

# BEFORE YOU WATCH

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Before you show *Including Samuel* to your students or colleagues, think about these questions, discuss with one other person, or discuss in a group.



Axis Dance Company features dancers with and without disabilities.

- What do you predict this film will be about?
- What does the term “disability” mean to you?
- Do you or a family member have a disability? How has it affected your life?
- Do you know what the term “inclusive education” means?
- Do you think that children with significant disabilities should go to regular schools and be full-time members of regular education classrooms?
- What is your experience regarding the place that people with disabilities have at your work, your school, in your town or city, in your place of worship?
- How are people with disabilities typically portrayed in the media – on TV, in movies, in the newspaper? Give examples of this.
- Do you think people with disabilities are a burden to society?
- What do people with disabilities contribute to society?
- Do you think society has an obligation to provide people with disabilities different or more protection and services than it does for people without disabilities?

# INCLUSIVE EDUCATION



all children will be educated full-time in age-appropriate general education classrooms in their neighborhood schools with support provided to enable students, teachers and the entire school community to succeed.

In schools throughout the country, inclusive education is becoming a reality. Students, families, teachers, administrators, policy makers and community members are recognizing the benefits to all when every student is valued as a learner and is welcomed as a member of general education classrooms and school communities.

This movement formally began in the United States in 1975 when the Education for All Handicapped Children's Act guaranteed universal access to free, appropriate public edu-

cation for students with disabilities.

In 1997, this act was reauthorized as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). IDEA requires that to the maximum extent possible students with disabilities are educated in general education classrooms and are making progress within the general education curriculum based on learning objectives that are the same for all students.

For 30 years, researchers have been studying the impact of inclusive education on student performance, professional achievement, and social

success. Students with disabilities, educated in general education classrooms, are more likely than their peers who are educated in separate classrooms to:

- acquire reading and math skills
- graduate from high school
- go on to post-secondary education
- have better communication skills
- obtain meaningful employment,
- have friends and meaningful social relationships
- be welcomed and contributing members of their communities.

# GENERAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



- How did the film make you feel?
- What was the filmmaker trying to communicate?
- Which person's story made the greatest impact on you? Why?
- How does the portrayal of the people with disabilities in this film coincide with the way you thought about disability before watching the film? Did watching the film change your impressions?
- Norman Kunc says that people with disabilities are "a normal part of human diversity." That is very different from viewing people with disabilities as deviant or broken – needing to be cured or fixed. What do you think about Kunc's viewpoint that "disability is natural?"

- What similarities did you see in the people in the film and those in your own life?
- Do you think inclusion is working well in your school, community or workplace? If not, what could make it work better?
- Do you see disability

as a part of diversity, like ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation?

- Is inclusion a "right" or a "privilege"?
- Do you think that all teachers and schools should be required to include children with disabilities?
- Some inclusion experts say that many schools fall short in their efforts to fully include kids with disabilities in typical classes. Why might this be?
- Do you see specific qualities within Barbara O'Brien's classroom (Samuel's class) or Haggerty School (Nathaniel's school) that allow inclusion to succeed? What are the general qualities or philosophies within a school that can help inclusion succeed?

➤ Did you see technological devices in the film that you found interesting or surprising?

➤ Now that you have watched the film, do you think you'll do anything differently in your home, work, or community life as a result? What and why?

*The world we have created is a product of our thinking.  
It cannot be changed without changing our thinking.*

*~ Albert Einstein*



## INSTITUTE ON DISABILITY / UCED

*A University Center for Excellence in Disability*

The **Institute on Disability (IOD)** conducts research and offers academic and professional development opportunities in the following areas:

Early Childhood

Inclusive Education

Autism Spectrum Disorders

Community Living & Adult Life

Transportation & Employment

Technology & Communication

Health Care & Public Policy

Leadership Training

The mission of the **IOD** is to advance policies and systems changes, promising practices, education, and research that strengthen communities and ensure full access, equal opportunities, and participation for all persons.

10 West Edge Drive, Suite 101 • Durham, NH 03824

phone: 603.862.4320 • fax: 603.862.0555

[contact.iod@unh.edu](mailto:contact.iod@unh.edu)

[www.iod.unh.edu](http://www.iod.unh.edu)