OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn the definition and examples of civil rights.
- Students will be introduced to the history of discrimination experienced by people with disabilities.
- Students will learn that people with disabilities have fought for civil rights like other groups, but for people with disabilities, they had to wait until 1990 to have their rights recognized under law in the United States.

TEACHER RESOURCES


VOCABULARY

- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)¹ - noun
  - Passed by Congress in 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is the nation’s first comprehensive civil rights law addressing the needs of people with disabilities, prohibiting discrimination in employment, public services, public accommodations, and telecommunications
- Civil Disobedience² – noun
  - refusal to obey governmental demands or commands especially as a nonviolent and usually collective means of forcing concessions from the government
- Civil Rights³ – noun
  - the nonpolitical rights of a citizen; especially : the rights of personal liberty guaranteed to U.S. citizens by the 13th and 14th amendments to the Constitution and by acts of Congress
  - the rights that every person should have regardless of his or her sex, race, or religion
- Citizen⁴ – noun
  - a person who legally belongs to a country and has the rights and protection of that country

ESTIMATED INSTRUCTION TIME: 20 minutes
• Discrimination⁵ – noun
  • the practice of unfairly treating a person or group of people differently from other people or groups of people

• Enforce⁶ - verb
  • to make (a law, rule, etc.) active or effective : to make sure that people do what is required by (a law, rule, etc.)

• Neglect⁷ - verb
  • to fail to take care of or to give attention to (someone or something)


WASHINGTON STATE LEARNING STANDARDS AND LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Disability History Month Act, RCW 28A.230.158, states that “Annually, during the month of October, each public school shall conduct or promote educational activities that provide instruction, awareness, and understanding of disability history and people with disabilities. The activities may include, but not be limited to, school assemblies or guest speaker presentations.” Available at https://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28A.230.158

Washington State Superintendent DA Policy 3226 Required Observances (includes Disability History Month); Policy 3227, Disability History Month.


• Benchmark 4A – Demonstrates awareness of other people’s emotions, perspectives, cultures, language, history, identity, and ability.
• Benchmark 4B – Demonstrates an awareness and respect for one’s similarities and differences with others.
• Benchmark 4C – Demonstrates an understanding of the social norms of individual cultures.
1. **Teacher show SLIDE 11: “The Civil Rights Movement of People with Disabilities”**
   (Slide attached). Teacher will lead the class discussion:
   a. The teacher should ask: Do you know what civil rights are?
      i. Answer: The teacher clicks through to show the first line in the body of the slide. Teachers reads “the same rights as other citizens.” The teacher explains that these are the same rights that every person should have regardless of race, gender, religion and disability. These are the rights that we are entitled to as citizens of the United States of America.
   b. The teacher should ask: Do you have any example of civil rights?
      i. Answer: The teacher can move through the slide. Examples of civil rights include: the right to education, vote, live in the community (not a big institution locked away from other people), use public transportation, and equal opportunities for employment.
   c. **Goal of Slide:** Students will learn that civil rights are rights that every citizen has including the right to vote, education, live in the community, use public transportation and equal opportunities for employment.

2. **Teacher shows SLIDE 12: “A Long History of Discrimination.”** (Slide attached). The teacher leads class discussion:
   a. The teacher explains that people with disabilities have a very long history of being treated differently and poorly.
   b. The teacher reads each bullet of the slide: defining discrimination, explaining how people with disabilities have been treated, and providing examples of discrimination.
   c. The teacher can explain further that people with disabilities had to fight for laws to be created and judges to make decisions that protect their rights. Here are some examples:
      i. The Blind had to fight for the right to use their canes.
      ii. The Deaf had to fight for the right to be educated by a teacher using sign language.
      iii. People with mental illness had to fight for the right to get treatment and not be hurt or neglected.
      iv. People with intellectual disabilities and their families fought for the right to receive treatment, to live in the community instead of being locked away in institutions, and to be educated.
d. **Goal of Slide:** Students will learn that people with disabilities have a long history of being abused and neglected. Students will learn that for many years, groups of people with different disabilities fought for the civil rights of those with similar disabilities on discrete issues such as education, using canes, and treatment. In other words, groups of people with specific disabilities fought for civil rights in silos rather than with a class conscious.

3. **Teacher shows SLIDE 13:** “Slow Change: Compare the 1964 Civil Rights Act.” (Slide attached).
   Teacher leads the class discussion:
   a. Teacher explains the connections between the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the civil rights movement for people with disabilities. Teacher explains that people fought to not have their civil rights taken away on the basis of race and obtained a federal law in 1964, but the fight for people with disabilities to have a federal law protecting their civil rights took a lot longer.
   b. Teacher explains that the fight for civil rights for people with disabilities was slow and happened in steps. The teacher reads the two bullets of the slide.

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**TEACHING TIP**

Civil Rights Act of 1964: People of color fought for their civil rights in the 50s and 60s with leaders including Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King Jr. The United States federal government finally passed a law to protect the civil rights of people of color: the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This law protects lots of people from discrimination, which means being treated unfairly. This means that a person cannot be treated unfairly because of an individual’s race, religion, national origin or gender. However, people with disabilities are not included in this federal law. This means that people with disabilities could be treated unfairly in many ways including, in employment, housing, entrance to shops, and receipt of public services, and they had no right under the law to protect themselves from discrimination.

People with disabilities learned from the 1960s civil rights movement. They saw the chance to fight for equal treatment, equal access and equal opportunities. They sought to change negative attitudes and stereotypes and to obtain political and institutional power.
c. Teacher explains that just passing a law is not enough. A government needs to create regulations and enforce its own laws.

d. Teacher explains that even after Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and its regulations were created, people with disabilities continued to face many barriers to exercising and accessing their civil rights.
   i. For example, buses were not accessible to wheelchair users.
      1. In 1978, people with disabilities in Denver held sit-ins to get accessible buses. This is important because in 1955 Rosa Parks fought to sit wherever she wanted on the bus, but over 20 years later, people with disabilities still cannot get on the bus.
      2. In 1983 a self-advocate group called ADAPT used civil disobedience to get accessible public transportation and buildings. For 7 years ADAPT conducts disobedience against American Public Transit Association and local authorities.

e. **Goal of SLIDE:** Students will learn that people with disabilities were inspired to fight for their civil rights by the civil rights movements of the 50s and 60s. They fought for federal laws to protect their rights and used civil disobedience, like Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King Jr to affect change.

**Lesson Three**

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**TEACHING TIP**

First, the U.S. Congress passed a law to protect the civil rights of people with disabilities in 1973: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (called “Section 504”). Section 504 was based on the Civil Rights Act of 1964. However, it did not go far enough. It only prevents entities that receive federal funds from discriminating against a person with a disability. For example, if a University receives money from the federal government, it cannot refuse to hire a qualified person for employment because the individual has a disability. However, if a business does not receive federal funds, Section 504 would not prevent the business from refusing to hire someone just because that individual had a disability, like using a wheelchair.

Second, in 1975 the federal government passed a law that requires that all children receive a free and appropriate public education. This law is now called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA"). Before the IDEA, people with disabilities did not have a right to attend school or receive an education that was appropriate and effective. Notably, the federal law was modeled after a Washington State law.
4. Teacher shows SLIDE 14: “Civil Rights for People with Disabilities.” (Slide attached). Teacher leads class discussion:
   a. Teacher explains that the existing laws were not comprehensive enough to protect the civil rights of people with disabilities and protect them from discrimination.
      i. People with disabilities led a civil rights movement. They started locally such as fighting for access to schools and employment. A movement grew called the Independent Living Movement that challenged the idea that people with disabilities needed to live in institutions and instead fought for services to live in the community.
      ii. The disability civil rights movement has its own leaders.

1. For example, in 1962, Ed Roberts, was admitted to the University of California Berkeley. As a result of polio, Ed Roberts relied on an iron lung to breathe and a wheelchair for mobility. Once the University realized that he had a significant disability, it tried to deny him admission, but he fought them and finally was the first person with a severe disability enrolled there. When he enrolled, there was no dorm that could accommodate his needs, but he fought for his rights and advocated to live in a converted unit of a hospital. The next year, another student with significant disabilities enrolled with him, John Hessler. Together they formed an organization called the Rolling Quads to advocate for greater access on and around campus. In 1970, they worked with the school to found the Physically Disabled Students Program (PDSP). PDSP became the nucleus for the first Independent Living Center, founded two years later that provided community living, political advocacy and personal assistance services. By the 1980s Independent Living Centers were in Canada, Europe, Asia and Latin America.
iii. People with disabilities worked with politicians to pass a national law that would protect their civil rights.

iv. July 26, 1990 – President George H. W. Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a comprehensive law to protect the civil rights of people with disabilities. The ADA is modeled after the 1963 Civil Rights Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. It was the most comprehensive disability civil rights law in history. It requires that governments be accessible, employers not discriminate, and places that the public uses like restaurants, theaters and stores be accessible. It also requires transportation and communication be accessible to people with disabilities.

b. Goal of SLIDE: Students learn in 1990 The Americans with Disabilities Act finally passed after years of civil disobedience and advocacy. People with disabilities finally had a law that protected their civil rights, over two decades after the Civil Rights Act of 1964 passed and prevented discrimination based on national origin, race, sex and religion.

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SLIDE 11: “The Civil Rights Movement of People with Disabilities”

The Civil Rights Movement of People with Disabilities

- The same rights as other citizens
- Such things like the right to an education, to vote, to access public transportation, to access public spaces, to equal employment opportunities, and to live in the community

SLIDE 12: “A Long History of Discrimination”

A long history of discrimination

Discrimination: the practice of unfairly treating a person or group of people differently from other people or groups of people.

People with disabilities have been abandoned, abused, pitied, segregated, neglected and isolated.

For centuries, different groups of people with disabilities fought for their rights such as the right to get jobs, be educated, be free from abuse and receive treatment.
SLIDE 13: “Slow Change: Compare the 1964 Civil Rights Act.”

SLIDE 14: “Civil Rights for People with Disabilities”