

Inspiring all Learners:  
Creating successful inclusive classrooms for  
students with significant support needs



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## People First Language

Language shapes and reinforces our attitudes toward others. Therefore, the words that many people use to describe individuals with disabilities must change before these citizens are viewed as equal members of our society.

Disability labels focus on what the individual cannot do rather than the person's abilities. People First Language looks at the individual before the disability. A disability is something that an individual has, not what an individual is.

Here are some examples of People First Language:

- Adam is a young boy *with* cerebral palsy.
- Jason is a thirteen-year-old *with* a learning disability.
- Alex is a kindergartner *and has* autism.
- A family has a son *with* Down Syndrome.
- Lucy *uses* a wheelchair.

Notice how much more positive People First Language sounds than saying a CP boy, a learning disabled teen, an autistic kindergartner, a Downs son, or a wheelchair bound girl.

As our language changes, perceptions and attitudes also change. People First Language helps in the movement toward the acceptance, respect, and inclusion of individuals with disabilities. If you do not know what to say, ask the person who has the disability to help put you at ease. Just ask what term makes them feel comfortable. Respect their language and remember, they are the experts.

Consider the following introduction of a friend who does not have a disability. "This is my good friend, Molly Stone. She grew up in Maine and has always loved art. Now she works as a landscape painter. She also is taking an Italian cooking class." Molly sounds like an interesting person. We are now able to talk about Maine, painting or Italian food. Molly's introduction was positive and it did not say what she cannot do or include negative information.

Why should the introduction of a friend who just happens to have a disability be any different? How would it sound if we introduced a friend with a disability as, "Her name is Kelly. She is retarded, but she can talk though. And, she is an epileptic too." What a showstopper. How can anyone build on this? No one wants to be identified by something they cannot do or control.

All individuals are made up of several characteristics. An individual's disability is just one part of them. People First Language takes the focus off of the disability and places it back on the individual.

## Strategies for Presuming Competence

- **Examine your attitude**—practice saying, “How can this work?”, “How can this child be successful?”
- **Question your stereotypes**—how someone looks, walks, or talks does not tell you about how they think and feel.
- **Use age appropriate talk**—examine your tone of voice and topic.
- **Support communication.**
- **Listen openly**—work to shed judgments.
- **Teach peers and others** how to interpret potentially confusing behavior.
- **Do not speak in front of someone** as if they were not there.
- In conversation, refer to the person in a way that **includes them in the conversation.**
- **Ask permission** to share information with others.
- **Be humble.**
- If possible, always let the person explain for himself or herself and **do not speak for them.**
- Assume that **every student will benefit** from learning age appropriate academic curriculum.
- Look for **evidence of understanding.**
- Support students to **show understanding using their strengths.**
- Design adaptations and accommodations to **support access to academics.**
- Be sure to **acknowledge the presence of a person with a disability in the same way** you would acknowledge others.



**“If you want to see competence,  
it helps if you look for it.”**

—Douglas Biklen

# Reflection on Belonging

Think of a time when you truly connected to something, like you belonged or were a part of something

How did you feel?

How did you act?

Think of a time when you felt disconnected from something, like you did not belong or were left out of something?

How did you feel?

How did you act?

# Inclusive Education

Norman Kunc

Kunc, N.(1992). The need to belong. Rediscovering Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

## In Principle, inclusive education means:

...the valuing of diversity within the human community. When inclusive education is fully embraced, we abandon the idea that children have to become "normal" in order to contribute in the world...We begin to look beyond typical ways of becoming valued members of the community, and in doing so, begin to realize the achievable goal of providing all children with an authentic sense of belonging (pp. 38-39).

## In Practice, inclusive education means:

**A Classroom Model** in which students with and without disabilities are based in a general education classroom and benefit from shared ownership of general and special educators.

**A Student-Centered Approach Beginning with Profiles** that help educators appreciate the strengths and challenges of learners with and without disabilities and the individualized accomplishments that can be attained.

**A Schedule** that accounts for the full range of needs in the class—where no student engages in "pull out" or alternative activities to the extent that disruptions in the daily schedule and in peer relationships do not occur.

**A Curriculum** that is rich and accommodating for all students—and when further individualized to meet the needs of a particular learner.

**A Teaming Process** in which support staff work in flexible, coordinated ways to strengthen the collaborative relationships among special and regular educators, parents, and the community.

**A Classroom Climate** that embraces diversity, fosters a sense of social responsibility, and supports positive peer relationships.

## Fair

You are a nurse in the emergency room and 12 people come in all at the same time with various emergencies. You need to place the people in an order where the first person (1) to be taken care of is the most critical and the last person (12) is not critical at all.

With your partner, number these emergencies in the order you think they should be taken care of 1-12.

\_\_\_\_\_ A woman in labor

\_\_\_\_\_ A person having a stroke

\_\_\_\_\_ A child with a broken leg

\_\_\_\_\_ A teen with a cut off finger

\_\_\_\_\_ A person in a coma

\_\_\_\_\_ A man with a collapsed lung

\_\_\_\_\_ A man with a severe cut on his head

\_\_\_\_\_ A baby with a temp of 104

\_\_\_\_\_ A boy with a bad nose bleed

\_\_\_\_\_ A man having a heart attack

\_\_\_\_\_ A girl with a pole through her leg

\_\_\_\_\_ A boy with a pencil stuck in his arm



## Diner Menu—Photosynthesis

### Appetizer (Everyone Shares)



- Write the chemical equation for photosynthesis

### Entrée (Select One)



- Draw a picture that shows what happens during photosynthesis.
- Write two paragraphs about what happens during photosynthesis.
- Create a rap or song that explains what happens during photosynthesis.

### Side Dishes (Select at Least Two)



- Define respiration, in writing.
- Compare photosynthesis to respiration using a Venn diagram.
- Write a journal entry from the point of view of a green plant.
- With a partner, create and perform a skit that shows the differences between photosynthesis and respiration.

### Dessert (Optional)



- Create a test to assess the teacher's knowledge of photosynthesis.

## Diner Menu—

### Appetizer (Everyone Shares)



- 

### Entrée (Select One)



- 
- 
- 

### Side Dishes (Select at Least Two)



- 
- 
- 

### Dessert (Optional)



- 
- 
-





THINK TAC TOE


*Team Meeting Minutes*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Team Members Present & Assigned Roles:**

**Team Members Absent:**

**Facilitator:**

**Recorder:**

**Timekeeper:**

**Consensus Builder:**

**Observer:**

\_\_\_\_\_:

\_\_\_\_\_:

<b><u>Today's Agenda Items</u></b>	<b><u>I-Information D-Discussion R-requires decision</u></b>	<b><u>Presenter</u></b>	<b><u>Time Guidelines</u></b>
<b><u>1.</u></b>			
<b><u>2.</u></b>			
<b><u>3.</u></b>			
<b><u>4.</u></b>			
<b><u>5.</u></b>			
<b><u>6.</u></b>			

**Items Discussed: (Continue on back of page)**

**Items Discussed (continued):**

**Task Delegated, Timelines, Follow-up:**

<b><u>Activity</u></b>	<b><u>Person Responsible</u></b>	<b><u>Timeline</u></b>

**Agenda Items for Next Meeting:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

**Next Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_**





# SUPPLEMENTARY Aids and Services

a bridge to learning



TYPES OF <b>Supplementary Aids and Services</b>	EXAMPLES
<p><b>ACCOMMODATIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not change the instructional level or performance criteria</li> <li>• Provides access to information and demonstration of knowledge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audio books</li> <li>• A note taker</li> <li>• Use of a laptop</li> <li>• Extended time for assignments or tests</li> <li>• Enlarged print</li> </ul>
<p><b>MODIFICATIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes what the student is expected to learn</li> <li>• The content remains the same</li> <li>• Paraprofessional Support</li> <li>• Support given to the individual student as well as all of the other students in the class by an adult</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key ideas from a lesson or unit</li> <li>• Same only less</li> <li>• Representative sample of skills</li> </ul>
<p><b>PARAPROFESSIONAL SUPPORT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support given to the individual student as well as all of the other students in the class by an adult</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One on one support</li> <li>• Small group instruction</li> <li>• Instructional support provided to the teacher</li> <li>• Data collection</li> <li>• Preparation of materials</li> </ul>
<p><b>PEER SUPPORTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilizing classmates to provide support in ways that enhance the learning of both the student with and without a disability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paired reading</li> <li>• Quiz review</li> <li>• Presentations</li> <li>• Group work</li> </ul>
<p><b>ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low tech and high tech materials and software used to provide access to learning and demonstration of content</li> <li>• Includes Augmentative Alternative Communication (AAC) devices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calculator</li> <li>• Reading strips</li> <li>• Highlighter tape</li> <li>• Book stands</li> <li>• Fidget toy</li> <li>• Raised line paper</li> <li>• Word prediction software</li> </ul>
<p><b>RELATED SERVICE PROVIDERS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professionals who push into the classroom to provide support with specific goals and/or needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lap top</li> <li>• Physical therapist</li> <li>• Speech therapist</li> <li>• Occupational therapist</li> <li>• Vision specialist</li> <li>• Nurse</li> </ul>



## Strengths & Strategies Quick Glance

Strengths, Gifts, Interests, and  
Talents for \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Effective Strategies  
for \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Adapted from Strengths and Strategies: Assessing and Sharing what Matters by Paula Kluth & Michelle Diamon-Borowski  
(see [www.paulakluth.com](http://www.paulakluth.com))*



The IEP: A Tool for Realizing Possibilities

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## Sample Strengths & Strategies Profile

### Strengths, Gifts, Interests, and Talents for Jordon

- Loves to read and is a good reader
- Great sense of humor
- Friendly and outgoing
- Great memory; remembers a lot of personal information about others after meeting them
- Knows a lot of information about cars
- Is very interested in all areas of science
- Loves to travel and has traveled all over the United States
- Is skilled at basic internet searches on specific topics
- Enjoys working to help others
- Loves school
- Likes PE and other physical games
- Enjoys swimming
- Works well with a schedule
- Loves football and soccer
- Loves to hang out with friends
- Interested in joining school clubs and sports teams
- Is a good public speaker and presents at conferences
- Has a lot of creative ideas to write about
- Is interested in going to college

### Effective Strategies for Jordon

- Make sure all literature is accessible — Use text reading software or make sure that material is at Jordon's reading level
- Highlight key points on text using highlighter tape
- Focus on Jordon learning big ideas in science and social studies
- Pre-teach points for him to share out loud
- Have students work in groups when possible
- Use buddy notes in all classes
- Color code notebook by subjects
- Have him dictate a brainstorm or story map prior to writing
- Color code what will go 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th... to support writing
- Use laptop and co-writer for all writing assignments
- Practice math skills while working in the school store
- Encourage him and provide praise in the same way as to others
- Use peer supports
- Teach in naturally occurring general education environments
- Have high expectations

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