



Lesson 1.2h – Reporting in Respectful Language

(Addresses Vermont high school learning standards 1.3, 1.6, 1.8, 3.3, 3.11, 4.4)

*(This is an abbreviated excerpt from the Lesson 1.2e curriculum for the K-4 module. It is presented in the same format as the full curriculum, with abbreviated text for introductory purposes.)

Learning Objectives:

Unit 1: Awareness/Orientation to the Curriculum

- Identifying and understanding various types of disabilities.
- Understanding the origins of discriminatory terms and how to use respectful language.

Materials:

- Chalk board or flip chart and writing instruments.
- Computers with access to the internet (as an in-class activity or homework assignment).

Time:

One or two class sessions with additional homework.

Setting:

Large group, individual computer-based research, independent writing.

Directions:

Lesson Implementation:

Students will practice the use of respectful language in a journalism writing activity.

Introduce the topic of using respectful disability language through a large group listing activity. Students will identify all the words and phrases they have heard used to describe people with disabilities. Explain that part of the



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purpose of this activity is to identify both the positive and negative uses of language so it is okay to include terms the students consider to be derogatory.

When the list is complete, review each term and place a check next to the items students think are respectful and appropriate to use when communicating to or about people with disabilities. Students will use their list and the "Guidelines" document (part two) as resources for part three of this lesson.

Part 2 – Have students utilize the internet to access the following resources:

- "Guidelines for Reporting and writing about People with Disabilities" – A resource tool developed by the Research and Training Center on Independent Living at the University of Kansas.
- The American Press Institute's Disability/Accessibility Resources Page- This site contains information about disability related topics and guidance on how to cover disability related news stories.
- The Center for an Accessible Society – The purpose of this site is to provide journalists with credible information and quotable sources on national disability policy and independent living issues.

Part 3 – Have students utilize the API or Center for Accessible Society's sites to select a writing topic. Students will write an article suitable for publication in the school or local newspaper. The writing assignment should follow the language guidelines identified by the class and contained in the "Guidelines" document.

Working with Younger and Older Students: Modify this lesson as needed to include grade-level appropriate technical requirements on the writing activity.

Lesson Wrap-up/Follow-up

Review the concepts of respectful and harmful language and how they relate to communicating with or about people with disabilities. Explain when the next lesson will be schedule. In preparation for the next lesson, encourage students to talk with their family members to begin identifying people they



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know who have disabilities (family members, friends, and characters from television, books, or movies).



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