

DISABILITY JUSTICE CLASSROOM AUDIT



A. Sensory Environment	Never	Sometimes	Mostly	Always
1. Fluorescent lighting is filtered or not used.				
2. Classroom spaces are clearly designated and the environment is kept free of visual clutter (disorganized or overflowing materials, excessively bright, shiny, or distracting imagery, etc.)				
3. Classroom routines are supported with visual instructions or anchor charts.				
4. Distracting ambient sounds are eliminated as much as possible.				
5. Classroom transitions are calm and free of loud noises.				
6. Scents in the classroom are eliminated as much as possible.				
7. Students are provided with self-select options for sound dampening, i.e. noise canceling headphones, a designed quiet space, etc.				
8. Students are provided with self-select options for tactile engagement, i.e. fidgets, chew tubes, stimming, etc.				
9. Students are provided with self-select options for proprioceptive engagement, i.e. thera-bands on chairs, wobble seats, standing desks, movement breaks, etc.				
10. Sensory needs are normalized within classroom culture through explicit naming, modeling by teacher, and regular permission- giving / encouragement.				
What action steps will you take for any items in the “never”, “sometimes,” or “mostly” columns?				

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B. Disabled Representation	Never	Sometimes	Mostly	Always
1. People with physical disabilities and/or mobility aid users are represented in classroom media.				
2. People who use assistive communication devices are represented in classroom media.				
3. People with cognitive disabilities are represented in classroom media.				
4. People who work with direct support professionals are represented in classroom media.				
5. Neurodivergent (autism, ADHD, etc) people are represented in classroom media.				
6. Disabled authors are included in classroom texts and required reading.				
7. Disability-related historic events and awareness days are included in classroom culture and celebrations, i.e. autism awareness month, Americans With Disabilities Act anniversary, developmental disabilities awareness month, etc.				
What action steps will you take for any items in the “never”, “sometimes,” or “mostly” columns?				

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C. Accessibility	Never	Sometimes	Mostly	Always
1. All classroom areas have enough space to be comfortably navigated by a wheelchair, rollator, or other mobility device.				
2. Entrance mats and classroom carpets are flush with the floor to eliminate tripping hazards.				
3. Steps and raised platforms are marked with highlight tape and have a non-slip surface.				
4. Classroom equipment and materials are accessible by students at a wide variety of heights and require minimal physical effort to obtain.				
5. All emergency procedures and plans are inclusive of students with disabilities, particularly mobility aid users and students with visual and/or hearing impairments who may require modifications to those plans.				
6. Text displays are in high-contrast color combinations and have visual (picture) supports.				
7. Students have read-aloud options for engaging with text-based media.				
8. Students have large-print options for engaging with text-based media.				
9. Students have access to calculators.				
10. Text displays, classroom signage, and written communication is translated into all primary languages that are represented in the student body.				
11. There is a clear, non-punitive make-up work policy to accommodate students who may experience disability-related absences.				
12. Every student has access to a communication system that fits their needs.				
What action steps will you take for any items in the “never,” “sometimes,” or “mostly” columns?				

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D. Language	Never	Sometimes	Mostly	Always
1. Students with disabilities exercise the agency to determine what language they want to use regarding their disability. (For example: person first language vs. identity first language, differences vs disabilities, the use or elimination of “special needs”, etc.)				
2. The teacher refrains from using ableist language and slurs (i.e. “off their meds,” “that’s psychotic,” etc.) and makes it clear to students that such language is unacceptable in the classroom.				
3. Ableist language is identified and discussed when it occurs in classroom media.				
4. Student IEP’s and related documentation is written using strengths-based language and is free of ableist or dehumanizing language.				
5. The teacher advocates for anti-ableist and inclusive language in staff meetings and professional development spaces.				
<p>What action steps will you take for any items in the “never”, “sometimes,” or “mostly” columns?</p>				
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E. Autonomy and Choice	Never	Sometimes	Mostly	Always
1. Academic content is conveyed using <i>multiple means of representation</i> .				
2. Students are able to use <i>multiple means of engagement</i> for academic content.				
3. Students are able to use <i>multiple means of expression</i> to show their learning of academic content.				
4. Student work artifacts are honored equally within classroom culture and student learning needs are referred to in value neutral terms.				
5. Students have an active role in determining their learning and behavioral support needs, both in IEP meetings and in daily classroom interactions.				
6. Students retain full autonomy over their physical bodies and support personnel asks for consent before physically prompting, guiding, or assisting a student.				
7. Students have an active role in risk-assessing classroom activities and determining if/how they will engage in those activities.				
What action steps will you take for any items in the “never”, “sometimes,” or “mostly” columns?				

Additional Reflection Question Bank for Self-Assessing Ableism in Instructional Planning

Adapted from [“Promoting an Anti-Ableist Classroom Culture”](#) by KidsVoting Ohio

1. What types of learning styles and needs am I welcoming here? Which am I excluding? How can I open up the syllabus/expectations/assignment/assessment methods/lesson plan (etc.) to welcome more ways of learning and engaging?
2. What were my learning objectives for this assignment? Is this form of assessment hostile to students who might have or need different objectives, or need to get there in a different way than the one I've required through this form of assessment?
3. Is this syllabus/lesson/assignment/assessment method etc. inviting or excluding for students with extreme anxiety? With depression? With difficulty focusing? With PTSD? With varying ranges of social needs and comforts?
4. What do I assume when my student tells me they're sick? How might an ethos of trusting students when they say they cannot complete something on time or simply do not come to class alter my assessment methods and the diversity of ways that I offer students to engage in coursework?
5. What assumptions do I make when a student sleeps in class? When a student is on their phone/computer in class? When a student gets up and leaves multiple times during class?
6. Am I casually using words like “crazy” or expressions like “off their meds” in class, or not addressing it when students do? Am I treating the R-word like a racial slur or curse word? (when students shut down from inadvertently violent things we say, they are often punished for it under traditional models of assessment.)
7. Do my attendance and participation requirements (including lesson planning and course content) automatically exclude or alienate students for whom interacting in particular ways is extremely burdensome? Am I proactive, rather than reactive, about providing multiple modes of engagement with the course?