

Bullying in High School: The Long-Term Effects

Grades 8-12

English Language Arts and Physical Education

Purpose of the Lesson

The purpose of this lesson is for students to dive deeper into the effects of bullying on one's mental health, and the importance of inclusion. Students will start by reflecting on what bullying looks like in their school or in their environment. They will then use the Inclusion Downloadable Resource and the Diverse-ability and Inclusion Comic Book to understand the importance of not isolating those around you. Finally, students will watch an inspiring video. The video is of Shane Koyczan, a famous spoken word poet, who shares what it feels like to be bullied and to be different. Students will end the lesson by reflecting on the video, and writing a poem of their own on mental health and bullying.

Curriculum Competencies:

English Language Arts

Develop poetry skills

- Use and experiment with oral storytelling processes (Grade 8/9)
- Transform ideas and information to create original texts. (Grade 8/9)
- Assess and refine texts to improve their clarity, effectiveness, and impact according to purpose, audience, and message (Grade 8/9)

After Grade 9 Language Arts divide into a more specific curriculum. This lesson could be used in Creative Writing or Spoken Language 10/11/12.

Physical and Health Education

- Describe and assess strategies for promoting mental well-being, for self and others (Grade 8)
- Analyze strategies for promoting mental well-being, for self and others (Grade 9)
- Explore and describe the impact of transition and change on identities (Grade 8)
- Explore and describe factors that shape personal identities, including social and cultural factors (Grade 9)
- Propose/Analyze strategies for responding to discrimination, stereotyping, and bullying (Grade 8/9)

After Grade 9, Physical and Health Education becomes an elective. Educators can still choose to use this lesson for their courses.

First Peoples Principles of Learning:

- Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.
- Learning requires exploration of one's identity.

Video

[To This Day - Shane Koyczan \(School-Friendly Version\)](#)

Guiding Questions:

- ◇ What is spoken word poetry? Have you heard it before?
- ◇ How is spoken word, or slam poetry, different than written poetry?
- ◇ Did you connect with any of the experiences Shane addresses?
- ◇ How did Shane face bullying?
- ◇ What does Shane say about being different?
- ◇ Why is finding our identity so important?
- ◇ Did this video change your view of bullying?

Step-By-Step Lesson Plan

Preparation: Ensure students have paper or a notebook for brainstorming.

1. Start by prompting the students in your class to reflect on bullying, what it means and its effect on their life. Get them to write "Bullying and Identity" in the middle of a blank piece of paper, and get them to brainstorm for 5-10 minutes. Here are some guiding questions for them:
 - *What is bullying?*
 - *What is identity?*
 - *What effect has bullying had on your life?*
 - *What effect does bullying have on the school environment?*
 - *How are bullying and identity related?*
2. Get students to share some of their ideas with the class, and tell them to save their brainstorm paper for later.
3. Second, display the comic "Diverse-ability and Inclusion" Comic on the projector. This can be found [HERE](#). **Allow the students to predict what will happen next before flipping the pages.** Ask them the following questions:
 - *What does inclusion mean to you?*
 - *What are diverse-abilities?*
 - *Why do people usually bully others?*
 - *What is the difference between bullying and inclusion?*
 - *How are they related?*
4. Get students to watch this inspiring spoken word poem "[To This Day](#)" by Shane Koyczan that addresses bullying, being different and identity. Ask students if this has changed their view of bullying.
5. **Pause the video and use the Guiding Questions to spark discussion.**
6. **Follow-up Activity:** For the accompanying activity with this lesson plan, students will develop oral storytelling and poetry skills. Slam or Spoken Word Poetry is when a poem is read out loud. It is different than simply reading it,

because it is almost musical and it has a rhythm when said out loud.
Play-on-words are typical of Spoken Word Poetry.

7. **Lesson Closure:** Get students to take their brainstorming sheets, and what they learned from the video, to write a poem about their experiences with mental health, bullying, inclusion and identity. Let them know the poem doesn't need to be about them self, but can be fictional if they would like.
8. **Optional Idea:** Have a Slam Poetry day where students present their poems in front of the class, or in small groups.