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Get To Know Me

Lesson Plan

(Grades K-2, 3-5)

Objective

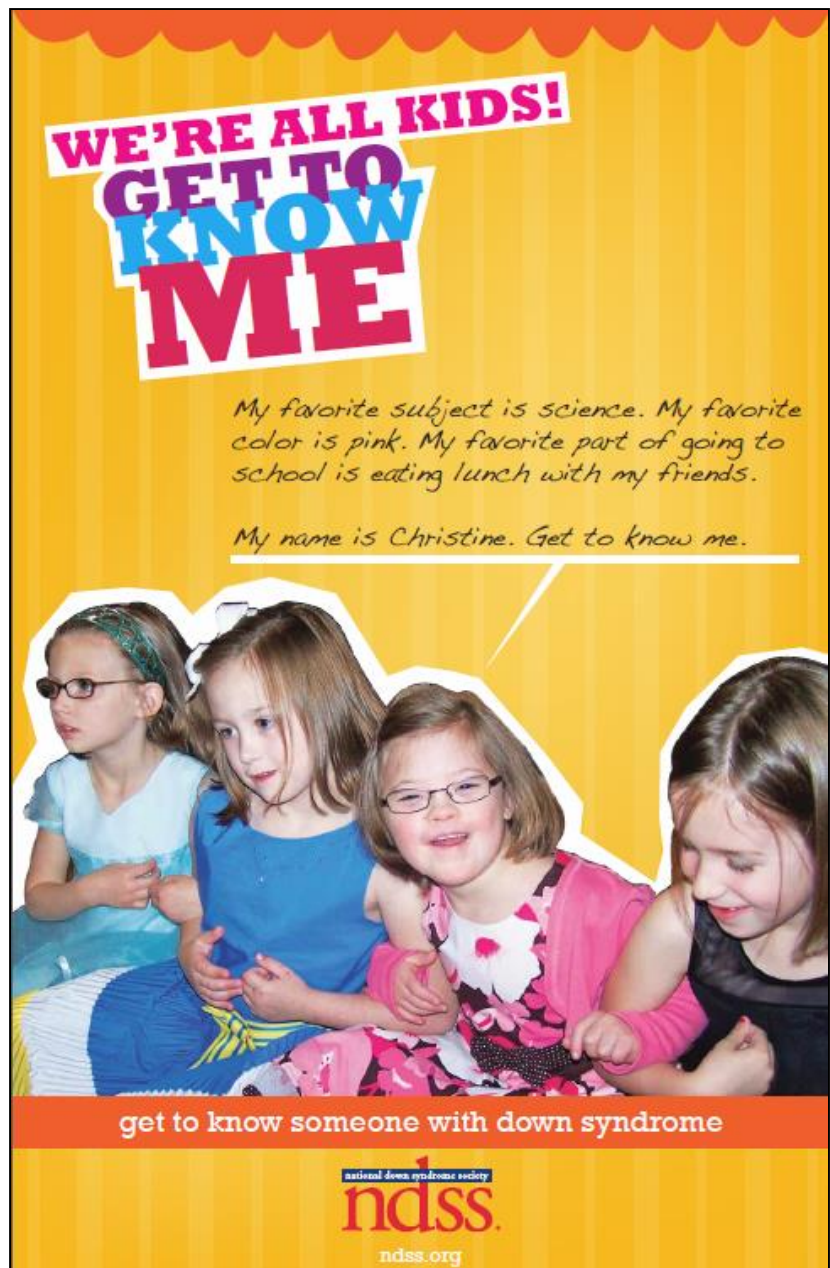
Students will participate in discussion around inclusion and acceptance of children with Down Syndrome.

Materials Needed

- NDSS Get To Know Me Poster
- NDSS Questions & Answers About Down Syndrome for Kids Handout

Key Points

- Kids have more in common than they may realize. These similarities can't be identified based on how a person looks or acts, so kids should "get to know someone" before they judge him or her.
- Some children have Down syndrome. Down syndrome is a developmental disability that affects how a person looks and learns in school.
- All kids want to be included and have friends. Kids with Down syndrome may have similar interests as we do. Next time we meet someone with Down syndrome, we will "get to know him/her" by asking questions and finding out how we are similar.



Anticipatory Set : Launch-Off

This warm-up game aims to show students how other students in the class have the same interests as they do. Students remain seated at their desks or sit on the floor in a circle.

Teacher's Explanation

"I am going to read a question. If you answer "yes" to the question, silently launch-off from your chair and stand up tall. Look around to who else is standing up. These people share the same interests as you. Sit down at my direction and listen for the next question."

Potential Questions

(Teachers should tailor questions to grade level and known interests of class.)

- Is your favorite subject science?
- Is your favorite color pink?
- Do you like eating lunch with your friends?
- Does your family have a pet?
- Are dogs the best kind of pet?
- Do you have brothers and sisters?
- Do you like to play any sports?
- Do you like pizza?
- Do you like drawing and painting?

Discussion

Teacher facilitates a class reflection on activity, driving towards the following key points:

- 1) We learned that some peers had the same interests as us. We didn't know how we were similar by just looking at them.
- 2) We make friends by getting to know people. We ask questions and talk to each other. We can't make friends by judging how a person looks or acts.

Sample Question Roadmap

- What did you realize about the other students who stood up with you? (We liked the same thing. We answered yes to the same question.)
- Can someone provide me with a specific example? (Jane and I both play sports.)
- Did you know that you and Jane both played sports? (No.)
- What could you do next to figure out more about Jane? (Ask her what kind of sport she plays or invite her to play basketball with me after school.)
- Can you tell that you and your classmates share these same interests by just looking at them? (No.)
- So how can we figure out if a person can be our friend or not? (We get to know them. We ask them what they like.)
- What did we learn from this discussion about friendship? (Teacher writes down key points in students' language on the board or chart paper to reference later in the lesson.)

Discussion Continued

Teacher references the poster and drives discussion towards the following key points:

- Christine looks slightly different from her friends because she has Down syndrome. However, she has the same interests as her friends.
- Christine's friends didn't judge her because she has Down syndrome. They got to know her and discovered their similar interests.
- When we meet a person with Down syndrome, we should find out how we are similar by asking questions and getting to know him or her as person.

Sample Question Roadmap

- What do you notice about this poster? (Girls are sitting together. Girls are friends.)
- What do you think the girls in the poster enjoy doing together? (Playing at recess. Eating lunch together.)
- This girl is named Christine. Christine looks a little different from her friends because she has Down syndrome. Down syndrome is a disability that affects how a person looks and learns. However, people with Down syndrome are just like everyone else.
- Why do you think these girls hang out together? (They like the same things.)
- Do you think it matters that Christine has Down syndrome to her friends. (No.)
- What sort of things matter to her friends? (That they like the same things.)
- How did her friends find out that they had so much in common with Christine? (They asked her questions and got to know her.)
- If a new student with Down syndrome came into our class tomorrow, what would you do? (Ask him or her questions about him or herself.)
- Does anyone have any questions about Down syndrome or what we spoke about today? (Teacher should encourage honest questions and dialogue to clear up any misperceptions about the conversation.)

Individual Student Reflection

K-2: Students draw a picture and write a short story about a new friend they made this year. Why are you friends? What do you both like? What matters the most in a friendship?

3-5: Students write an advice column for the school newspaper on the following prompt: A new student arrives in your class. The student appears to have Down syndrome. How should you treat the new student?

or

Describe a time when you felt that you were judged because of how you looked or acted. How did it make you feel? How do you want people to treat you and get to know you?

Name: _____

Draw a picture of you and a new friend you made this year.



Why are you friends? What do you both like? What matters the most in a friendship?