What Happened to YOU

Lesson Plan

Author: James Catchpole

Illustrator: Karen George

Grade: K-3

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that.
Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that." - Martin Luther King, Jr.

Teacher Reflections:

Please reflect on your thoughts and questions after reading the book.

Book Summary:

Joe has one leg. Every time Joe goes out and meets new kids, he gets asked the same question,"What happened to you?". He is weary of this kind of attention and the same old question, besides... Why should he even have to answer it? With humour and emotive illustrations, this story explores how someone living with a disability may appreciate being spoken to and treated, while also asking children without disabilies to consider their actions as allies.

Teacher's Notes:

Add from guide linked below.

Resources:

Author's reading guide:
https://thecatchpoles.net/2021/08/08/official-what-happened-to-you-lesson-plan-created-with-the-author/

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Pre-Reading Questions:

1. Imagine that you got sent to school with a silly hat and were told to wear it all day. When you got to the playground everyone asked you why you were wearing that hat. How would that make you feel? Now, imagine you could never take the hat off. Would you feel the same about explaining your hat to people all the time?
2. Have you ever gotten attention you didn't want or been asked questions you didn't want to answer? How did that make you feel?

Activities:

Activity 1: What is a Disability? (Teacher-Facilitated Group Discussion)
Students will brainstorm their answers to the following question: What is a disability? This book discusses visible disabilities, but it's okay if students want to discuss invisible disabilities and mental health concerns as well. The teacher will use this activity to gauge how much background discussion is required to support students' understanding of this reading.

While Reading

Questions:

1. How does Joe feel about handling the sharks in his game vs. kids he hasn't met yet?
2. How does all of the attention and questions Joe receives because of his one leg make him feel? What tells you he feels that way (facial cues, response, body language)
3. What are some of the silly ideas kids on the playground have about why Joe has one leg?
4. What is the moment that things changed for Joe on the playground? What happened next and why did it make Joe feel better? (Simone and Joe finally introduced themselves to each other, he got to be himself first and play with new friends, not just the kid missing a leg)
5. What was Joe's question for Simone?

Activities:

Activity 2: Introductions (Small Groups and Teacher-Facilitated Group Discussion)
Students will brainstorm ideas about how they can show someone they want to be friends when they first meet them. Students will then move around the class and practice using a social script that incorporates some of these ideas. Students will introduce themselves, "Hi my name is and I am years old. I really like . [Ask new friend a question but remember we do not ask people questions about their bodies. You can ask: Their name, age, if they want to play, favourite book/sport, etc.] Once a few students have practiced their introductions, you can discuss some other things you might ask someone you've just met as a class.

Post-Reading

Questions:

1. What could these kids have done differently?
2. What did the kids do that was right?
3. If you saw a bunch of kids asking a disabled child questions like this, what can you do? (You can go in and tell them to leave the kid alone and ask the kid if they want to play with you or if they're okay.)
4. How can we include people with different abilities?
5. Why do you think we didn't find out why Joe only has one leg? (Because it's none of our business.)

Activities:

Activity 3: Story of New Friends (Small Groups)
In small groups, students will think about what they would do if they saw a student that wasn't being included in a game in the school yard. They will discuss why that student might not be included in the game and what they could do to include them and share back with the class.
Option: Draw and cut out paper characters to act out the scenario and what the group would do to include the student.