



Discussion Starters and Activities to Promote Self-Determination

Onika Wants To Help

For Choice Making

Story pages demonstrating choice making: 13, 19, 27, 30

Discussion starter:

Onika spends time with her friends and watches what they like to do. What does Teophani like to do? What do Agnes and Elibeth like to do? Onika made choices of how she helped them. How did she help Teophani? How did she help Agnes and Elibeth? What tools did Onika use when she helped them?

Classroom activity:

Ask each student to bring a 'tool' from home. Set all the tools on the table or the floor. Have the students guess what each tool is used for. Have the students take turns choosing a tool they think would be fun to use. Have them explain why they chose that tool and then return it.

For Decision Making and following Interests

Story pages demonstrating decision-making: 13, 21, 22

Discussion starter:

Onika had to decide what kind of work she interested in learning. She watched her friends work and decided she wanted to do something different. Her love of color and making things determined her decision. You can see she loves to wear her jewelry, too! What are you interested in? How does that help you make your decisions?

Classroom activity:

Have each student chose five crayon colors. Their assignment is to draw the design for a piece of jewelry or a belt with those colors. Ask each student to share their drawing and explain how they decided on their design.

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For Problem Solving

Story pages demonstrating problem solving: 4, 5, 29-31

Discussion starter:

The biggest problem in this story is that there was no school for Onika and her friends when they were young. Have you ever had a big problem in your life? Or have you had a friend with a big problem? What was the problem? How was it solved?

Classroom activity:

Divide the class into a group of girls and a group of boys. Set up a competition to see which group can more quickly solve the problems on this list: (Each problem is solved with something in a garden.)

1. The rabbits are hungry.
2. The ground is very hard and cracking.
3. There are no vegetables in the garden.
4. Our teacher wants something pretty in the garden.
5. The corn is too tall.
6. We can't reach the berries on the bushes.
7. The garden is too full.

For Engagement

Story pages demonstrating engagement: 9-13, 14-19, 23-27

Discussion starter:

When Onika was little she had to stay home. Her friends, who also have disabilities, had to stay home, too. Going to school made a huge difference in their lives and allowed them to become a part of their community. Can you think of a time you just sat and weren't included in an activity? How did that make you feel? How do you feel when you are part of your school activities?

Classroom activity:

Tell the students there is an imaginary place called Rainbow Land. Ask them to draw a picture showing what the people in Rainbow Land like to do together so they are a community.