



Assessment of Individual Ableism

Thank you for taking the time to consider how ableism might be affecting your worldview. Please note, this is **NOT** a normed assessment. These questions have *not* been validated as proving one thing or another. Instead, this is an assessment that was designed to get you thinking. It's likely that if you answer honestly, you'll be uncomfortable with what you are writing down. That's okay. Be honest with yourself, learn from this reflection and make some changes. If you embrace the momentary discomfort perhaps in a few months you will find that your answers have changed and have become more aligned with your true values.

Best of luck on your journey,

Katrina

Founder, Bridges Learning System

Part 1: For everyone

Please mark all that apply unless noted otherwise.

1. How do you feel around disabled people?

Extremely nervous

Very comfortable

1

2

3

4

5

2. Have you ever avoided talking to someone who communicates differently than you out of fear of embarrassment of not doing it right? (*Consider people who use alternate forms of communication such as Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) devices, people who use ASL and people who have articulation challenges*)

Often

Once or twice

Only with certain disabilities that I'm less familiar with

Never

3. Do you believe that certain traits accompany different disabilities? Consider things like ability to empathize, likeability, socially interested, shy, etc.

No

Yes

4. Are some disabilities worse than others (physical, emotional, mental)?

No

Yes

5. Have you ever wondered if an individual with disability was using their disability to gain advantage economically or socially?

No

Yes

6. Should someone with a cognitive disability have the same decision-making power a non-disabled person of the same age?
- Generally no, they need help to make important decisions.
 - If I think they can do it.
 - Always
7. Which is more important...? (Choose one)
- Fitting in
 - Being yourself
8. Do you know what a person can and can't do by reading or hearing their diagnosis? (*Consider your thinking around ADHD, Autism, Dyslexia, Cerebral Palsy etc.*)
- Yes, if I have had a lot of experience with that type of person
 - Yes, if it comes with assessment results.
 - No, not until I have met them myself.
 - No, not until I have spent significant time with them.
9. When reading a story about a disabled person being honored what feelings does it evoke?
- Surprise at the accomplishment
 - Disappointment at the portrayal of a disabled person as inspirational
 - Wonder about what in their experience was unique that allowed them to achieve.
 - Happiness seeing a success story.
 - Anger at the one-dimensional representation of disability
10. Are you better equipped to determine what is socially appropriate and inappropriate than those with neurodivergent disabilities?
- Yes
 - No

11. What is the disabled students' role in the education system?

- The person that is being helped
- A decision maker in their future

12. Do you use the terms low and high functioning to describe a person's ability and disability?

- No
- Yes
- Sometimes

13. Do you follow preferred identifiers that have been chosen by the communities that they represent (e.g. Autistic child, rather than child with autism)?

- For some disability categories
- Always
- I generally use person first because that is what others [caregivers, educators etc] use.

14. **True or False**, emotional expression and communicative expectations are similar in most cultures.

- True
- False

15. Do you correct others when they use ableist language?

- No
- Yes
- It depends on who it is.
- I don't know what ableist language is.

16. How often do you refer to an incident as crazy, a person with sight as "blind to__" or called someone an idiot?

- Pretty regularly, but not to an actual disabled person
- Rarely, sometimes it slips out.
- Never, I am very careful about the language that I use.

17. **True or False**, a disabled white student will be treated the same in society as a similarly disabled black student.

True

False

18. Do you actively work to support neurotypical children and adults to understand that there are many ways of thinking and being?

No, I don't have any opportunities to talk to other neurotypical children and adults about neurodivergent students.

Yes, I teach them to tolerate differences.

Yes, I teach about the strengths that come from different ways of thinking and being.

Part 2: For teachers, therapists, and practitioners.

Please mark all that apply unless noted otherwise.

1. Do you write student goals that support them in becoming more like their same age peers?
 - Yes
 - No

2. Do you hold different standards for disabled students from different races?
 - No
 - Yes

3. Have you ever asked your students what their goals are for themselves?
 - Yes, students tell me what they hope for themselves and what they think will help them meet those goals.
 - Yes, students self-select goals and then I figure out what they need to do to meet them.
 - No, my students aren't capable of answering that type of question.
 - No, its my job to figure out their goals and help them achieve them.

4. When working with disabled students what do you focus on?
 - Communication and interactions skills they need to learn.
 - How to get their needs met
 - How they should behave
 - Using their strengths

5. **Who** do you work with to identify solutions to students' support needs? *(Please mark one)*
 - I work with the students support system (caregivers, other educators, and medical professionals).
 - I work with the student on self-advocacy.
 - Both

6. Do you teach neurodivergent students to mask in order to fit in?
- Wait, what's masking
 - Yes, but only when they really want to fit in
 - No, I teach them the dangers of masking.
7. Do you support disabled students in being a part of their community in whatever way they choose?
- No, my students' needs are too severe for them to be with typical peers.
 - Yes, my students' needs are less so they can get away with acting normal when around others.
 - Yes, I work with students to figure out what role they would like in different community settings and help them achieve those goals.