



# Book of Differences

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**Stage 4**  
**Student Resource**

# Types of Barriers

We can all face barriers in our lives from time to time. Maybe you slept-in and were running late. Perhaps you forgot your shoes for sport practice or it's your internal doubt stopping you from trying something new.



**What are some barriers you have already faced today or this week?**

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There are four types of barriers that people with a disability may face. These are:

- **Attitudinal** – where other people’s behaviours, perceptions and assumptions discriminate against people with a disability.
- **Physical** – structures or obstacles (natural or manmade) that get in the way or block access.
- **Communication** – anything that affects reading, writing, hearing, speaking and understanding.
- **Transportation** – where the lack of adequate transportation can interfere with a person’s independence and ability to function in the world around them.

**Barriers come in many forms,  
but a person’s disability is not the barrier**

# Pushing the barrier

There are many amazing people living with disabilities who are finding ways to help overcome and smash through barriers they face every day.

Individually (or find a partner to help) use your research skills to identify famous people living with a disability and the barriers they may face. Identify how they could or do overcome these barriers and share your research with your class.

Use the prompt questions below to help create your discussion/presentation.



**Who are they? (An online image would be great to use for your presentation)**

**What disability do they live with?**

**What are some of the barriers they might face in their day to day lives?**

**What ways have they or could they break down these barriers in their lives?**

**How are they creating a more aware and inclusive world?**

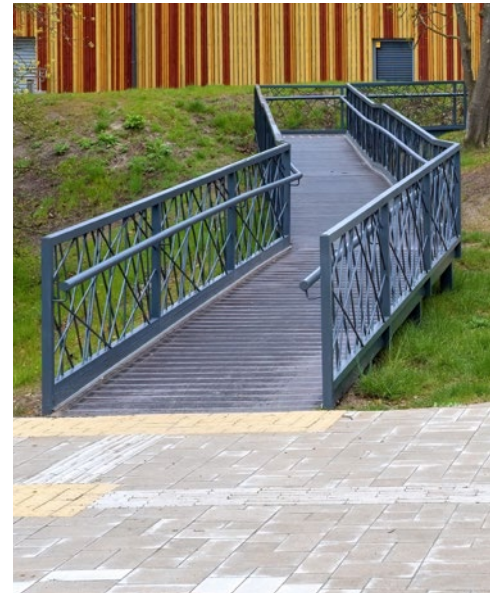
**We can all play a part in breaking down barriers**

# Accessible Design

One way you can help break down barriers is through accessible design. This is a process in which the needs of people with disabilities are specially considered when a product or service is designed. Some common examples of accessible design are the provision for ramps in place of steps or the use of closed caption text in videos.

## Where are they?

Go around your school, home or even just an online search to explore accessibly designed products. Once you find some, include them in the table below. Don't forget to also add what barriers they overcame and how they did it.



Accessible design piece	What barrier did it overcome?	How does it achieve this?
EXAMPLE: Technology - iPad	A student who has a vision impairment is unable to read a physical book	Allows the person who is blind to read independently using audio books

## Share it around

Get together as a small group or whole class to discuss the accessible design pieces you found and how they overcome barriers.

## What's your big idea?

One way to assist in creating a design that is accessible and inclusive is to use the I.D.E.A framework:



### Identify the barrier

(e.g.: steps to get into the school library)



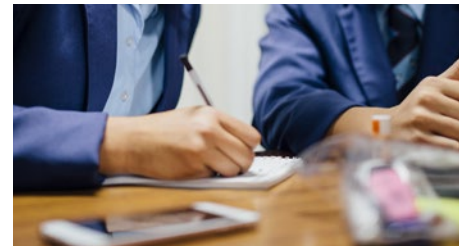
### Define why this is a barrier and to who

(e.g.: a person who uses a wheelchair or a parent with a pram can't walk up the stairs to access the library)



### Explore possible solutions

(brainstorm ideas e.g.: build a ramp, install a stair lift)



### Answer, what is the solution and how will this break down the barrier?

(create a prototype or design)



1. Find an example of something that would create one (or more) of the four types of barriers people with a disability might face (page 1).
2. Write this into the table below and list who might find this a barrier in their day-to-day life.
3. Then, come up with three of your own accessible design solutions that could help break down that barrier. Don't forget to explain how they will achieve this.
4. Finally, circle or highlight the accessible design idea you think would be the best solution.

The barrier		
What is the barrier example?	Who might find this a barrier?	
Break down the barrier		
What are some accessible design solution ideas that could help break down that barrier? How will each idea achieve this?		
Idea 1:	Idea 2:	Idea 3:

### Let's go social!

Using your chosen big I.D.E.A, create a social media image, post or short video that explains your big I.D.E.A and how it will help make the world more accessible and inclusive. Use your social media message to help encourage others to also find ways they can make the world more inclusive and accessible as well.



# Rewrite the scene...

## More inclusive connections

By using inclusive language and behaviour, you can help combat discrimination and allow everyone to fully participate in your community. Sometimes we forget to do this, especially when hanging out with our friends in real life or online.

Imagine you are one of the participants in the following scenarios. Write down how the scenario might leave some group members feeling left out or insulted. Then, rewrite the scene, explaining how your new scenario will be more inclusive.



**The video scenario:**  
You are sitting with a group of friends one of whom, Jayden, is deaf. Another friend, Jen, finds a funny video short on their phone and shows it to the group. You all find it hilarious and are laughing!  
You turn and see Jayden looking at the phone, but not laughing with the group.

**A. How might the different members of the group be feeling right now and why?**

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**Rewrite the scene...**

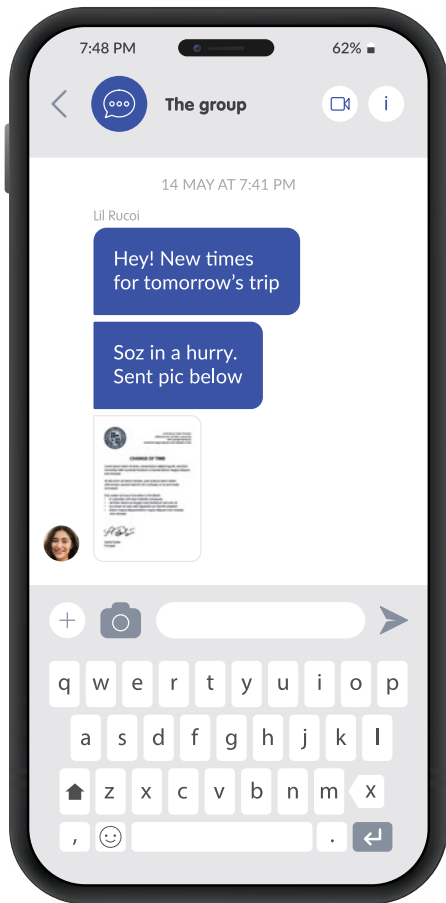
**B. What could you do to make the situation more inclusive for everyone in the group?**

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**The screenshot scenario:**  
You receive a message in your group chat from Lil. It's an important change to the times for a school trip tomorrow. One of the group members, Mateo, is vision impaired and finds it difficult to read text. Lil is in a hurry and just sends a photo of the trip change notice to the group.

**A. How might the different members of the group be feeling right now and why?**

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**Rewrite the scene...**

**B. What could you do to make the situation more inclusive for everyone in the group?**

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# Book of Differences

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**Stage 4**  
**Teacher Resource**

# Activity: Disability barrier challenge

Not all barriers are the same, and not all disabilities are the same. Even people with the same disability may not always face the same barriers in their lives or need the same solutions.

## Class Discussion 1 – Types of disability

### Class discussion

Run a short class discussion exploring the different types of disability.

### The three types of disability are:

- **Sensory disability** is when someone has a disability that affects their senses. They might have trouble hearing, seeing or speaking. Someone who is vision impaired is an example of a sensory disability.
- **Physical disability** is when part of a person's body is missing or doesn't work the way it should. For example, some people can't stand on their legs, so they use a wheelchair. Someone with Paraplegia is an example of a physical disability.
- **Hidden disabilities** are ones that affect our thoughts, feelings and the way we act, or how our body operates. They are called Hidden because you can't tell someone has a disability by just looking at them. Autism is an example of a Hidden disability.

## Class Activity 1 – Hidden disability barrier

### Activity summary

This activity will help to demonstrate how at times people with Autism (or hidden disabilities) can find it harder than others to focus in certain situations, such as noisy or "busy" classrooms.

One student will be given a task of listening to a paragraph of text and answering questions in relation to it, while other students attempt to distract them by creating a busy environment.

### What you will need to run this activity

- A unique paragraph of text for each student to read aloud (1 different piece of text per group member). Each piece of text should finish with 3 questions about the text. For example: What was the name of the main character? Where did the character go?
- A secondary paragraph of text (different to the one above) for students to read aloud (1 per group)

1. Divide the class into groups of 3 – 4.
2. Each group member will have a specific role:
  - **Person #1** will take on the challenge (or represent a person with a hidden disability). Your job is to concentrate on the paragraph that Person #3 is reading to you.
  - **Person #2** will stand close to Person #1 and read the secondary paragraph of text quite loudly throughout the activity.
  - **Person #3** will use a normal voice to read the first paragraph of text to Person #1
  - **Person #4 (if 4 members in the group)** will stand in front of Person #1 and will perform a silly action or movement. Continue this action throughout the activity.
3. Have Person #3 start reading the text to Person #1. Whilst the text is being read, have the other group members interact with their assigned activity.
4. Once Person #3 has finished reading the text, have all group members stop their actions
5. Person #3 will then ask Person #1 the three questions related to the text. Person #1 must answer the questions on the text as best they can.
6. Once Person #1 has been asked all questions, rotate the roles around the group members and try the activity again. NOTE: Each rotation will use a different paragraph text piece to ensure it is new to the Person #1 role.
7. At the completion of the activity regroup for a follow up class discussion.

### Optional Activity Extension

As an extra “barrier” you could include another student in the group to gently use a soft prop to touch the back of Person #1 to simulate a physical touch distraction.

Alternatively, you could have another student tap on a desk or shake a noisy object in front of Person #1 to simulate an extra noise distraction.

## Class Discussion 2 – Let's hear your thoughts

### Follow up class discussion

Follow up the activity by running a class discussion exploring questions such as:

- Were you able to concentrate reading the paragraph during the commotion?
- How did it feel having so much distraction taking place around you?
- What emotions did you feel e.g., frustration, anger etc?
- What are some ways you could help create a space that would not be so distracting for others?

## Class Activity 2 – Mindfulness Grounding

### Activity summary

The previous activity specifically looked at situations students with hidden disabilities might find a barrier, but we can all have moments of frustration, lack of concentration and negative emotions.

A useful tool in helping to combat these moments is grounding ourselves through mindfulness activities.

Below is a quick and easy exercise that you can run with students designed to help ground and refocus. Although a great tool for everyone to use, an activity like this can specifically help students who have learning disabilities or find it hard to focus in certain classroom situations.

Discuss with the students that the activity is something that you will run together now, but they can also use by themselves at any time.

HINT: Maybe make this a daily class exercise.

1. Have the students find a comfortable position to sit (or lie down).
2. Start by asking the students to quietly take a moment to just concentrate on their breathing – in and out.
3. Ask the students to answer the following questions in their head - without speaking (ask the questions one at a time, giving space between each question for the students to think of their answers):
  - Name 5 things you can SEE
  - Name 4 things you can HEAR
  - Name 3 things you can TOUCH
  - Name 2 things you can SMELL
  - Name 1 thing you can TASTE

## Class Action Plan

Ask the students to individually reflect on what they have learnt from the workshop and activities. Use some prompt questions to guide them such as:

- “What has surprised you most about what you have learnt?”
- “How can you use this newfound knowledge in your everyday life?”

Finish by encouraging the students to create an action plan (individually or as a group) to promote accessibility and disability inclusivity within their classroom, school and/or community.



**We'd love to hear about the positive changes you've observed in the student's behaviours and attitudes after the Just Like You workshop. Please share your insights with us at [support@justlikeyou.org.au](mailto:support@justlikeyou.org.au)**

**Thank you for participating in our program,  
and always remember  
people with disabilities are**

