

DISCUSSION GUIDE for VIDEO
“INTRICATE MINDS II:
Understanding Elementary School Classmates
With Asperger Syndrome”

I. PREPARATION

- a. Determine if you have any children with Asperger Syndrome in your class and consult with their parents to help determine if the children choose to be identified as having AS. If so, determine if they'd like to participate in your presentation and the discussion after the video. Some kids with AS may want to be in the room while the video is played and others may not.
- b. Some parents may volunteer to be part of the discussion and answer questions. (You may want to consult with a school counselor when considering identifying a particular child's disability.)

II. PREVIEWING THE CONTENT

- a. Tell the students they will see elementary school students who think differently and who may act differently. Mention that the kids in the video all attend regular school classes for all or part of the day. (*Some of the children also attend some special classes.*)
- b. The video will explain how these students feel and how they would like to be treated.
- c. Vocabulary words you may wish to discuss before viewing:
 - i. *Sensitivity* -- being sensitive (perceiving with the senses-- touch, sight, sound, taste)
 - ii. *Empathy* -- understanding another's feelings or situation
 - iii. *Champion* -- one who defends or supports another person

III. PLAYING THE VIDEO

- a. The video runs 16 minutes.
- b. While the closing credits run, the narrator tells a funny story about Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart playing a joke on Franz Joseph Haydn.

IV. CLASS DISCUSSION

- a. Ask the students what they learned from the video.
- b. Ask the students if they can recall what the video said that students with Asperger Syndrome might be like.
- c. Ask the students how they might help another student who has Asperger Syndrome feel accepted in their class.
- d. Ask the students how they might handle a situation where a student is being harassed or bullied.
- e. Ask the students how they might feel if classmates ignored them or excluded them from activities.

- f. Ask the students to offer ideas about ways to make friends with kids who seem different and how to include such students in activities.
- g. Ask students to role-play situations and practice: opening a conversation, inviting students to participate in an activity, and asking a bully to stop teasing someone.
- h. Suggest that while the video was about kids with a specific condition (Asperger Syndrome), the points it makes apply to the way they should treat any student who acts a bit different and has trouble fitting in.
- i. If necessary, repeat that not every person with AS is a genius – that it affects different people in different ways.
- j. If asked, explain that *“tres difficile pour vous, n’est ce pas?”* is a French phrase meaning, “very difficult for you, isn’t it?”
- k. If asked about the historical figures in the video, repeat that it’s not possible to know for sure whether they had AS. Emphasize the important point is that people looked past their “different” behaviors to see their worth as people.

V. CONCLUSION

It’s good to conclude with a reminder about the four things the video asks children to do:

- a. Be friendly
- b. Be understanding
- c. Be a champion
- d. Be adventurous

VI. Follow-up

- a. Conduct a follow-up discussion about a week later and ask students if they have been able to put into action any of the recommendations from the video.
- b. Ask students to continue to look for ways to include students who are left out of group activities.

For more information, contact Coulter Video at 336-608-4224
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