





#InclusiveEducation

 Down Syndrome
International



What can an
inclusive
lesson look
like?



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What is an inclusive lesson?

Inclusive lessons (lessons being defined as set periods of teaching & learning) cater for everyone in the room, physically or virtually! Regardless of skill, subject, or topic being delivered, all the kids have objectives to aim for, direct teaching/instruction, activities to complete, opportunities for interaction with others, plus a chance to see/hear how they've done. It should be noted that even in the best circumstances, with the most resources (including staff) and with a narrow band of abilities, this is still very skilled and labour-intensive work. In **theory**, all children of the same age (some neuro-divergent, some neuro-typical) can learn alongside each other in inclusive schools. Hard line inclusion advocates remain steadfast in their convictions that **all children** can be taught all together, in the same lessons, by the same teacher.



What can an inclusive lesson look like?

The theory is easy, risk-free, and hard to argue against. I've interviewed authors who have written books against inclusive education, who admit that the dream is a worthy one. The practical reality is difficult, risk-laden, and hard to be relatable to more than one situation at a time! Many teachers, parents, and even peers, if given time and support, can often come up with solutions to single dilemmas regarding inclusive education. A secondary GCSE history teacher said to me, 'How can I include the child with her peers when she is so far behind academically, socially, and emotionally?'

Several months later, the child is doing history, sitting next to her peers, with additional support. But this is just one context, and what worked here, won't work the same anywhere else. One 'inclusive' lesson will look totally different to another. What has become effective in one class, for one set of children, will not work with another set in a different class.





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With droves of teachers leaving a quite frankly torrid profession, there is one particular jewel to cling on to: Creatively and reflexively adapting your practice to effectively include a learner with an intellectual disability will MASSIVELY improve/upskill you as a practitioner.



If you're waiting for a prescription for how to make your lesson inclusive, then you won't get one. An inclusive lesson looks however it needs to look to meet the needs of all the kids in the room. And for those reading who are parents or who don't work in schools – this means all 30! Not exclusively for the children with a disability, a care plan, an individual learning plan or who are on extra school support. An inclusive lesson must cater for, inspire, encourage, assess, engage, support, and teach those who are 'most' able, those who are 'least' able, those who don't care and those who are the 'teacher's pet'... A formidable task with no easy answers.



In summary, anyone who claims to be able to provide a template, proforma, blueprint or resource to ensure lessons are inclusive are wholeheartedly missing the point – it's the skill, knowledge (of curriculum, SEND, pedagogy, and the children) mindset and hard work of the teachers that must be considered, and applauded.

