

Lesson 1

Learning About My Rights & Responsibilities in High School

TIME: 45-60 minutes

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. identify legal facts that affect special education programs
2. identify student rights and responsibilities in a high school setting
3. identify personal accommodations and modifications

MATERIALS

1. Notebook paper
2. Transfer of Parental Rights at Age of Majority (extension activity)

LESSON OPENING

Critical thinking: Read the following scenario to students. Have them identify the key issues/problems and solutions.

You have just started your first semester at the University of Oklahoma and are very excited about all of the fun things that go along with being a college student. Three weeks into the first semester, you fail your History exam and do poorly on your Algebra test. You are concerned about your GPA and you know you need some accommodations on your exams. You are confused because there are no special education teachers at college and none of your professors are asking you if you need help. What do you do?

- Provide students time and opportunity to respond to the story.
- Record the solutions students identify in the space below or somewhere in the classroom. Students will need to revisit these solutions at the end of Unit 4.

Problems	Solutions
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

- Instruct students to think about this scenario as they work through Unit 4. Inform them that at the end of the unit the class will discuss this situation again to see if anyone has come up with new problems and/or solutions.
 - *Please take out your KWL charts.*
 - *Today you are going to start learning about your rights and responsibilities as a student.*
 - *Before we start, is there anything listed on your KWL that you have not gotten an answer to yet?*
 - *Now, let's take a minute to write some entries on what you know about rights and responsibilities.*
- Provide students time and opportunity to discuss what they know about rights and responsibilities.
 - *Now, take a minute to write some entries on your KWL charts.*
- Provide students time to make entries on their KWL charts.
 - *Let's move on to our lesson about rights and responsibilities.*

Discussion point(s): Introduce and discuss the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

- Write “IDEA” on the board. Ask students what they think “IDEA” means.
- Provide students an opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas.
 - *In unit 2, when we were learning about Special Education, we briefly talked about the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). It is a law created to help protect the educational rights of students with disabilities.*
- Ask students the following two questions and provide them time to brainstorm and share possible answers.
 - Is the IDEA important to you? Explain why or why not.
 - Does having a law that protects you mean that you can do anything you want? Explain why or why not.
- *Today we are going to learn about the IDEA and some of the ways it might affect you while you are in high school.*

- *There are two important terms you need to understand when we discuss laws that protect us. Those two terms are “rights” and “responsibilities”.*

PROCEDURE

1. Introduce, define and discuss the terms “rights” and “responsibilities”.

- Write the words “rights” and “responsibilities” on the board.
- Ask students to define each of the terms. Provide students an opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas aloud.

Definitions:

Rights: Something that is due to a person by law. Examples include getting an education, voting (if you are 18 or older), not being discriminated against, and owning property.

Responsibilities: Your responsibilities are things you are accountable for. Taking responsibility means making and acting on decisions and being reliable. Examples include paying your bills, getting to your job on time, turning in your school work, and doing things you tell others you will do.

- Have students brainstorm specific behaviors or actions of people who are responsible. Provide students an opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas aloud.

Examples:

People who are responsible:

- acknowledge that they make choices about their life
- accept that they are solely responsible for the choices they make
- choose the direction of their life
- do not blame others for their poor choices and/or mistakes

- Have students brainstorm specific behaviors or actions of people who are NOT responsible. Provide students an opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas aloud.

Examples:

People who are not responsible:

- rely on others to make choices for them
- get upset when the choices made for them are not what they wanted
- blame others for their mistakes
- do not learn how to make better decisions

- Have students brainstorm reasons people use for not taking responsibility for their actions. Provide students an opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas aloud.

Examples:

Some common excuses for not taking responsibility for ones actions:

- that’s just how I am
- I don’t want to be responsible
- it’s too hard
- I don’t know how
- it doesn’t matter
- who cares?
- it’s my parents’ (teacher, friends, brother, sister, etc) fault
- life is just unfair

- Have students brainstorm reasons for being or becoming a responsible person. Provide students an opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas aloud.

Examples:

Reasons for taking responsibility for yourself:

- I am important and what I think matters
- I want to learn to make better choices and the only way to do that is to practice
- I want to be taken seriously by others
- I want to be successful
- I want to be happy

- Have students brainstorm a list of their responsibilities.
 - *Think about some of the responsibilities you have in your life. Lets make a list of the responsibilities you have in your life right now.*
- Encourage students to write their answer(s) on the board.

Examples:

- walk, feed, and water my dog (pet)
- turn my work in for class
- finish my homework on time
- arrive to my job on time
- take care of my school books
- put gas in my car
- plan for my future

- *What are some consequences you might face if you choose not to take care of the responsibilities listed on the board?*
- Have each student describe at least one consequence of failing to take care of the responsibility they listed.

Examples:

- dog gets hungry, hyper, and makes a mess in the house

- earn poor grades in school
- lose my job
- have to use my money to pay for school books
- run out of gas while I am driving
- have a difficult time being successful

2. Class discussion point: Introduce, define and discuss the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

- *Now we are going to talk more about the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This law exists to help protect the educational rights of students with disabilities.*
- *The IDEA is the law that outlines the rights of students in special education. It describes how schools must provide special education to students during elementary, middle, and high school. There are many things discussed and described in the law; we are not going to cover all of the information. However, there are four things in the IDEA that are especially important for you to understand while you are in high school. Those things include FAPE, Child Find, accommodations, and modifications.*
- Ask students if they have heard the term Child Find before today.
- Ask students what they think Child Find means.
- Provide students an opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas aloud.
 - *Child Find is the part of IDEA that states that school districts are responsible for identifying students with disabilities. If the school believes that a student has a disability, they test the student. If the student is found to have a disability the school must provide special education.*

Note to teacher: Important point about Child Find

Child find:

- You did not have to tell anyone about your disability
- The school was responsible for testing you to see if you have a disability
- The school was responsible for providing you services for your disability
- Ask students if they have heard the acronym FAPE before today.
- Ask students what they think FAPE means.
- Provide students an opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas aloud

- *The acronym FAPE stands for Free Appropriate Public Education. It means that schools must provide students with disabilities an education. Sometimes special education services can be very expensive, but because of FAPE, schools cannot make families pay for special education.*

Note to teacher: Important points about FAPE

FAPE:

- You did not have to pay for the test to find out if you have a disability
 - You do not have to pay for special education services
- Ask students to describe accommodations.
 - Provide students an opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas aloud.
 - *Accommodations are changes made to the environment or assignments that change how students access information and how a student shows what he/she has learned. For example, a student might get more time to finish a test or project. A student might need their test read aloud or might need help taking notes in class.*

Note to teacher: Important points about accommodations

Accommodations:

- You have the right to accommodations on your schoolwork during high school and in postsecondary school.
- Ask students to describe modifications.
 - Provide students an opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas aloud.
 - *Modifications are changes to the work students must complete. For example, answering one essay question on the test when there are three or watching a video while other students are required to read a book.*

Note to teacher: Important point about modifications

Modifications:

- You have the right to modifications on your schoolwork during high school, but not in postsecondary school.
- Ask students to give examples of how FAPE, Child Find, accommodations, and modifications affect them at school.

3. Discussion point(s): Have students create a list of their accommodations and modifications and describe their rights and responsibilities.

- Read the following instructions while you draw an example on the board.
 - *Everyone take out a sheet of paper and fold it down the middle so you have two equal sides. Draw a line down the middle of the page and label the two columns like I am doing.*

Figure 4.1

<u>My Rights to:</u>	<u>My Responsibility to receive:</u>
Accommodations: <i>1. To have extra time on my test in Math</i>	Accommodations: <i>1. Talk to my teacher before the test to decide when I will come in for the extra time I need</i>
Modifications: <i>1. Write 5 pages for my World History report instead of the 7 assigned</i>	Modifications: <i>1. Talk to my History teacher to explain why the modification is important and come to an agreement about how many pages I will write</i>

- *Think about the accommodations and modifications we learned about when we talked about your IEPs in Unit 3. You still have your IEPs in your Me! Book. Go back and look at them if you are having a difficult time remembering your accommodations and modifications.*
- *I need you to write one or two accommodations in this space. Point to the space for accommodations in the “My Rights to” column.*
- *I need you to write one or two modifications in this space. Point to the space for modifications in the “My Rights to” column.*
- Provide students time to write their information in the two boxes. Move around the room to check student answers and assist students having a difficult time providing an answer.
- Provide students an opportunity to share their answers.

- *Now you have identified at least one modification and one accommodation listed on your IEP. Next, you need to identify your responsibilities.*
- Encourage students to discuss possible answers with each other. Share the examples from figure 4.1. Provide students time to write their information in the two boxes. Move around the room to check student answers and assist students having a difficult time thinking of answers.
- Provide students an opportunity to share their answers aloud.

Extension Activity: Have students work in small groups to create a written statement describing their educational rights and responsibilities. Distribute a copy of the “Transfer of Parental Rights at Age of Majority” from “Notice of Procedural Safeguards” (see below) for students to consider as they create their written statements. Provide students time and opportunity to read their statements aloud and discuss questions regarding the “Transfer of Parental Rights at Age of Majority” statements and their personal statements.

***TRANSFER OF PARENTAL RIGHTS AT AGE OF MAJORITY**

When a young adult with a disability reaches the age of majority (18 years of age) or when a minor is married, under State law (except for a young adult with a disability who has been determined to be incompetent under State law):

- The school district must provide any notice required by the law to both the young adult and the parents.
- All other rights afforded to parents under the IDEA Part B transfer to the young adult.
- The school district must notify the individual and the parent(s) of transfer of rights at least one year before the transfer in your student’s IEP.
- All rights afforded to parent(s) under this law transfer to young adults who are incarcerated in an adult or juvenile federal, state, or local correctional institution.

If, under State law, a young adult with a disability who has reached the age of majority has not been determined to be incompetent, but who is determined not to have the ability to provide informed consent with respect to his or her educational program, the State must establish procedures for appointing the parent(s) of the young adult, or if the parent(s) are not available, another appropriate individual, to represent the educational interests of the young adult throughout the period of eligibility of the young adult under this part.

* Taken from the Policies and Procedures for Special Education in Oklahoma (2007).

LESSON CLOSURE

- Ask students to answer the following questions aloud.
 - *What is the IDEA?*
 - *Is the IDEA important to you? Explain why or why not.*
 - *Does having a law that protects you mean that you can do anything you want? Explain why or why not.*
 - *Does anyone have any questions about what we covered today?*
 - *Take out your student KWL chart and add your thoughts and questions to your chart.*

STUDENT EVALUATION

1. Participation in class discussion
2. Completed Accommodations and Modifications list (Figure 4.1)
3. Rights and Responsibilities Statement (extension activity)
4. Additions to student KWL chart as necessary

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OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. identify legal facts that affect special education programs
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3. identify personal accommodations and modifications

MATERIALS

1. Notebook paper
2. Transfer of Parental Rights at Age of Majority (extension activity)
3. **Worksheet 4-1: Rights and Responsibilities**
4. **Worksheet 4-1: IDEA**
5. **Power Point Presentation**

LESSON OPENING

Critical thinking: Read the following scenario to students. Have them identify the key issues/problems and solutions.

You have just started your first semester at the University of Oklahoma and are very excited about all of the fun things that go along with being a college student. Three weeks into the first semester, you fail your History exam and do poorly on your Algebra test. You are concerned about your GPA and you know you need some accommodations on your exams. You are confused because there are no special education teachers at college and none of your professors are asking you if you need help. What do you do?

- Provide students time and opportunity to respond to the story.
- Record the solutions students identify in the space below or somewhere in the classroom. Students will need to revisit these solutions at the end of Unit 4.

Problems	Solutions
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- Instruct students to think about this scenario as they work through Unit 4. Inform them that at the end of the unit the class will discuss this situation again to see if anyone has come up with new problems and/or solutions.
 - *Please take out your KWL charts.*
 - *Today you are going to start learning about your rights and responsibilities as a student.*
 - *Before we start, is there anything listed on your KWL that you have not gotten an answer to yet?*
 - *Now, let's take a minute to write some entries on what you know about rights and responsibilities.*
- Provide students time and opportunity to discuss what they know about rights and responsibilities.
 - *Now, take a minute to write some entries on your KWL charts.*
- Provide students time to make entries on their KWL charts.
 - *Let's move on to our lesson about rights and responsibilities.*

Discussion point(s): Introduce and discuss the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

- Write “IDEA” on the board. Ask students what they think “IDEA” means.
- Provide students an opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas.
 - *In unit 2, when we were learning about Special Education, we briefly talked about the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). It is a law created to help protect the educational rights of students with disabilities.*
- Ask students the following two questions and provide them time to brainstorm and share possible answers.
 - Is the IDEA important to you? Explain why or why not.
 - Does having a law that protects you mean that you can do anything you want? Explain why or why not.
- *Today we are going to learn about the IDEA and some of the ways it might affect you while you are in high school.*

- *There are two important terms you need to understand when we discuss laws that protect us. Those two terms are “rights” and “responsibilities”.*

PROCEDURE

1. Introduce, define and discuss the terms “rights” and “responsibilities”.

- Write the words “rights” and “responsibilities” on the board.
- Ask students to define each of the terms. Provide students an opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas aloud.

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Examples:

People who are responsible:

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- Have students brainstorm a list of their responsibilities.
 - *Think about some of the responsibilities you have in your life. Let's make a list of the responsibilities you have in your life right now.*
- Encourage students to write their answer(s) on the board.

Examples:

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- *What are some consequences you might face if you choose not to take care of the responsibilities listed on the board?*
- Have each student describe at least one consequence of failing to take care of the responsibility they listed.

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Accommodations:

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- Ask students to describe modifications.
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Note to teacher: Important point about modifications

Modifications:

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- Ask students to give examples of how FAPE, Child Find, accommodations, and modifications affect them at school.

3. Discussion point(s): Have students create a list of their accommodations and modifications and describe their rights and responsibilities.

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- *Think about the accommodations and modifications we learned about when we talked about your IEPs in Unit 3. You still have your IEPs in your Me! Book. Go back and look at them if you are having a difficult time remembering your accommodations and modifications.*
- *I need you to write one or two accommodations in this space. Point to the space for accommodations in the “My Rights to” column.*
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- Provide students time to write their information in the two boxes. Move around the room to check student answers and assist students having a difficult time providing an answer.
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Extension Activity: Have students work in small groups to create a written statement describing their educational rights and responsibilities. Distribute a copy of the “Transfer of Parental Rights at Age of Majority” from “Notice of Procedural Safeguards” (see below) for students to consider as they create their written statements. Provide students time and opportunity to read their statements aloud and discuss questions regarding the “Transfer of Parental Rights at Age of Majority” statements and their personal statements.

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- All rights afforded to parent(s) under this law transfer to young adults who are incarcerated in an adult or juvenile federal, state, or local correctional institution.

If, under State law, a young adult with a disability who has reached the age of majority has not been determined to be incompetent, but who is determined not to have the ability to provide informed consent with respect to his or her educational program, the State must establish procedures for appointing the parent(s) of the young adult, or if the parent(s) are not available, another appropriate individual, to represent the educational interests of the young adult throughout the period of eligibility of the young adult under this part.

* Taken from the Policies and Procedures for Special Education in Oklahoma (2007).

LESSON CLOSURE

- Ask students to answer the following questions aloud.
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 - *Take out your student KWL chart and add your thoughts and questions to your chart.*

STUDENT EVALUATION

1. Participation in class discussion
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4. Additions to student KWL chart as necessary