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Attainment's
**JOB SKILLS
STORIES** 5
STUDENT BOOK

Self-Advocacy

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STORY 1

A Classy Poster



1 A Classy Poster Vocabulary



roadblock

A barrier to moving forward or advancing.
One of Jan's *roadblocks* is her lack of confidence.



awareness

Knowledge of a situation.
Social services have *awareness* of issues affecting teenagers.



differences

The way in which people are not the same.
There were many *differences* between the farm kids and the city kids.



interaction

Activity or conversation between people.
The parent-teacher conference was a friendly *interaction*.

1 A Classy Poster

Three classmates work together to create a disability awareness poster.

Mia was sitting in study hall with two classmates. She asked, “Why does Ms. Stayner want us to make a poster about disabilities anyhow?”

Samuel said, “She said it’s for **awareness**. She says everyone should be aware of their own problems. She also says we should know about the extra **roadblocks** others have to overcome in life.”



Some people are born with a disability, and some people become disabled later in life.

“And,” Addison added, “She says being aware of others’ problems will help us respect peoples’ **differences**.”

“So, do we just have to make a list of 10 disabilities on a poster?” Mia asked.

“No, we have to have four columns,” Samuel said.

“Oh, yes,” Mia said. “I remember the columns now. I wrote them down in my notes.” Mia pulled her notes out of her backpack.

Addison said, “I wrote them down too.” She already had her notes. “The first column has to have the name of a disability.”

Mia read from her notebook, “And, the second column has to have a description.”

Addison continued, “The third column has to have typical challenges.”

“And,” Mia finished up, “the fourth column has to have an image. It has to show something about the disability.”

Samuel added, “She said to get the images from the Internet.”

Mia said, “OK, let’s decide on the 10 disabilities we are going to use. I think we should start with disabilities that we know about.”

“That’s a good idea,” Addison said. “My brother has autism. I’d like to use that.”

Samuel said, “I have a learning disability. I want to include that.”

“My neighbor was in a car accident. He has a traumatic brain injury. Let’s include that,” Mia said.

“Another is epilepsy,” Samuel said. “My cousin has epilepsy.”

Mia said, “I babysit a little girl with Down’s syndrome.”

Addison said, “There are two girls in my church who are twins. One of the twins has cerebral palsy.”

Addison said, “My brother has ADHD. When he was in grade school he really struggled. He worked with a counselor on ways to be more organized and pay attention in class. He’s out of school now and seems to be handling it.”

“Once, I met a girl who was in a car crash and lost a leg,” Samuel said.



Living with a disability can mean having to overcome extra challenges in everyday life.

Mia said, “I know a little boy who lost a kidney from his diabetes. He is doing a lot better now, but he can’t take part in any rough sports.”

“And,” Samuel said, “That’s 10 of them!”

“Wow,” Addison said, “That went pretty fast! The three of us are connected to so many disabilities. Who would have guessed?”

Mia said, “Let’s make a grid on our poster. Then we can add the pieces.”

“I think someone else should draw the grid,” Addison said. “I know I’d make the lines crooked.”

Samuel said, “There’s no such thing. You are just too lazy to take the time to measure. Then you could make the lines straight. Give me that black marker. I’ll draw the grid. I can make straight lines.”

“NO,” Addison said, “you can’t just freehand a grid.”

Mia said, “Clearly, you are also too lazy to measure.”

Addison said, “Mia, it sounds like you are the only one here who can do it.”

“You mean WILL do it RIGHT,” Mia said. She used a yardstick and drew the grid. Then she filled in the first column with the 10 disabilities. Using sticky notes, they each added challenges and descriptions related to the items they had added.



Examples of physical disabilities are cerebral palsy, epilepsy, spina bifida, and cystic fibrosis.

Then, Samuel said, “Let’s look on the Internet for the right wording.”

“That’s a good idea,” Mia agreed.

“We have two computers. How about if Addison and I look up the challenges and descriptions? And, Samuel, you find images.”



Examples of cognitive disabilities are attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, Down’s syndrome, and traumatic brain injury.

Samuel said, “Sounds good.” A few minutes later, he said, “Here’s an image showing a brain. That would be good for epilepsy since that is the part of the body affected by a seizure. And, here’s an image of an x-ray of a person with one kidney.”

“Those are good,” Mia said. “Our challenges and descriptions are pretty good. But we are adjusting some of them. For example, we changed our autism description to include ‘a developmental disorder that displays itself through difficulty in social **interaction**, speech, communication, and repetitive behaviors.’ And, we changed the autism challenge from ‘trouble talking’ to ‘problems with communication.’”

Addison said, “What we had was OK, but too simple.”

“You are probably right,” Samuel said.

An hour later, the poster was all filled in. Mia said, “That’s one classy poster. I think the straight lines make it!”

Samuel said, “I think the images make it!”

Addison said, “I think you two are both right!”

1 A Classy Poster Quiz

Select the correct answer.

1. Which choice is an example of a cognitive disability?
 - A** attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
 - B** cerebral palsy
 - C** epilepsy
2. Which choice is an example of a physical disability?
 - A** brain injury
 - B** cystic fibrosis
 - C** Down's syndrome
3. One good reason to study disabilities is so you have an _____ of others' problems.
 - A** awareness
 - B** eagerness
 - C** opinion
4. What do you call a challenge one might face?
 - A** autism
 - B** birth
 - C** a roadblock
5. The boy in this photo is using a walker due to a _____ disability.
 - A** cognitive
 - B** nature
 - C** physical



STORY 2

One Question and One Friend at a Time



2 One Question and One Friend at a Time

Vocabulary



confidential

Information about someone that you don't tell anyone else.

He asked to keep his lab results *confidential*.



medication

A drug used to help an illness or disease.

I take *medication* for my epilepsy, and it helps.



trust

Belief that a person will help or take care of you.

You are my friend and I *trust* you.



private

Something you don't want everyone to know.

You can lock your diary to keep it *private*.

2 One Question and One Friend at a Time

A young man decides to share information about his disability with a friend.

Jace and Tyler were on the way to a movie. Tyler was driving, and he asked, “Why don’t you ever take a turn driving? It doesn’t seem very fair that I drive all the time.”

Jace looked out the window and didn’t say anything. Tyler said, “Earth to Jace. I’m talking to you.”

Jace said, “I hear you. I just don’t want to talk about it.”

“Well, I do want to talk about it,” Tyler said. “I always drive when we do things. I don’t want to be your driver my whole life.”

Jace looked at Tyler quietly. Then he said, “I don’t like to tell people, but I have epilepsy, and I’m not allowed to drive.”

“You have epilepsy?” Tyler asked with surprise in his voice. “Why haven’t I ever seen you have a seizure? How often do you have seizures? Who all knows about it? Do Grace, Josh, and Claire know?”

“Slow down!” Jace said. “One question at a time. I take **medication**, and I haven’t had a seizure in a year. So, most people don’t know about it,” Jace said.



You do not have to share information about your disability. It is your right to keep it private.

“Don’t you think you should tell people about it?” Tyler asked.

“No, it’s my right to keep it **private**. I don’t want people thinking of me as sick. And, I don’t want people thinking that I might flip out at any moment,” Jace said.

Tyler said, “I’m sure people will understand.”

“I can see it in your eyes that you are worried about that now,” Jace said.

“Well, I guess it’s natural to worry about someone who is your friend,” Tyler said.

Jace said, “But you’ve known me for two years without knowing anything about it. You didn’t worry about me then, did you?”

“Well, no,” Tyler said.

“I’m still the same person,” Jace said. “And, I don’t want you worrying about me.”

“But we’re friends,” Tyler said. “I don’t keep secrets from you. You shouldn’t keep such a secret from me.”

Jace said, “I suppose it’s only fair that I tell you so you understand why I don’t ever offer to drive. But I don’t want you to think differently about me.”

“You’re right that you are the same person I’ve known for two years,” Tyler said. “And, yes, I do think a little differently about you. Now that I know that my friend needs me to drive him, I’m good with that! Driving all the time is no longer a problem for me.”



Sharing information with a friend, coworker, or boss can help them understand your disability.

Jace asked, “If it’s not a problem now, why was it a problem before?”

“I thought you were using me. And that did not feel very good,” Tyler explained. “Now that I understand, I’m fine with it.”

Jace said, “I’d like you to keep my disability **confidential**. Please do not tell anyone.”

“I can do that,” Tyler said.

Then Jace said, “Do you know why I didn’t tell you my secret in a cornfield?”

Tyler said, “Because we aren’t in a cornfield?”

“No, because in a cornfield there are ears everywhere!” Jace said.

“Aren’t you funny?” Tyler laughed. Then Tyler asked, “Seriously, is there anything I should know in case you have a seizure?”

Jace rolled his eyes and said, “Nothing I want to talk about now.”

“OK,” Tyler said. “Well, when you’re ready, let me know!”

The two rode along in silence for a little bit. Then Jace said, “Even though I can’t drive, I’m really good as a navigator. I can get the directions on my phone and help a driver follow them.”

“I like having a good navigator. I’m a better driver if I can give it my total attention. So it works for me!” Tyler said.



When telling someone about your disability, describe your strengths and the things you are good at.

Jace said, “I’m glad we’ve talked about my epilepsy. It feels good not to have a secret.”

“Do you think you would be safer if you told more people about your disability?” Tyler asked. “Then people would know to look out for you.”

“You might be right,” Jace said. “I’ve thought about that, but I don’t want to be known as ‘the epileptic.’ I think I’ll just tell people when a situation comes up where it makes sense to share my disability. Just like I did with you today.”

Tyler said, “Well, if it helps any, I have to say that I feel honored that you **trust** me enough to tell me. Your other friends will probably feel that way, too.”

“You might be right,” Jace said. “But for now, it’s going to be one friend at a time!”



Explaining the challenges you face because of a disability helps other people know how to support you.

2 One Question and One Friend at a Time Quiz

Select the correct answer.

1. Things that are kept in secret are known as _____.
 - A confidential
 - B answer
 - C medication
2. When you decide to keep something private, who do you tell?
 - A most people
 - B almost no one
 - C just your friends
3. One reason to share information about your disability is to help others _____ you.
 - A challenge
 - B inform
 - C understand
4. People often use their _____ to deal with the challenges they face.
 - A clothing
 - B stops
 - C strengths
5. In this photo, a young woman is explaining to her boss the challenges she faces because of her disability. How is the young woman likely to benefit from sharing her challenges?
 - A she will probably be fired
 - B she will probably get a new boss
 - C her boss will probably support her

