

Activity Leader Guide

Companion to the Middle School Teacher Guide



Everything you need to lead the six whole-class activities from the Middle School Teacher Guide: prep checklists, materials, facilitation scripts, ways to include every student, and all the printables. Students do the work, and you coach.

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2 Timeline Gallery Walk

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Printables: event cards, organizer, audit, proposal, social planner, scripts, unified sheet, tracker

PLAN IT

Planning overview

These activities put students in charge of research, campaigns, and real proposals. Plan a little ahead: several need admin or colleague sign-off.

MASTER SUPPLY LIST

- ☐ Copies of all printables
- ☐ Poster paper, markers, sticky notes
- ☐ School-approved devices for research and posts
- ☐ Clipboards for the Belonging Audit
- ☐ PA/announcement slots for 5 days
- ☐ Coordination time with the special education team
- ☐ Spare socks basket + tally sheet

TIMELINE

- 1 3 weeks before**
Pick your date (March 21, 2027 is a Sunday, so most schools celebrate Friday, March 19). Get admin okay for the audit, social posts, and announcements.
- 2 2 weeks before**
Co-plan the Unified Activity with the special education team. Recruit the announcement team.
- 3 3.21 week**
Gallery walk, audit, social campaign, and daily announcements all week.
- 4 Celebration day**
Rock Your Socks Day, the unified activity, audit proposals presented, and results shared with #Celebrate321.

SAMPLE 3.21 WEEK

Mon

Lesson + Timeline
Gallery Walk

Tue

School Belonging
Audit

Wed

3.21 Social
Campaign

Thu

Unified Activity

Fri

Rock Your Socks Day
+ proposals

LOGISTICS & PERMISSIONS

- Audit teams observe spaces and systems, never individual students.
- All posts go through school-approved channels with adult review.
- Follow your school's photo policy. Feet photos avoid faces.

THE HEART OF EVERY ACTIVITY

Middle schoolers are asking, "Where do I fit?" These activities turn that question outward: **"Who else needs to fit, and what can I do about it?"**

ACTIVITY

1

Timeline Gallery Walk

Groups research one milestone in the history of Down syndrome and disability rights and make a poster. The class walks the gallery and responds.

25–40 MIN

GROUPS OF 3–4

CLASSROOM WALLS

MESS: LOW

GET READY

- ☐ Print and cut the **event cards** (8 events).
- ☐ Copy the **research organizer**, one per group.
- ☐ Set out poster paper, markers, and sticky notes.
- ☐ Bookmark reputable sources on devices.

MATERIALS

- Event cards
- Research organizers
- Poster paper + markers
- Sticky notes
- Devices

MAKE IT WORK FOR EVERYONE

- Provide a pre-highlighted article for groups who need reading support.
- Assign roles: researcher, writer, designer, presenter.
- Allow a digital slide instead of a poster.

LEAD IT

1

Launch

Hand each group an event card.

SAY

You're the experts on this moment in history. Your job: help the rest of us understand why it mattered.

2

Research (10–15 min)

Groups fill in the organizer using reputable sources.

3

Make the poster (10 min)

Include: what happened, why it mattered, a visual, and a question for visitors.

4

Gallery walk

Posters go up in timeline order. Students walk the gallery and answer each question on a sticky note.

5

Debrief

Stand at the 1983 and Today posters.

SAY

Life expectancy more than doubled. What do you think made the difference?

WRAP UP & FOLLOW THROUGH

Leave the timeline up through 3.21. Invite other classes to walk it.



Photo moment: The full timeline wall with sticky-note responses.

ACTIVITY

2

School Belonging Audit

Student teams look at lunch, clubs, events, and school culture, then present one realistic proposal.

2 CLASS PERIODS

TEAMS OF 3-4

AROUND THE SCHOOL

MESS: NONE

GET READY

- ☐ Get admin permission for teams to observe common spaces.
- ☐ Copy the **audit checklist** and **proposal** page.
- ☐ Assign each team one area (lunch, clubs, events, culture).
- ☐ Invite the principal or student council to hear proposals.

MATERIALS

- Audit checklists
- Proposal pages
- Clipboards
- Hall passes

MAKE IT WORK FOR EVERYONE

- Pair students who find it hard to approach others with a confident “interviewer.”
- Allow audio notes instead of writing.
- Offer a sentence-starter bank for the proposal.

LEAD IT

1

Frame it

Review the norm.

SAY

We’re auditing places and systems, not people. No names, no photos of students, no judging individuals.

2

Observe (20 min)

Teams visit their area and complete the checklist.

3

Ask

Teams talk with at least one student or staff member about their area, ideally including students with disabilities.

4

Propose (day 2)

Teams complete the proposal page and prepare a 2-minute pitch.

5

Present

Teams pitch to the class, then the best proposals go to admin or student council.

WRAP UP & FOLLOW THROUGH

Follow up in a month: did anything change? Share the results with the class.



Photo moment: Teams presenting (check permissions), or the completed proposals.

ACTIVITY

3

3.21 Social Campaign

Students plan and create posts that explain why we Rock Our Socks, for school-approved channels only.

30 MIN + DAILY POSTING

SMALL TEAMS

COMPUTER LAB OR DEVICES

MESS: NONE

GET READY

- ☐ Confirm which channels are approved (school account, newsletter, morning slides).
- ☐ Copy the **social campaign planner**.
- ☐ Name the adult reviewer for every post.

MATERIALS

- Campaign planners
- Devices
- Learn One Thing fact sheet
- Ask Before You Post checklist

MAKE IT WORK FOR EVERYONE

- Offer roles: writer, designer, fact-checker, scheduler.
- Provide Celebrate 3.21 colors and #Celebrate321.
- Students without device access can design on paper for the morning slides.

LEAD IT

1

Mission

Explain the goal.

SAY

Your job is to get our whole school to understand 3.21 and show up. Accurate, respectful, and actually interesting.

2

Plan

Teams fill in one post per day on the planner.

3

Create

Teams draft captions and visuals.

4

Review

Each post goes through the checklist and adult approval.

5

Launch

Post daily. Track views or reactions if available.

WRAP UP & FOLLOW THROUGH

Debrief: which post worked best, and why?



Photo moment: A screenshot of the best student post.

ACTIVITY

4

Student Announcement Team

A student team delivers a 5-day series of 30-second morning facts leading up to 3.21.

PREP 20 MIN + 30 SEC/DAY

TEAM OF 4-6

PA / MORNING SHOW

MESS: NONE

GET READY

- ☐ Book 5 morning slots with the office.
- ☐ Copy the **5-day scripts**.
- ☐ Recruit readers, including students who don't usually volunteer.

MATERIALS

- Announcement scripts
- Timer
- PA access

MAKE IT WORK FOR EVERYONE

- Pre-record for students who'd rather not go live.
- Students can contribute as writers or timers instead of readers.
- Add a daily "myth or fact" question for homerooms to answer.

LEAD IT

1

Assign days

Each reader takes a day. Two voices per day works well.

2

Make it yours

Readers can rewrite scripts in their own voice. Check accuracy and language together.

3

Rehearse

Practice with a timer. Aim for 30 seconds.

4

Go live

Deliver daily. Friday's script kicks off Rock Your Socks Day!

WRAP UP & FOLLOW THROUGH

Send the scripts to families in your newsletter.



Photo moment: The team with the mic (with permission).

ACTIVITY

5

Unified Activity

Students with and without disabilities plan and do something together as equal partners: a game, art project, lunch, or service project.

1 PERIOD

PARTNER CLASSES

GYM, ART ROOM, OR CAFETERIA

MESS: VARIES

GET READY

- ☐ Co-plan with your intervention specialist or special education teacher using the **co-planning sheet**.
- ☐ Recruit student co-leaders from both classes.
- ☐ Run the sensory and access check.
- ☐ Contact your school's unified sports or inclusion club if you have one.

MATERIALS

- Co-planning sheet
- Activity supplies
- Name tags

MAKE IT WORK FOR EVERYONE

- Offer multiple ways to participate in every role.
- Have a quiet space available.
- Use visual schedules and clear roles.

LEAD IT

1

Co-plan

Student co-leaders from both groups plan the activity together.

2

Mix it up

Form mixed teams or pairs from the start, with no "helpers" and "helped."

3

Do it

Run the activity. Adults step back and let students lead.

4

Reflect

Debrief with both classes.

SAY

What did you learn about each other? What should we do again?

WRAP UP & FOLLOW THROUGH

Plan the next one. Unified activities work best as a habit, not a one-time event.



Photo moment: Mixed teams in action (with family permissions for all students).

ACTIVITY

6

Rock Your Socks Day

A grade-level sock challenge on celebration day, with student counters, a tally board, and a group feet photo.

CELEBRATION DAY

WHOLE GRADE OR SCHOOL

HALLWAYS

MESS: NONE

GET READY

- ☐ Include the challenge in announcements and the social campaign.
- ☐ Copy the **tracker**. Assign student counters.
- ☐ Stock a spare-socks basket in the office.

MATERIALS

- Tracker
- Clipboards
- Spare socks

MAKE IT WORK FOR EVERYONE

- Count percentages so every homeroom can win.
- Socks on hands or backpacks count!
- Make spare socks easy and judgment-free to grab.

LEAD IT

1

Kick off

Friday's announcement launches the day.

2

Count

Counters visit homerooms and record participation.

3

Group photo

Grade-level feet photo at lunch or in the gym.

4

Report

Announce the final count at the end of the day.

WRAP UP & FOLLOW THROUGH

Share the final count and photo with #Celebrate321 (following school policy).



Photo moment: The grade-level feet photo.

PRINTABLE

Timeline event cards

Cut apart. Give one card to each group for the gallery walk poster. (These match the Timeline of Change student page.)

**1866**

Dr. John Langdon Down publishes a description of the condition

1959

Scientists discover the extra copy of chromosome 21

1968

Special Olympics is founded

1975

Federal law guarantees public education for students with disabilities (now IDEA)

1983

Average life expectancy for people with Down syndrome: about 25

1990

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) becomes law

2011

The UN declares World Down Syndrome Day (first observed 2012)

Today

Average life expectancy: about 60

STUDENT PAGE

Gallery walk research organizer

One per group. Research your event, then turn your answers into a poster.

**Our event & year**

What happened?

Explain it in 2–3 sentences a 5th grader would understand.

Why did it matter?

How did it change life for people with Down syndrome or other disabilities?

Connect it to today

What's still true, or still unfinished, today?

Our question for the gallery

A question you want visitors to answer on a sticky note.

Good sources: National Down Syndrome Society (ndss.org) · U.S. Department of Education (IDEA) · ADA.gov · United Nations (un.org) · Special Olympics

STUDENT PAGE

School Belonging Audit checklist

Teams walk the school (with permission) and observe. Be respectful: observe places and systems, not individual students.



Lunch & common spaces

Is there a place for anyone who wants company? ☐ Yes ☐ Some ☐ No

Do students of all abilities eat together? ☐ Yes ☐ Some ☐ No

Are tables and lines accessible for wheelchairs and walkers? ☐ Yes ☐ Some ☐ No

Notes: _____

Clubs, sports & activities

Do all students know how to join? ☐ Yes ☐ Some ☐ No

Are there unified or inclusive options? ☐ Yes ☐ Some ☐ No

Are fees, tryouts, or transportation barriers? ☐ Yes ☐ Some ☐ No

Notes: _____

Events & assemblies

Is seating accessible and not separated? ☐ Yes ☐ Some ☐ No

Are there options for students sensitive to noise or crowds? ☐ Yes ☐ Some ☐ No

Do students with disabilities have roles, not just seats? ☐ Yes ☐ Some ☐ No

Notes: _____

Signs, words & culture

Do our signs and posters show people of all abilities? ☐ Yes ☐ Some ☐ No

Do we hear hurtful words in the halls? ☐ Yes ☐ Some ☐ No

Would a new student feel welcome here? ☐ Yes ☐ Some ☐ No

Notes: _____

Our top 3 findings

What stood out most? Bring these to your Belonging proposal.

Area audited: _____ Team: _____

STUDENT PAGE

Belonging proposal

Turn your audit findings into one realistic proposal for your principal or student council.

**What we noticed**

One specific place or system where someone might feel left out.

Our proposal

What should change? Be specific and realistic.

Who we talked to

Did you ask students with disabilities, staff, or families what they think?

What it would take

Cost, people, time, and permission needed.

How we'd know it worked

What would be different in a month?

Team members: _____

STUDENT PAGE

3.21 Social Campaign planner

Plan posts for school-approved channels only. Every post gets checked before it goes live.



DAY	POST TYPE	MESSAGE / CAPTION IDEA	VISUAL
Mon			
Tue			
Wed			
Thu			
Fri			

POST IDEAS

- Why 3/21? A fact in 15 seconds
- Myth vs. fact carousel
- Our sock gallery or feet photo
- A self-advocate quote (with credit)
- “Show up for 3.21” challenge for other schools

BEFORE-YOU-POST CHECKLIST

- ☐ Facts are accurate (check the fact sheet)
- ☐ Person-first, respectful language
- ☐ No faces or names without permission
- ☐ Not pity or “inspiration” framing
- ☐ Uses #Celebrate321
- ☐ Approved by: _____

CAPTION STARTERS

“Why are we wearing mismatched socks? Because 3/21 = three copies of chromosome 21. #Celebrate321” ·
 “Myth: people with Down syndrome are always happy. Fact: everyone has the full range of emotions. #Celebrate321” · “Our whole school showed up for 3.21. Different looks good here. #Celebrate321”

PRINTABLE • STUDENT LEADERS

Student announcement scripts: 5-day series

About 30 seconds each. Students can read these as-is or rewrite them in their own voice. Rehearse with a timer!

**Monday**

“Good morning! This week we’re celebrating World Down Syndrome Day. Why March 21? Most people have two copies of each chromosome. People with Down syndrome have three copies of chromosome 21. Three, twenty-one. Show up for 3.21!”

Tuesday

“Fact of the day: in 1983, the average life expectancy for people with Down syndrome was about 25. Today, it’s about 60. Better health care and inclusion changed lives. Show up for 3.21!”

Wednesday

“Myth or fact: people with Down syndrome are always happy. MYTH! Everyone feels the full range of emotions. People are more than one idea. Show up for 3.21!”

Thursday

“Today’s challenge: sit with someone new at lunch, or invite someone into your game. Belonging is built by what we do. Show up for 3.21!”

Friday

“It’s Rock Your Socks Day! Look around. Nobody’s socks match, and that’s the point. Different looks good here. Thanks for showing up for 3.21!”

Readers: _____

Unified activity co-planning sheet

Plan WITH your intervention specialist or special education team, and with students of all abilities as co-leaders.



Activity & date

Game, art project, lunch, service project, or performance.

Co-leaders

Include students with and without disabilities as equal planners and leaders.

Everyone can participate because...

Rules, roles, spaces, and supports that let everyone take part fully.

Sensory & access check

Noise level, lighting, seating, mobility, breaks, communication supports.

Equal partners, not helpers

How will you make sure it's WITH each other, not FOR someone?

Reflection

After: what worked? What would students change next time?

PRINTABLE

Student counters record participation by homeroom or grade. Post the final count!

[illegible]

#Celebrate321