Move desks into two lines. Give students 2 minutes to discuss the first question. Then, students in Line A move down one chair (while one student comes to the other end of the line), and students have 2 minutes to discuss question number 2 with their new partner.*

Day 3

Opener (5 min) Color Challenge

Display the colored words image at [Brainbashers](https://www.brainbashers.com/colour.asp). Ask students to say the color of the letter, not the word spelled. Demonstrate with the first line slowly. Increase speed for each line. Explain that many people with reading disabilities in their first language struggle in a similar way.

<https://www.brainbashers.com/colour.asp>

Critical Thinking (15 min)

Give groups or pairs time to discuss the critical thinking question after the text. Optional: Assign a short written or spoken response homework for this question. OR Assign each group a different technology and ask each to give a short presentation to promote their project.

Listening Vocabulary (30 min) Listen-to-Learn

(For more on the Listen-to-Learn method, [read our post](#).)

Use the audio option of a digital dictionary (such as at Vocabulary.com) to play the following words. Ask students to write the word that they think they hear in the table. With a partner or small group, allow students 3 min to collaborate and try to write the words. Ask each student to write one of the words on the board and correct or provide spelling if necessary.

Perspective
Response
Transform
Internalize
Limitation
Identity
Restriction

Read or play the words again and ask students to mark the syllable, stress, 'color' or other pronunciation notation. Ask students to check their answers with a partner, and ask each student to add pronunciation notes to the entries on the board.

(For more on the Color Vowels, check out [English Language Training Solutions](#))

Give students 5 minutes to write the meaning, part of speech, word family for words that they know. Then, give them 5 minutes to walk around the room and collect missing information from classmates who know the answer.

Ask students to complete the information on the board, and correct or supply missing information.

Day 4

Opener (5 min) Agree or Disagree

Designation one wall *Agree* and the opposite *Disagree*. Read the following statements and ask students to move nearer to the wall that matches their opinion. They can stand nearer the middle or close but not quite at the wall to indicate their viewpoint.

I would rather live in the mountains than at the beach.

I would rather go out to see friends than stay home.

If I have to complain to a company, I would rather write a letter than call.

If I want to advertise something I'm selling, I'd rather make a video than draw a poster.

After each statement, ask a few students why they chose their answer.

Before you listen (10 min)

Play video segment from 3:40-7:20. Give students 5 minutes to discuss questions. Monitor for understanding of words 'scuba' and 'wheelchair' and teach words if students don't know them.

https://www.ted.com/talks/sue_austin_deep_sea_diving_in_a_wheelchair/transcript

Listening for main idea (10 min)

Play full video and ask students to correct the incorrect word in each sentence. Elicit correct answers.

Listening for details (15 min)

Play full video and ask students to match the sentence parts. Ask students to compare answers with a partner. For difficult questions, play the corresponding segment of the video again, with subtitles if necessary.

After you listen (15 min) Paraphrasing

Read the quotes out loud slowly, and elicit some ideas for what they could mean.

Ask each student to rewrite one of the quotes in their own words and respond to a question.

Students without experience paraphrasing may need to work in pairs for this. *Note: This is a difficult skill, so leave plenty of time for students to read and understand the quote, rewrite it with original vocabulary, and comment on it.*

Closer (5 min)

Ask each student to explain his or her quote to instructor before leaving. *Optional: Assign as written or spoken homework.*

Day 5

Opener (10 min) Drawing

Ask students to close their minds and imagine themselves in a place where they feel completely free. Give them 2 minutes to draw themselves in that place. Next, ask them to add something that is part of their identity to the picture. Finally, ask them to add something that represents their relationships. If time allows, ask students to explain their picture to a partner or the class.

Wrap-up (10 min)

Finish activities from Listening or Reading sections if needed.

Critical Thinking (15 min)

Elicit the meaning of ‘repurposed.’ Elicit other words with ‘re’ prefix.

Ask students to choose something that they brought to class that day that can be repurposed. Give students 5 minutes to prepare their answer. Then, students share in pairs, small groups, or as a class. *Optional: Instructor can provide notecards for students to prepare ideas. Or students can receive this assignment to prepare for Day 5.*

Project Preparation (25 min)

Assign Unit Project to groups. Give them time to decide on their target group of people with a disability, and make sure that they have a rough plan before leaving class. Also, check that students understand the goal of a proposal, and how it differs from an academic assignment. Show examples and suggest students use bullet lists, headers, images, or other techniques to make it look professional. *Optional: Instructor can play YouTube clips from the TV show *Shark Tank* to show students what “pitching a proposal” is like.*

To follow up with this class, ask each group to present their proposal. Choose the most creative idea, the most well-planned idea, or the idea that has the greatest potential to improve universal access to residents.