

ALL CHILDREN HAVE DIFFERENT EYES:
Learn to Play and Make Friends
Written by Edie A. Glaser and Maria Burgio, Ph.D
Illustrated by Doina Parschiv
Teacher's Guide created by Cassandra Reigel Whetstone

Story Summary

Tommy and Wendy are children with different types of visual impairment. They each share their experiences learning, playing, and making friends while facing the challenges of low vision.

More information about the creators of ALL CHILDREN HAVE DIFFERENT EYES as well as related games and resources are available at: www.lowvisionkids.com.

Pre-reading

1. Group students in pairs and give each student a paper and crayons. Have each student draw a picture of one of their partner's eyes. (Optional for older students: give each student a hand held mirror and have them draw a picture of their own eye.)
2. Have students hold up their pictures and ask, "Are your eyes all the same? How are they different?"
3. Ask, "What do our eyes do?" "Do they all work the same?" Discuss that some people need glasses and discuss any other vision issues that the class may already be familiar with.

Discussion Questions (Reading/Listening Comprehension)

Chapter 1: Me and My Wiggly Eyes

1. What is special about Tommy's eyes? (*literal*)
2. Why do you think some kids say mean things to Tommy? (*inferential and evaluative*)
3. Why do you think some kids say mean things to other kids? Why does the author tell us that it's not only Tommy who hears mean things? (*inferential, evaluative, analysis*)
4. Why does Tommy sit in the front row? (*literal*)
5. Why is it hard for Tommy to see what's on the board when his eyes are wiggling? (*inferential*)
6. Why does Tommy need to have the book in front of him? (*literal*)
7. Why does it help Tommy to know when his friend is going to throw the ball? (*inferential*)
8. If Tommy were playing with you at recess, what are some things that you could do to help with the games and activities that you play? (*inferential and evaluative*)

Chapter 2: All Kids Have Different Eyes

1. What is special about Samantha's eyes? (*literal*)
2. What things would be easier for Johnny to see? What things would be harder? (*inferential and evaluative*)
3. Which colors are hard for David to see? (*literal*)
4. What does David do to help read the traffic light? (*literal*)

Chapter 3: It's OK to See in Different Ways

1. What is special about Wendy's eyes? (*literal*)
2. Why do you think Wendy wears an eye-patch? (*inferential and evaluative*)
3. What is it about playing hopscotch that worries Wendy? (*literal*)
4. Why is Lucy mean to Wendy? (*inferential and evaluative*)
5. If Wendy lived in your neighborhood, would you invite her to play with you? Why? (*evaluative*)

Do What Tommy and Wendy Do (Language Experience Activity, Health)

Objective: Simulate the experience of learning while visually impaired.

Materials: At least one pair sunglasses to pass around.

Set Up: Place transparent tape over the lenses or smear petroleum jelly on the lenses.

K-3 Procedure:

1. Write in normal size letters on the board and ask children wearing the sunglasses in the back of the room if they can read the writing. Ask them to walk up to the board until they can see the writing. Now write very large letters on the board and repeat the exercise. Discuss what accommodations need to be made (sitting in the front row, walking up to the board, writing in bolder, bigger letters, asking classmate to help) to help children with low vision see writing on the board.
2. Ask students who are wearing the sunglasses to read a part of the book (2-3) or point out a part of the picture, such as a red pencil or pink flower (K-1). Now ask them to take off the glasses and do the same activity. Discuss the differences they experienced and what accommodations would help them to see the book better (holding the book closer, better lighting, asking classmate to help).
3. Go outside and ask students to wave to each other from 20 feet away. What accommodations can be made to help them know that someone is waving to them? (yelling out to the person, getting closer to the person wearing the sunglasses).

Compare and Contrast: Low Vision vs. Normal Vision (Language Arts, Health)

Objectives:

- Understand individual differences in growth and development (K-3)
- Use a graphic organizer to brainstorm writing (K-3)
- Write a sentence (K-1); Write a paragraph (2-3)

Set Up:

- (K-1) Make a worksheet with sentences on them that say:
 - Tommy, Wendy, and I are different because _____
 - Tommy, Wendy, and I are the same because _____
- (K-3) Make a chart that looks like this:

Kids with Low Vision and Kids with Normal Vision	
Same	Different

K-1 Procedure:

1. Ask students to list things that are the same and different between kids with low vision and kids with normal vision. Write answers on the chart.
2. Give each student the worksheet. Help them use the ideas from the chart to finish the sentences.

2-3 Procedure:

1. Ask students to describe the things that are similar and different between kids with normal vision and kids with low-vision. Suggested topics include: *basic needs, going to school, reading from the board or overhead, sharing books, recess, P.E., friends, homework, chores, family, feelings, exercise.*
2. Give students the topic sentence, "Tommy and I are the same in many ways." Ask students to write three sentences about how they are the same. Give them the topic sentence, "Tommy and I are different in other ways." Ask them to write three sentences about how they are different. If a student has low vision, they may want to write about other differences evident in the story (family types, interests, etc.)

Closure: Ask students to tell a partner or their table group one thing that they learned about children with low vision.

Extensions

Ping Pong ball toss (Physical Education, Health)

Objective: Simulate the experience of doing physical activities while visually impaired.

Background: It would be useful to explain to the students at their level that when looking out of one eye, it is difficult to judge distance (poor depth perception) and that is why the students may have a hard time catching the ball or picking it up when the ball falls. That is one reason Wendy didn't throw the stone in the square. The other reason is that she has low vision, too.

Materials: Non-adhesive eye patch and sunglasses smeared with petroleum oil per pair of students; one white and one orange ping pong ball per pair of students.

Procedure:

4. Have student pairs stand three-four feet away from each other and have them toss a white ping pong ball back and forth. Ask students to share how easy or difficult the task is.
5. Give one student in each pair an eye patch and one student sunglasses with the petroleum oil smeared on them. Have them continue tossing the white balls for a few minutes. Have students exchange the patch and sunglasses with their partner and spend a few more minutes tossing the balls. If the balls fall, ask the student to find it and pick it up without taking off the patch or sunglasses.
6. While students are playing, ask them to compare the experience of tossing the balls with and without the visual impairment. Ask students to discover what might help the person who is visually impaired in this activity. (*Students may discover that verbal cues, or positioning themselves in a certain way may help.*)
7. While wearing the patch or sunglasses, give each pair of students an orange ball. Have them toss it back and forth ask them if the orange color helps them catch the ball easier and find it when it drops. Ask them to give verbal cues and try other methods to help their partner catch the ball. Explain that the verbal cues and the orange balls are examples of "accommodations" to help kids with visual impairments do the same things that kids with normal vision do.
8. Go outside and throw basketballs or play hopscotch (like Tommy and Wendy do) while wearing the patch or sunglasses. Discuss how easy or hard these tasks are and what accommodations can be made to help the visually impaired child play the games equally with other classmates. Try out those accommodations if they are easy to do so (verbal cues are the easiest here).

Friendship List Poem (Writing, Health)

Objectives: Explore why positive peer relationships and friendships are important; use webbing technique to brainstorm and write a list poem.

Materials: book, chart, overhead, or board; pencil and paper per student

Procedure:

1. Review pages 12-15 and 30-33. Ask,
 - a. "Tommy and Wendy both enjoy playing with their friends. How does having low vision affect the way they join in the games?"
 - b. "What problems do they have to overcome?"
 - c. "What would have happened if Tommy and Wendy only watched the other kids play without trying to joining them?"

Discuss the importance of playing and being involved in building friendships.

2. Ask children to help you create a web to brainstorm ideas about friendship. Draw the word FRIENDS on the center of the chart and put a circle around it. Ask students to share ideas about friends, and write them around the circle. Prompts to generate discussion may include:
 - a. *What is it like to have friends? What is like to not have friends?*
 - b. *What do friends do for each other?*
 - c. *Have you ever been treated badly by a friend because you were different in some way? How did that make you feel?*
 - d. *If Tommy or Wendy were in our class, what would you do to help them play and make friends with other kids?*
 - e. *If Bobby the bully said bad things to you about your friend Tommy's eyes, what would you say or do?*

3. Tell students that they are going to use the brainstorm to create a list poem about friendship. *Example:*
Sometimes I don't feel like I have friends and that makes me sad.
Friends defend each other against bullies
Friends help each other play

K-1: Have whole group use brainstorm to write a whole class list poem. Begin with the title, "Friends are Important," and list statements about why friends are important. Copy final poem onto butcher paper and invite students to illustrate the poem.

2-3: Have students write, "Friends are Important" on the top of their paper. Help them list statements about friendship. When they have finished their lists of statements, have them go back and number the statements in the order that they want their list to be read. Encourage students to think about how they could give their poem a beginning, middle and end. Help students self-publish and illustrate the final drafts of their poems.

Sharing Goals and Struggles (Language Arts, Physical Education)

Objectives: Utilize knowledge of psychological and sociological concepts that apply to the learning and performance of a physical activity; use verbal and non-verbal language to communicate with peers.

Materials: paper, crayons, chart paper

Session One:

1. Choose an activity that the children have been learning in P.E. (ball skills, a specific game, etc.). Give children crayons and paper and ask them to draw themselves doing the activity.
2. When the children are finished drawing, ask them to talk about their pictures. Ask what is fun, easy, challenging, frustrating about the activity. Ask students to share what parts of the activity they do well and what parts they want to improve. Record children's thoughts as they share them.
 - Restate the things that children say that they do well and the things that they want to improve on.
 - Discuss what Wendy and Tommy experienced while doing activities with their peers.
 - Tell students that their class is a team, and teams work together to make everyone successful.
 - Ask students to brainstorm how they can accommodate the needs of their class so they can all have a better experience with the activity.
 - Discuss ways to support each other including using names when passing, making sure everyone understands the directions and rules of the activity, and address any specific physical needs of students in the class.

Session Two:

1. Before the lesson, make a chart listing the supportive ideas from the class brainstorm session.
2. Review chart with students and review the rules for the targeted P.E. activity.
3. Take students outside to do activity, and if possible hang chart on wall or chair. Refer to the chart as children do the activity. Encourage them to utilize the suggestions on the chart and point out when children do something that supports a classmate.
4. Afterwards, invite children to discuss what they experienced in doing the activity.

Closure: Ask students to draw another picture of themselves doing the P.E. activity. Compare the second pictures with the first. Discuss any differences between the two sets of pictures.

Extension for older students: If students have a younger class that they are buddies with, consider having the big buddies teach the little buddies the same P.E. activity, or modify it to make it appropriate for the younger grades. Ask students to utilize the suggestions from the chart as they work with their little buddies. Afterwards, discuss their experiences.

I'm A Special Person Mobile (Art)

Objectives: Understand that all children are special

Materials: five large, blank index cards per student plus one extra set, photo of each student, photocopy of Tommy, glue, crayons, string or yarn, hole punch

Procedure:

1. Post directions on the overhead or board.

Directions for *I'm A Special Person Mobile*

1. Write your name on the top of one index card, and glue your picture under your name.
 2. Write "My Favorite Things" on one index card and draw pictures of your favorite things. (Cards may be pre-labeled for students in grades K-1)
 3. Write "My Family" on another card and draw a picture of you and your family.
 4. Write "I am special because" and write and draw about how you are special on another card.
 5. Pass your last card to five friends and have them write one sentence about why you are special.
2. Tell students they are going to make a Special Person Mobile for Tommy. Have the class generate sentences for the cards while you model the activity.
 3. Pass out supplies to students and have them make their cards.
 4. As the students finish, help them use the hole punch to punch two holes in the bottom of the Photo card. Punch a hole in the top and the bottom of the "My Favorite Things" and "My Family" cards. Use string to hang the two cards to the photo card. Punch a hole in the top of the "Special" cards and hang them from the middle set of cards.
 5. Display mobiles. Each day, share two or three of the mobiles with the class, until all of the mobiles have been shared.