



TOGETHER WE ARE ABLE  
School Inclusion Education Program

## STEP 3: **Post-Play Day Classroom Workshop**

Post-Play Day Workshop  
Post-Play Day Worksheet

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# POST-FIELD TRIP DEBRIEF

## Core Learning Objectives:

- Gaining new perceptions about people with disabilities and inclusion
- Understanding the reciprocal relationship between students with and without disabilities
- Identifying actions that can be taken to “pay the experience forward” and promote inclusion on the school campus.

## 1. Acknowledge Successes and Challenges

**Time Requirement:** 5 Minutes

**Supplies:** None

We start the de-brief by acknowledging the class for their successes (pointing to specific buddy pairings that did well together, creatively sought solutions to challenges, etc.) and acknowledging the challenges of the day. Inevitably, there are buddy pairings or experiences that don't find their rhythm and struggle through challenges together.

## 2. Post-Field Trip Written Exercise

**Time Requirement:** 10 Minutes

**Supplies:** Handout, Pencils



Hand out the writing exercise “Field Trip Reflection”, and ask everyone to take 5 minutes and answer the follow up questions. Remind them that just as before, we are asking them to be as honest and open as they can. Read through the statements/questions out loud as the children complete them.

### 3. Guided Discussion

**Time Requirement:** 10 Minutes

**Supplies:** None

When they are done, ask the kids to share about their day. Remember that this is your opportunity to **honor and listen to their experience** – also a chance to provide more insight into their buddies’ behavior, ability/lack of to connect, confusing moments during the play experience, etc. Consider focusing the discussion around the following questions:

- a. Who was your buddy? What was his name, how old, what was his favorite part of the playground?
- b. What surprised you about your buddy? Did he or she have a special ability?
- c. What did you and your buddy have in common? (Sometimes this question is a stretch... but it can be something simple – like your buddy loved bubbles and so do you or your buddy was very curious and you are too – or your buddy was really fast and so are you.)
- d. What surprised you about you? Did you learn anything about yourself that day? (Most kids say that they had to be really patient or had to remember to take turns, etc.)
- e. Did your buddy use words? If not, how did you guys communicate? How did you know what he/she was feeling?
- f. Did anyone find the buddy experience hard? What were the challenges? What were the solutions that you came up?

Site specific examples of what YOU saw during the play experience...overcoming challenges, examples of compassion, creative play! This discussion can be a powerful vehicle for larger conversations around inclusion/exclusion, bullying, and respectful communication. We have seen children apologize to each other after realizing how painful their behavior has been.

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**Some of the topics you can explore include:**

- How children/peers with disabilities or differences are treated on your campus
- Issues of bullying and the impact it has on students
- How our thoughts and feelings about people with disabilities impact our response/actions, and how those actions impact the person with a disability (social isolation, low self-esteem)
- How our feelings about ourselves (physical appearance, lack of social skills, feelings of isolation) impact our responses to others

If you have a particularly challenging group that is having a hard time getting the message, consider one of the inclusion exercises listed in the Supplemental Material. If you have time, they are good illustrations of what kind of impact isolation has and that isolating others is a choice.

## 4. Celebrate the Circle

**Time Requirement:** 15 Minutes

**Supplies:** Yarn

Get the kids into a circle, shoulder to shoulder. Get out a ball of yarn and pass it around the circle, as you ask the students the following questions (time it so that the students hold the yarn as they speak):

1. For the first half of the circle, ask students to share what gift they gave their buddies on the day of the field trip (time, laughter, friendship, fun, patience, attention)
2. For the second half, ask the kids to share what gift they were given (awareness, patience, fun, etc.)

Tell them that each of them, and their buddies, are part of this circle. What holds our circle together? Aside from string, of course. Our gifts! Our ability to see beyond the outside and appreciate who someone is on the inside. Compassion holds our circle together, which creates community.

Tell them to hold onto their piece of yarn, you will come by and cut it, giving them a reminder of their buddies, their field trip, etc.

**Additional Talking Points:** Encourage each child to “Pay It Forward.” Give your gift you on to someone else. What would that look like? Ask them to come up with concrete examples...

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- Invite someone new to sit at your table during lunch time
- Invite someone who may seem different to join your group at recess
- If someone who seems different is bullied or teased, tell an adult rather than just watch
- When you see someone in a wheelchair or who has a disability, look him/her in eyes rather than looking away

Each time you give your gift on to someone else, your circle widens to include more people. I challenge you to wrap it around the globe!

**If both the general and special education classes are from the same school**, tell the kids that they will be on their field trip until the last day of school. Can anyone guess why? You have the chance to give your gifts, and get gifts in return, all year! What are some things you can do if you see your buddy in the halls, cafeteria, or playground...

- Say his/her name and say hi
- Invite your buddy to sit at your table
- Play with him/her! Include your buddy in your games

Consider supporting the ongoing experience with your students! Schedule classroom parties together, host reading/craft exercises where the two students work on a joint project, alter your P.E. time so that the kids get time together to play on the playground (which is great physical exercise). A few changes in schedule or a little extra coordination among teachers can change the tone for not only your students but the students in other classes as well!

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# POST-FIELD TRIP WORKSHEET

## REFLECTIONS

What surprised me most about my buddy was his/her ability to...

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I found out my buddy and I have something in common, we both like to...

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Being a buddy taught me that I can... (listen, communicate with someone who can't talk, etc.)

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After going on your field trip, what would you want others to know about people who have different abilities? Is there a message you would want to share with others?

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