

Friends  
come with  
all types of



**TOPIC: Inclusion**

Using the book/video A Rainbow of Friends, you will help your students understand that everyone is an important part of a community (school, sports team, family, etc.) and that when one person is excluded because he or she is "different", the community as a whole suffers.

**GRADE: 3**

**TIME: 30 minutes**

**OBJECTIVES:**

Students will:

- Understand that respect and understanding grow when friends of differing abilities play and learn together.
- Learn about and embrace the concept of diversity and that each person is unique and makes valuable contributions.
- Learn that as a community we are interconnected and interdependent.

**MATERIALS:**

- Book, A Rainbow of Friends by P.K. Hallinan, or on YouTube if you use an interactive whiteboard: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EmjwPhqPX8E>
- 24 puzzle pieces cut out of hard stock paper so each student has one puzzle piece – see accompanying template. The correct side of each piece has a small star in the lower right corner so that the students will write on the proper side. If there are fewer than 24 students, you will still need to use the extra blank pieces to create the whole puzzle.
- Colored pencils

**ACTIVITY:**

- A. Begin with a game of "hangman" or any other guess-the-word game that you prefer. Put seven blank spaces on white board or flipchart for the word "include."

For interactive whiteboards, see the accompanying guess-the-word game that is already set up with both the words in this section. If you choose, this interactive whiteboard version also allows students to "buy a letter" to move the activity along faster.

Once students guess the word, ask a few questions:

- Does anyone know what this word means?
- Can anyone share an example of what it means?

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**The Cromwell Center for Disabilities Awareness**

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- Why would we want to include people in things? (It's kind to do so, many people can offer different contributions, we can learn things from others.....etc.)
- B. Play one more round, this time with 9 blank spaces for "*community*." Once word is guessed, ask questions.
- What does community mean?
  - What does a classroom community look like? Is everyone the same?
  - In classrooms, are all kids always included in activities? Why/why not?
  - Do you think everyone can offer something to make the classroom or community a special place? What might be some examples?
- C. Read [A Rainbow of Friends](#) or show the [YouTube video](#) of the book being read. Follow up with questions.
- How were the characters in the book friends? (Being nice, helping each other, etc.) How are you a nice friend? What do you do to include people?
  - Why do you think this book has a rainbow in it? How are friends like rainbows? (They can be different and can like different things.) What are some examples of things you like that are different from your friends?
  - Does it matter that people are different from each other? Can they still be a community and learn to accept and support each other and get along?
  - Can people who are different from us teach us and help us with things? What about if a difference is a disability?
- D. Let's talk about community and how we can be inclusive.
- How can people be different? How can they be alike?
  - Do you think people can be afraid of differences sometimes? Can you give examples?
  - Can it be hard to accept/respect someone who is different from us? Why? Do you think people can be afraid of differences? Why?
  - What are the benefits of having friends who are different from us?
  - Does a community of people mean they are all the same? Why/why not?
- E. Hand out a puzzle piece and one colored pencil to each student. Ask each student to write something that is special about them or something they can do to include others. If necessary, prompt them with some ideas.
- F. Once all have done this, ask if anyone would like to share what they wrote on their puzzle pieces. Get a few responses.
- G. Have the class sit in a circle or U shape on the floor and help students assemble the puzzle. (You can number pieces on the back for quicker assembly and refer to them if necessary when assembling.)
- H. Questions:
- How is this puzzle like a community? What if one piece was missing? Would the community be complete?
  - How would someone feel if they were left out? What can you do to include them?

- Is it true that we all have differences, like a rainbow? When we include everyone, isn't it like we have a complete rainbow, a colorful community?
- Can we learn from each other?
- What do you think about this: "A lot of different flowers make a bouquet?" How does that connect to people? How do you think this applies to people with disabilities or special challenges?
- When we read the story (or watched the YouTube reading) we learned that there are all kinds of people who complete the rainbow. Do you think school and other communities should accept everyone? Why?

## **AN IMPORTANT NOTE FROM THE CROMWELL CENTER**

Dear Teacher or Guidance Counselor:

Your brief feedback on this or on any of our other lesson plans is very important. It will enable us to share results with our grant funders and help obtain future funding, and any suggestions for improvements will help us fine tune the activities to best meet your needs.

To provide this valuable feedback, please go to the form on the bottom of this page on our website: <http://cromwellcenter.org/teacher-resources/>.

Or, if you prefer, you can e-mail your comments to [sgreenwood@cromwelcenter.org](mailto:sgreenwood@cromwelcenter.org).

Thank you!