

Five Questions About Autism

Resources

- [Five Questions About Autism](#) (6:22)
- [Five Questions About Autism \(Lesson Slideshow\)](#)

Identities & Themes

- Identity affirmation
- School success
- General diversity
- White/European
- Ability and Neurodiversity

Summary of Resource

In this video, autistic children, teens, and young adults answer questions about autism. They share their unique experiences with being autistic along with what makes them special..

Condition for Belonging: Identity Safety

Anti-Bias Education Tenets

- Empathy & Understanding
- Healthy Complex Identities
- Respect Across Differences

Social-Emotional Learning Competencies

- Self-Awareness
- Social Awareness
- Relationship Skills

Before You Teach

Vocabulary

Autism spectrum disorder (autism or ASD) - a neurological disability caused by differences in the brain. Some people with ASD have a known difference, such as a genetic condition. Other causes are not yet known (cdc.gov)

- Autistic people may behave, communicate, interact, and learn in ways that are different from most other people.
- There is often nothing about how an autistic person looks that sets them apart from other people.
- The abilities of autistic people can vary significantly. For example, some may have advanced conversation skills whereas others may be nonverbal. Some need a lot of help in their daily lives; others can work and live with little to no support.

Teacher Reflection Questions

- If any, what are your experiences working with students or colleagues with autism? How did the different ways that they saw the world impact their work or relationships with others?
- What questions do you still have about autism? How might continuing to educate yourself around neurodiversity inform the way you teach?
- What questions do you anticipate your students having about autism? What support do you need to accurately answer their questions?

Materials Needed for Lesson

- [Five Questions About Autism \(Lesson Slideshow\)](#)
- Ability to project a slideshow and video
- Journal or notebook
- Large poster paper or access to digital equivalent (for follow-up activity)

Process of Implementing

- [Project the Five Questions About Autism \(Lesson Slideshow\)](#).
- Introduce the lesson and vocabulary.
- Show the video.
- After showing the video, give students time to complete a written reflection to at least one of the journal prompts.
- Lead students through the discussion questions.
- Complete the follow-up activity if time permits.

Journal Prompts

- One teen talked about how autism is “part of your perception of the world.” When have you felt like you saw the world (or even a situation) differently than others? How did this feel? Were others able to understand your perception?
- If you do not have autism, how can you be more understanding of your peers with autism? If you are autistic, what do you wish your peers understood about your experience?

Discussion Questions

*Essential questions are in bold.

- **What main ideas did you take away from the video?**
- Toward the beginning, one teen says, “Let’s face it here. There really is no such thing as ‘normal’.” What could you say to support this statement?
- **What questions do you still have about autism?**
- **How might our school or classroom be a difficult place at times for some autistic people? Why is it important to consider these things?**
- Why do you think the teens in the video say they would not want to cure autism?

- **Why do you think the video includes the question, “What makes you special?” for the participants?**

Follow Up Activity

Use large poster papers (or a digital option, such as an interactive whiteboard) to display the following prompts throughout the room:

- What have you learned about autism?
- There really is no such thing as normal.
- What should people know and understand about autism?
- Everyone has unique qualities that make them special.
- How could support and love for autistic students look in our school?

Give small groups time to visit each poster. Groups should discuss what’s there, add their own insights and questions, and even respond to questions or statements by previous groups. If time permits, you could have groups visit each poster more than once, as they will continue to change as the groups move through.

Next, give small groups each a poster to focus on. Each group should read what’s there and compile a summary to share with the whole group. When groups share, answer questions and any misconceptions that may arise.