



Just Ask! A Conversation About Inclusivity

Amidst the pandemic, our students have had to think about health and health-related stories far more than most children in the recent past. As we are all compelled to think about health and our bodies more, we are presented with a great opportunity to learn with a positive and inquisitive mindset about people whose bodies may work a little different than our own. Gaining a better understanding of those who are different from us is important for teaching a culture of inclusivity to our students.

In Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor's book, *Just Ask! Be Different, Be Brave, Be You*, we are introduced to several kids with different backgrounds and physical qualities that make them unique. The story encourages students to speak up and ask when they don't know something, rather than to make assumptions or continue without an explanation. After you read or *listen to the story (*Check out the several read alouds for this book on YOUTUBE.), use the following questions to have a meaningful conversation about inclusivity, diversity, and asking thoughtful questions.

1. Sonia talks about how people are like gardens of fresh flowers. If you could plant a garden, would you plant one kind of flower, or a whole variety of flowers? Why?
2. Just like the kids in the book who all have things that make them unique, you are also unique! What are some things that make you special?
3. Sonia explains that if she doesn't know or understand something, she just asks! It is important to make sure that we are asking kind and thoughtful questions. What are some good ways to ask a question?
4. We were introduced to several kids in this book. Try going through each of the characters we met and thinking of one thing you have in common with them! Do you both like music? Do you both feel frustrated sometimes? Make a list.
5. Do you ever feel nervous to ask questions? What are some things that hold you back, and what is some advice you would give to someone who wants to ask a question but feels shy?
6. Lots of the characters in the book were happy to share a little bit about themselves- they just needed to be asked! Is there anything that you wish more people asked about you?