

Introduction to Rights and Responsibilities

Instruction in Self-Advocacy Benchmark:

Explore rights and responsibilities as it relates to the student's disability

Note to those providing service:

These activities are developed in a way that allows the learner to gradually build upon their skills. Each student has different foundational skills so some students may need more support or instruction than others. With that being said, you can choose what activity you start with based on your learner's strengths and needs.



Extended Pathways

Students who are interested or enrolled in career and technical education (CTE) or postsecondary education, regardless of disability (remember to presume competence!), may or may not need some of the information that seems introductory in nature. Take as much or little time as needed based on student knowledge. More specific activities related to CTE and postsecondary education are identified as extended activities and pathways.

Preparation and Materials Needed:

- Know the student's knowledge or awareness regarding their rights and responsibilities as it relates to their disability. It would be helpful to know some of the differences between IDEA and ADA. Be sure to review these laws in advance and understand their differences and scope of protections.
- Prepare needed assistive technologies and/or accommodations (ex: communication supports (visual, objects, pictures, voice output devices, etc.), physical supports/space access needs, vision supports, hearing supports, sensory needs/supports).
- Computer to access videos. Print materials in advance if necessary.



Print

- [Learn the Lingo Vocabulary \(PowerPoint\)](#)
- [Learn the Lingo – Social Story](#)
- [Knowing My Responsibilities](#)
- [Rights Scenario Cards](#)
- [IDEA vs ADA Fact Sort Worksheet](#)
- [IDEA vs ADA Fact Sort Answer Key](#)
- [Scenario Cards](#)
- [Scenario Cards Answer Key](#)
- [Self-Evaluation – Rights and Responsibilities Section](#)



Activities to Meet Benchmark:

Activity 1: Learn the Lingo

This activity aims to review vocabulary related to the rights and responsibilities of a student with a disability.



Review: This [Learn the Lingo Vocabulary \(PowerPoint\)](#) is arranged from foundational to more detailed. Feel free to modify the vocabulary list to meet the student's needs.

- **Choice:** The act of picking or deciding between two or more options. It means having the freedom to select what you want.
- **Support:** Help that makes things easier for someone. It can come from a person, like a teacher or friend, who helps you learn or do things. Support can also be something you use, like a checklist that reminds you what to do or a special device that helps you talk.
- **Rights:** Things that every person is allowed to have or do. For example, the right to speak and be heard.
- **Respect:** Treating others with kindness and valuing their feelings and opinions. It means recognizing that everyone is important.
- **Responsibility:** A duty or task that a person is expected to take care of. It means doing what you are supposed to do.
- **Laws:** Rules made by the government that everyone must follow. They help keep people safe and make sure everyone is treated fairly.
- **Freedom:** The power or right to act, speak, or think without any restrictions. It means being able to do what you want.
- **Disclose:** To reveal, share, or make known information that was previously a secret or private. Remember, disclosing information can be voluntary (you choose to share it) or required (you have to share it by law or policy in certain situations).
- **Self-Determination:** The ability to make your own choices and control your own life. It means deciding what is best for you.
- **Self-Advocacy:** Speaking up for yourself and your own needs. It means asking for what you want and explaining why you need it.
- **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA):** A federal law in the United States that ensures students with disabilities have access to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) that meets their unique needs. This protects students still in high school.
- **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):** A federal law in the United States that protects people with disabilities from unfair treatment. It makes sure that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else.
- **Reasonable Accommodation:** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) says that a reasonable accommodation is a change to the hiring process or workplace that helps a person with a disability have the same chance to get a job and take part in work activities.



Discuss: Now that you have learned about your rights and responsibilities, let's take a moment to explore how they impact your daily lives. Please read each paragraph in the [Learn the Lingo Social Story](#) which focuses on a key vocabulary word related to your rights and responsibilities. After reading, answer the question that follows.

[Note to Instructors: You can use the Learn the Lingo - Social Story as a discussion tool by reading aloud and having a group discussion with all learners.]



Resource: Read and fill out the [Learn the Lingo - Social Story](#)

Activity 2: What Are My Rights?

This activity aims to learn more about disability rights.



Discuss: Today, we're going to talk about something really important — *disability rights*. Everyone deserves a fair chance to learn, work, and be part of their community — no matter their disability or supports needed to feel included. Sometimes, people with disabilities might face barriers that make things harder for them. That's why there are *disability rights* — rules and laws that help make sure things are fair. There are two major federal laws that give you disability rights.

One is the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, also known as IDEA, which helps students with disabilities get the support they need at school. A free and appropriate public education (FAPE) means you can go to school and learn like everyone else, at no cost to your family. The way this is done is through an Individualized Education Program (IEP) which is a plan made just for you that explains your goals and what help you'll get. The IEP can include services and supports like speech therapy, a special teacher, or extra time on tests based on your unique needs. You have the right to be a part of any of these school meetings and any decisions that are being made. Students are no longer covered by IDEA once they leave or graduate from high school.

Second is the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) which helps make sure things are fair and accessible for everyone at school, at work, and in the community. This can mean access to public places like schools, stores, and parks. This provides rights to get and do jobs without unfair treatment. This also means rights to communication in ways that work for you, like sign language or written information. This also means rights to ask for changes or help, like reasonable accommodations to help you participate or do a job. These are rights that are with you your whole life.



Reflect: If you are a part of any disability support networks, many will have a list of your rights and responsibilities that you can ask for. Or explore some of the resources in the Click and Explore below.

- How do these rights relate to you in your life now, what about in the future?
- Were there any rights that surprised you? Why?
- What right(s) would you like to know more about?
- How can knowing your rights empower or help you?



Click and Explore:

- [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\) | U.S. Department of Education](#) – provides guidance, resources, and technical assistance related to IDEA.
- [Applicant and Eligible Individuals Rights | Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities](#) - provides a list of rights and processes for using these rights with their vocational rehabilitation (VR) services.
- [Employment Discrimination FAQ | Disability Rights Ohio](#) – reviews support, protections, and rights under the employment discrimination laws.
- [Guide to Disability Rights Law | U.S. Department of Justice](#) - provides an overview of federal civil rights laws that ensure equal opportunity for people with disabilities.
- [A Guide for People with Disabilities Seeking Employment | U.S. Department of Justice](#) - answers questions you may have about your employment rights under the ADA.



Extending the Conversation

If you have a developmental disability, there may be other rights that are extended to you. It is helpful to know about your rights because you have many rights to make decisions for yourself. It is important to hear stories of others and to think about what you want for yourself.



Watch: [Disability Bill of Rights \(14:57\)](#)



Reflect: In this video, Ohio advocates explain the Disability Bill of Rights as it relates to their life. As you watch this video, think about how these rights relate to you and your life both now and in the future. [Note to Instructors: You can print and use [The Bill of Rights List](#) which follows the order of the video. Pause as needed for conversation or explanation. [The Bill of Rights Easy Read Guide](#) can be printed and shared with students.]



Resource:

- [Bill of Rights List](#)
- [Bill of Rights Easy Read Guide](#)

Activity 3: How to Use My Rights and Responsibilities

This activity aims for students to learn ways to be responsible based on their rights.



Watch: [Self Advocacy - Social Emotional Lesson \(3:26\)](#).



Discuss: You have learned about some of your rights, and these rights come with responsibilities. These rights and responsibilities matter to you and how you live your life every day. Knowing your rights and practicing your responsibilities helps you advocate for yourself and what you want. Let's learn more about our responsibilities.

After watching this video, who can share a way they have advocated for themselves? Is it easy or hard to do? What helps you when you need to advocate for yourself?



Review: The [Rights Scenario Cards](#) contain various situations that you may have experienced before, you may experience in the future, or you may never experience related to your disability rights. The challenge is knowing what to do if you or someone you know ever faces one of these situations. Review these scenarios to explore, discuss, or debate various ways to handle the situation using self-advocacy skills. There are multiple ways to handle these situations so there is no right or wrong answer.

- 1. Instructor Assisted:** Instructors can select scenarios and demonstrate how to think through the situation. Ensure students are able to follow discussion and provide prompts to support engagement.
- 2. Guided Activity:** Instructors can review a scenario to help students understand the purpose. Students can then work together or individually to read through scenarios and then share ideas on how to handle the situation.
- 3. Independent Activity:** Students can work independently or in groups to explore the situation and talk through their ideas. Instructors can have students share their discussion on how they would handle the situation.



Resource: [Rights Scenario Cards](#)



Reflect: Now that you have learned about rights and responsibilities, complete the Rights and Responsibilities section of the [Self-Evaluation Worksheet](#).



Resource: [Self-Evaluation – Rights and Responsibilities Section](#)



Extending the Conversation

If you have a developmental disability, you learned about additional rights in Activity 2 of this lesson. It is helpful to know about your rights because you have many rights to make decisions for yourself. It is also important to know that with your rights come responsibilities.



Review: In a small group or individually, students will use the [Knowing My Responsibilities Worksheet](#) that lists each of the rights they learned about in the Bill of Rights video in Activity 2. Learners will review a right listed and then fill in their responsibility related to that right in the empty bubble. Based on time, do as many as you can. There is an example on the first page.



Resource: [Knowing My Responsibilities Worksheet](#)



Extended Pathways

Activity: ADA vs. IDEA: Understanding Your Rights

This activity aims to review disability rights and protections through ADA and IDEA.



Discuss: Now that you have learned about rights and responsibilities, you are going to explore the laws that put these into practice. The two laws you are going to focus on are the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). You learned that IDEA is a federal law in the United States that ensures students with disabilities have access to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) that meets their unique needs. This law specifically applies to children with disabilities in the educational (school) system from ages 3-21 years old. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a United States law that protects people with disabilities from unfair treatment. Its purpose is to make sure that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else. This law impacts all people, but has a lot of protections around employment, public services and accommodations and is not limited to students or educational settings.



Review: Using the [IDEA & ADA Fact Sort Worksheet](#) we are going to review each of the facts and determine if it pertains to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Here are some options on how to review with students:

- 1. Whole Group Discussion:** On a whiteboard, chalkboard, or projector screen, create or show the [IDEA vs ADA Fact Sort Worksheet](#) first page. Handout the three fact pages to the students. Ask students to pick and read a fact aloud and then discuss together how to sort it. Students can use sticky notes, cut out fact cards, or simply write the facts on the whiteboard to sort them. Continue through the facts together until all are sorted.
- 2. Small Group Sorting:** Give each group a set of "IDEA vs. ADA" fact cards that are attached to the bottom of the worksheet. Be sure to mix up the cards before providing them to the students. Have the students sort the cards into each category: IDEA or ADA. After sorting, bring the entire group together and compare their results as a group.
- 3. Independent Student Sorting:** Give each student a set of "IDEA vs. ADA" fact cards that are attached to the bottom of the worksheet. Have each student sort the cards into each category: IDEA or ADA. After sorting, bring the students together and compare their results as a group.



Resource: [IDEA vs ADA Fact Sort Worksheet](#) and [Answer Key](#)



Extended Pathways

Activity: Scenario Showdown

This activity aims to apply knowledge of disability rights for various scenarios.



Review: the [Scenario Cards](#) together or hand them out to the student(s) to read and review.



Group Discussion: IDEA and ADA have impacted the way individuals with disabilities access the world around them. Whether it be through their education, employment, or another area of life, these laws have had a profound impact on the lives of people in America. Think about how IDEA and ADA have influenced the lives of people in America. Have each student pull a scenario card and take turns reading them aloud. After the student has read their scenario aloud, discuss the following questions as a group:

- Which law applies to this scenario?
- What rights or protections are relevant?
- What actions should be taken?

[Note to Instructors: Repeat until each student has had a turn or until time is up. Remember, some scenarios describe situations where both ADA and IDEA apply.]



Resource: [Scenario Cards](#) and [Scenario Cards Answer Key](#)



Reflect: Understanding these laws is crucial, as it helps us appreciate the rights and opportunities they provide. Let's take this time to share our thoughts and learn from each other.

Let's reflect on the following questions, either as a group discussion or through a brief written reflection:

- What's the most important thing you learned about ADA and IDEA?
- How might this knowledge be useful to you or someone you know?



Wrap-Up:

Understanding your rights, such as access to accommodations and protection from discrimination, is essential for advocating for yourself in your educational journey. Equally important are your responsibilities, including engaging and communicating with your team. Remember, knowing your rights helps you to create a positive and accessible learning environment. It's crucial to communicate your needs and seek help when necessary. As you move forward, think about how you can advocate for yourself and others. If you have any thoughts or concerns about your rights, make sure to share with a guardian, teacher, or others you trust to help you.