

# "Designing a More Accessible World!"

## Objective:

Students will learn why physical access is important for people with disabilities and develop ideas for making spaces and places more accessible.

## Part 1: Introduction to Physical Access (15 minutes)

### Materials:

- Video from Come on In or a slideshow showing barriers people with disabilities face in public spaces (e.g., stairs vs. ramps, wide doors, uneven sidewalks)
- Discussion prompts

### Steps:

1. **Watch a Video or Slideshow:** Show a 3–5 minute clip highlighting examples of spaces that are accessible and others that are not (e.g., ramps, elevators, wide doors, accessible restrooms).
2. **Class Discussion Questions:**
  - How does a person in a wheelchair or with a walker feel when they can't access a building or area?
  - What are some ways we can make our school or community more accessible for people with disabilities?
  - Why is it important for everyone to have equal access to places, both inside and outside?

## Part 2: Accessibility Scavenger Hunt (20 minutes)

### Materials:

- "Accessibility Scavenger Hunt" checklist (see below for details)
- Clipboards and pencils

**Steps:**

1. **Prepare the Scavenger Hunt:** Create a checklist of different accessibility features or challenges around the school or classroom (e.g., wide doors, ramps, uneven floors, signs in braille), grab bars in an accessible bathroom or stall.

**Example of checklist:**

- Find a ramp or flat entrance that allows someone in a wheelchair to enter the building.
  - Look for a sign with braille and print.
  - Find a door that is wide enough for a wheelchair or stroller.
  - Look for an elevator or escalator (if applicable).
  - Find a place where there is a clear path for people with mobility aids (no obstacles).
  - Find a door handle that you can use with your hand closed in a fist.
  - Locate a bathroom that is accessible (wide door, grab bars, etc.).
2. **Explore the School or Classroom:** Send students on a scavenger hunt around the school or classroom to check for accessibility features or barriers. If you are indoors, you can adapt the hunt to focus on classroom-specific features (e.g., desk arrangements, aisle width, and access to learning materials).
  3. **Group Discussion:** After the hunt, gather students to share their findings. Were there enough accessible features? Were there any barriers to access? What improvements can be made?

**Part 3: Design Your Accessible Classroom or Playground (20 minutes)****Materials:**

- Large poster paper or drawing sheets
- Markers, crayons, and rulers

**Steps:**

1. **Group Design:** Split students into small groups and give each group a large sheet of paper. Their task is to **design an accessible classroom or playground**. Encourage them to think about:
  - Wide doors and clear pathways
  - Accessible desks or workstations
  - Ramps instead of stairs
  - Accessible playground equipment (e.g., swings with harnesses, wide slides)
2. **Draw and Label:** Have students draw their designs, labeling important features that ensure physical access for everyone (e.g., "This ramp allows wheelchair users to enter" or "This swing can be used by children who can't walk").
3. **Presentation:** Allow each group to present their design to the class, explaining why each feature is important for physical access.

**Part 4: Reflection and Discussion (10 minutes)****Materials:**

- Reflection worksheet or journal

**Steps:**

1. Ask students to reflect on the activity by answering questions like:
  - Why is it important to make sure everyone can access places, regardless of disability?
  - How would you feel if you couldn't get into a place because it wasn't accessible?
  - What small changes can we make in our school to improve accessibility?
2. Allow students to share their reflections and encourage open conversation about empathy, inclusion, and the importance of equal access.

**Optional Add-ons:**

- **Invite a Guest Speaker:** A person with a disability (perhaps a parent or community member) could visit to discuss their experiences and how they navigate the world with physical access challenges.