



Empowered Mind & Body

This mini-lesson focuses on being empowered to make healthy decisions. In middle school students will learn how developing strategies to deal with stress and other emotions – as well as being kind to others and themselves – can empower them to make healthier decisions. The key message is that it's healthy to be empowered. It's important to note, the lesson plans may need to be adjusted by the teacher to accommodate the unique attributes and diversity of individual classes and students. All mini-lessons can be implemented in their entirety or added to already existing health education or physical education lessons.

Lesson Name: In or Out

Unit Name: Empowered Mind & Body

Grade Level: 6-8

Lesson Length: 15-20 minutes

Before beginning, teachers should offer accommodations specifically mentioned in a student's IEP to support their ability to participate in the mini-lesson. A sample list of common accommodations and modifications to aid you in selecting appropriate supports for students can be found under "Additional Resources" [here](#).

Lesson Objective(s):

Students will examine the feelings that come with being left out of a group and to explore the factors associated with the behaviors of insiders and outsiders.

Essential Question (related to objective):

How can I be more inclusive?

Equipment Needed:

- [How am I feeling? Emoji Rating Scale poster](#) or [How am I feeling? Daily Check-In poster](#)
- 1 envelope per group
- 1 set of instructions (see last page)

CASEL Core SEL Competency:

Social awareness

- Taking others' perspectives
- Identifying diverse social norms, including unjust ones

National Standards and Grade-Level Outcomes for K-12 Physical Education:

Standard 4: The physically literate individual exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others.

- No specific grade-level outcome is identified for this activity.

National Health Education Standards & Performance Indicators:

Standard 2: Students will analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology and other factors on health behaviors.

- 2.8.2 Explain how the perceptions of norms influence healthy and unhealthy behaviors.

Lesson Overview:

Teachers will have students engage in small group activities. The teacher can use the activity provided or have students participate in small groups of the teacher's choice. This mini-lesson can be a twist on an already existing lesson to incorporate the concept of inclusion.

Mini-Lesson Name: In or Out Unit Name: Empowered Mind & Body Grade Level: 6-8

Definitions:

Inclusion is being included within a group where everyone has

- value
- sense of belonging
- support

Diversity is a range of differences that make us unique (e.g., race, religion, language, gender, age, physical ability, mental ability, nationality, sexual orientation, socio-economic status).

Activity Progression:

To start the mini-lesson, have students check in using the Emoji Rating Scale or the Daily Check-In Poster.

Example script: “Before we get started let’s check in with ourselves. It’s healthy for us to take time to see how we are feeling. So, let’s look at this check-in poster and see how we are feeling today, right now in class.

[Give students a few minutes to think about how they are feeling. They can share out if they would like or keep their response to themselves.]

If you would like to share how you are feeling right now you can or if not, that’s okay too! I’m feeling [insert an emoji/heart] because [then a reason you are feeling this way]. We do this check-in daily as a way to be mindful because a lot of times our feelings can change how we might act toward others.”

Introduce the small group activities they will be doing during class. The teacher can choose to do the activity suggestion below or choose to set up small group activities students have already done before.

Get students into groups of 5-6. Go over the activity instructions and allow the groups to start the activity. After about three minutes of play, stop the class and ask for one volunteer from each group to come to the front with the teacher. Instruct the groups to continue with the assigned activity while the volunteers are together with the teacher.

While the groups are starting on their activity, tell the volunteers you will give them instructions in just a minute. You will go to each group and hand them an envelope with instructions in it.

The instructions will explain that they will get a new group member and their goal is to not include them. The groups can use any means possible, except violence or physical touching, to keep the new group member from being included in the group activity. The group may choose not to pass an object to the new member or may ignore them.

Now return to the volunteers and tell them they will be assigned to a new group and their goal is to be included in the group activity with the new group.

Suggested activities for groups:

- **Group juggling**
 - Have students pass a ball/bean bag (or another object) in the small group. They cannot pass to someone next to them. If they are successful at passing the object, challenge them to add a second object. If the object is dropped, start over.
- **Ultimate**
 - Allow students to play 3 v. 3 within their groups. Students must pass an object (frisbee, bean bag, ball) from one of the play areas to the other. Students cannot move once they have the object and must throw the object within 10 seconds. If a pass is dropped or not caught the other team gets the object.
 - A point is awarded to the team who successfully gets the object to the other side. Once a point is scored the opposing team gets the object and will try to move the object to the opposite end of the play area.
- **Create a game**
 - Provide each group with random equipment. Their task is to come up with a game to play and to teach it to the class.

After a few minutes have everyone stop and come to the center of the play area and begin a discussion on what just happened. Be sure to acknowledge the bravery of the students who were volunteers. Ask the volunteers:

- How did you feel about being excluded by the group?
- How hard did you try to become part of the group?
- What did you do to try to get in?
- What did the group say or do to you to keep you out?

Ask the groups:

- How did you feel about excluding the volunteer?
- How far were you willing to go to keep the volunteer out?

Explain to students they were purposely asked to exclude other students from the group activities, but that this happens in real life to people just because they are different. Continue the discussion with the following prompts. Allow students the option to answer or not answer aloud.

Example script: “Can you think of a time when you felt different from everyone else? Maybe you were the youngest person in a group of adults or older kids. Or maybe you were the only girl in a room of boys or you had on fancy clothes and everyone was dressed more casual. Does anyone want to share a time when they felt different?”

Additional questions:

- What is one word that best describes how you felt when you were the one who was different?
- Have you ever been excluded from some group that you wanted to join? Why did you want to join them, and how did they exclude you?

Review the definition of diversity and inclusion.

Example script: “Think about someone that you consider different from you or the kids you hang around with. I’m sure everyone can think of at least one person that you think of as being different. Raise your hand once you have the person in mind. Now, think of at least two ways in which that person is the same as you.

Diversity is what makes us unique. By the language we speak, or race, gender, age, abilities. But even though we are different we have similarities too. What we should always be aiming for is inclusion because our differences don’t make us bad they just make us who we are. Inclusions is making sure everyone is included in a group, but it’s more than that as well, we want everyone to feel valued, feel a sense of belonging and feel they are supported. This creates a positive community and makes us more accepting and kind people.”

At the end of class have students check in with themselves again using the Emoji Rating Scale or the Daily Check-In Poster. If time permits, allow students some time to reflect through participation in a Mindful Minute.

Activity adapted from Inclusion/Exclusion, a part of the Diversity Discussion Starters prepared by Patreese D. Ingram, Ed.D.

Modifications/Differentiation:

- Allow for volunteers to not be a volunteer and select a different member.
- Pre-select volunteers based on student personality who may be equipped at being a volunteer.
- Allow students to journal their feelings.
- Pre-assign groups.
- Allow groups to choose what group activity they want to complete.
- In health, in stead of physical activities have students select a health-related topic to discuss instead of doing physical activities.

Checks for Understanding:

- Based on your experience in this activity, would you change any of your behaviors at school?
- How could we make it easier for others to join our group?

Group Instructions Strips

Cut the instructions out and put them in an envelope. You will need one envelope with instructions per group.

Your group will get a new group member and your group's goal is to not include them. The group may choose not to pass an object to the new member, move away from them, or ignore them. Your group can use different ways to not include the new group member, *except* violence or physical touching.

Your group will get a new group member and your group's goal is to not include them. The group may choose not to pass an object to the new member, move away from them, or ignore them. Your group can use different ways to not include the new group member, *except* violence or physical touching.

Your group will get a new group member and your group's goal is to not include them. The group may choose not to pass an object to the new member, move away from them, or ignore them. Your group can use different ways to not include the new group member, *except* violence or physical touching.

Your group will get a new group member and your group's goal is to not include them. The group may choose not to pass an object to the new member, move away from them, or ignore them. Your group can use different ways to not include the new group member, *except* violence or physical touching.

Your group will get a new group member and your group's goal is to not include them. The group may choose not to pass an object to the new member, move away from them, or ignore them. Your group can use different ways to not include the new group member, *except* violence or physical touching.

Your group will get a new group member and your group's goal is to not include them. The group may choose not to pass an object to the new member, move away from them, or ignore them. Your group can use different ways to not include the new group member, *except* violence or physical touching.
