

CLASS DISCUSSION
DIVERSITY: SOCIETAL VIEWS
ESTIMATED TIME: 50 MINUTES

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

To gain a better understanding of diversity and special education through discussion topics.

OVERVIEW

This activity offers an opportunity to consider how people with disabilities and diverse backgrounds are viewed in society. The following discussion questions are meant to help students consider the different issues involved with diversity, disabilities, and special education.

ACTIVITY

- Describe some of the details special education teachers must face as the number of students from cultural and linguistic backgrounds increases in our schools across the nation.
- How might you ensure that, as a teacher, you evaluate a student who has a disability in ways that do not discriminate against his or her cultural or linguistic background?
- How can special education teachers who are monolingual meet the educational needs of linguistically diverse students? Discuss the availability of services in your community that may be supportive to this teacher.
- What can administrators representing a school do to create a comfortable learning environment for all students (special education and general education)?
- Address recommendations that university professors should include in their curriculum for special education teacher trainer programs in order to better prepare new teachers for working with students from diverse backgrounds.
- What are some societal stereotypes often associated with special education and bilingual education?
- Identify some of the issues surrounding language and instruction: What language of instruction should a non-English-speaking child with a disability receive if living in the United States? When should this student move from a bilingual classroom to an all-English class setting?
- What role can technology play in providing special education services to students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds?