

## Activity

Begin class with a discussion: 1) Use **yourself** as the focal point of understanding the concept of unique. Ask the students to share: *what do you think you observe as my “unique” qualities?* You can write the descriptors on the board. 2) Then ask students: *what do you see as your own unique qualities that you would be willing to share with the class?* Both questions for discussion should take about 10 minutes. You could also include a famous person to teens (rock star, actor, etc) and ask what their “unique” qualities are. 3) Finally, ask: (the opening sentence-question of the essay) BEFORE essay is distributed to the class.

- ✓ *What if everyone in the world was exactly alike? What if everyone talked the same, acted the same, listened to the same music, and watched the same T.V. programs?*

After the above discussion, then distribute and have the class read the essay, This I Believe, “We’re All Different in Our Own Ways”. Choose the question(s) for immediate class discussion, and any question(s) for journal writing, or a written assignment. Students are then asked to do written work: a) journal writing: their own 3 traits of uniqueness b) computer search of Asperger’s traits, taking notes for a paragraph report. c) a written response to the question(s) assigned by teacher found at the end of the essay. These three above assignments may take the rest of the class period.

## Objectives

- Describe 3 traits in writing that make students unique
- Research a disability called Asperger’s Syndrome and write one descriptive paragraph
- Articulate one or more unique qualities of a classmate, following a structured class exercise

## Materials

This I Believe NPR Essay called “We’re all Different” – enough for each student

Determine ahead whether the class will read silently or aloud and estimate how long it will take

Check the discussion/writing questions at the end of the essay for journal writing and/or discussion focus

Student journals for describing the 3 traits of themselves that are unique

Computer availability for students to research and write a descriptive paragraph on the traits of Asperger’s Syndrome

## Vocabulary

- Autism
- Asperger’s Syndrome
- Unique

## Summary

Ask students to partner up in the last 5 minutes of class, and share a unique trait which they will report out to the class tomorrow upon arriving, with the permission of the partner.

## Notes for Teachers

The first activity opens with a student discussion of YOU and your unique qualities. If you are uncomfortable with this suggestion, you will want to make a change.

Computer availability with websites already on the screen or written down for quick reference.

## Reflection

- ✓ Students are to write in their journals on their own unique traits, which will create some valuable reflection time. Also, through the parent-home connector there is more opportunity for reflection and growing self-awareness.

## Home Connection

Students can ask their parents what do they believe is **unique** about their son/daughter? Does the parent response agree with student's own perception, or is it a surprise? Report responses to the class next day.