

# UNIT 12 CLOSE YOUR EYES AND SEE

## UNIT OVERVIEW

In this unit, students will:

- 🎧 Read and listen to David Henry talk about what it's like to be blind.
- Answer open-ended comprehension questions to show understanding of the story.
- 🗣️ Consider three alternative opinions about disabled people and express agreement or disagreement with the opinions.
- Study the Opinion Network to learn expressions for understanding someone's opinion.
- Extend the Topic by talking about everyday activities.
- Read a Culture Corner extract about rights of disabled people.
- Share ideas about how to help disabled people.
- Listen to a follow-up video extract from Scott giving his views about how disabled people should be treated.
- Take the Unit Test.

### Authors' Introduction

Go to [impactseries.com/issues](http://impactseries.com/issues) to listen to Junko's unit introduction.

### The Issue

In this unit, a blind man, David Henry, talks about being blind and how people treat him. People tend to treat a blind person as somebody incapable of doing anything, but a blind person can listen, talk, laugh, and love, just like everyone else. Of course, being blind or being disabled is inconvenient, but we should realize that disabled people are real people, not much different from ourselves. To help us understand this concept, David Henry is telling us to close our eyes. By closing your eyes, you realize being blind does not make you a different person—you are still the same person.

### Questions Raised

- What is being blind like? What can you or can you not do if you are blind? How do people treat blind people?
- What is our misunderstanding about or bias toward disabled people? How can we have more understanding of them?
- How do disabled people want to be treated? Are they happy with the way people treat them? Do they want to be treated differently from people who are not disabled?

### To Keep in Mind

- Most students do not have contact with blind or disabled people unless they have somebody in their family or among their friends who is disabled. Therefore, it will be difficult for them to imagine what it is like to be blind or disabled. This unit will be a good opportunity for them to think about that.
- Students should realize that anybody could become disabled any day because of accidents or diseases. Also when you become elderly, it is more likely that you will become disabled. Therefore, they should think of disabilities as their problem, not somebody else's.
- Not many people think about disabled people's rights. They should have the same rights as other people. They should be able to work or enjoy life equally.

## TEACHING GUIDE

### Getting Ready

→ Because students cannot answer #2 and #3 without knowing the answer to #1, do the first question as a whole class. Once everyone understands the meaning of *blind*, have students ask and answer the last two questions in pairs.

🗣️ **Teaching tip:** After the students have worked in pairs, you could ask volunteers for their answers. If students who do know a blind person are willing to share, you could ask them more about the person. For example: How did the person become blind? (From birth or from an accident?) This illustrates the point that we all have the possibility of becoming disabled.

### Situation

→ For the first listening, have students read and listen to the dialogue. For the second listening, have them listen to the dialogue with their eyes closed.

🗣️ **Teaching tip:** Have students work in pairs. Students will read David's story aloud to each other by alternating paragraphs. For example, the first student reads the first paragraph and the second student reads the second paragraph. Then the first student reads the third paragraph, and so on. When one student is reading, the other student will listen with his or her eyes closed.

### Answer Key

1. Yes, he can.
2. Because the waiter treated him as if he was not there.
3. To understand that they are real people.
4. Yes, you can.

### What Do You Think?

→ After you check students' understanding of the story using the comprehension questions, students discuss their opinions of Iris, Shingo, and Mark. Discussion should be done in pairs.

🗣️ **Teaching tip:** This Opinion Network box is more challenging than those of previous units. You may want to model the expressions. In particular, students will need to hear the pronunciation of "sympathize." Give students a chance to practice asking and answering the questions in pairs.

🗣️ **Culture Point:** Attitudes toward disabled people can be different depending on the culture. They can also be different depending on whether or not you know somebody who is disabled, for example a friend, family member, or neighbor.

### Extending the Topic: Everyday activities—easy for you?

→ Have students work individually when filling out the list, and in pairs (or threes) for the follow-up discussion.

Give students plenty of time to make their choices. The more they have thought of their own ideas, the easier it will be for them to do the following discussion activity. The main point of this activity is to show that at various stages in life, all of us experience difficulty doing all of the activities in the list and therefore we are all "disabled." If time permits, wrap up this activity by asking for volunteers to contribute their groups' ideas.

### Culture Corner

Have students work in pairs or groups of three. Students read through the list of rights for the disabled that the International Disability Alliance is fighting for. Give them an opportunity to ask about unknown words. Then write a few questions on the board for discussion. For example: Which of these rights do disabled people in your country have? Which ones do you think are the most important? These questions are also appropriate lead-in questions for the Sharing My Ideas task.

## Sharing My Ideas: Helping disabled people

### → Choose

Begin by having students select the disability they would like to talk about. Explain that they are going to give a presentation about how their country can help people with that particular disability.

### → Prepare and Rehearse

Your students can use the Presentation notes and Language Hints to prepare their presentation. Encourage them to take simple notes, as the focus is on oral presentation and not on writing. Walk around and be sure that everyone listed four problems and solutions. Once they are ready, they can practice with a partner. Remind students to do the Listener task, and be sure to point out the Language Hints. Give students plenty of time to improve their notes before moving on to the Present step.

### Sample Presentation

#### Helping People Who Cannot Walk

*The first problem is that there are no elevators at many train stations. A way to solve this problem is to provide a lifting machine on the stairs for wheelchairs. The next problem is the pedestrian crossing bridges in town. People in wheelchairs cannot use them, so they cannot cross the street. Another problem is bumps everywhere. I think my country should make every place barrier-free. The last problem is there are few opportunities for disabled people to participate in sports or entertainment. For example, people in wheelchairs should be able to enjoy sports such as basketball or swimming. I think there should be more programs that help disabled people do these things.*

### → Present

Have students find a new partner or have them work in small groups. Draw students' attention to the Listener task. They are asked to answer three comprehension questions. The Presentation Tip reminds the presenter to ask if there are any questions. In order to ensure that students have questions, ask listeners to prepare one question they'd like to ask the presenter.

If you are using the assessment guide below, go over each point with the whole class before students begin their presentations. (This could also be done during the Rehearse step so that students have time to prepare for or practice each assessment point.) Be sure to remind your students that communicating their ideas is more important than using perfect English!

### Assessing the Activity

Have students evaluate the person speaking. Create a handout showing a checklist such as the one below, or write it on the board:

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1 – The presentation was well organized                                     | Y | N |
| 2 – The presenter sounded confident.  | Y | N |
| 3 – The presenter did not read word for word from the page.                 | Y | N |
| 4 – The presenter used the Language Hints.                                  | Y | N |
| 5 – At the end, the presenter asked the audience if they had any questions. | Y | N |

When students are working in pairs, have each student evaluate the other. If a student presents in front of the class, have each student grade him or her.

## PERSONAL OPINION

→ If you have downloaded the video clip or have access to the Internet in class, play the video clip. The first time, have the students watch with books closed. Ask questions to see if the students have understood the gist of Scott's opinion. Then have them look at the summary. See if they can fill in the missing words. Play the extract once or twice more. Then check the answers.

## Answer Key

### Scott

In my opinion, the blind man is absolutely right in saying that, even though I can't see, I'm a regular person who sleeps, eats, drinks, does everything you do. So why treat me any differently? Myself, I also have a handicap. Obviously, it's not blindness, but often people are overly concerned and ask me, "What's it like to have this?" I always say, "Well, what's it like to have green eyes? What's it like to be able to walk normally?" And then, nobody knows what to say because they realize they are just like you.

I had a friend who had an experience where he tried to help somebody who was walking on crutches. I told him, "Don't you dare help!" And the point is that that person has lived with that disability probably for as long as they can remember and they can do it themselves. So we need to remember that those people feel just as normal as everyone else and we need to treat them as such.

## Video Script

Well, uh, I think that the blind man is very right in saying "Well, look, even though I can't see, I'm a regular person who eats, sleeps, drinks, does everything you do. So why treat me any differently?" Myself, I also have a handicap, obviously not blindness, but every time someone is overly concerned or asks me, "What's it like to have 'this'?" you know, I always say, "Well, what's it like to have green eyes? What's it like to be able to walk normally?" And then, nobody knows what to say because, the fact is, for the handicap, they are just like you.

Um, and I had a friend who had an experience where he tried to help somebody who was actually walking on crutches, and I told him, "Don't you dare help!" And the point of the matter is that that person has lived with that handicap probably for as long as they can remember and they can do it themselves. So, uh, we need to be, uh we need to remember that those people feel just as normal as everyone else and we need to treat them as such.

## UNIT TEST

→ **Make copies of the Unit Test** for each student. Distribute the copies and allow about 15 minutes for the class to complete the Test. Correct the Test in class.

A. **Understanding the Situation:** The focus is on understanding the expressions David uses to tell us about being blind.

B. **Vocabulary:** The focus is on understanding three words or phrases from the Situation or the Extending the Topic sections. Students fill in three missing words of a short paragraph that summarizes the Situation.

C. **Expressions:** The focus is on you check students' understanding of expressions or phrases from the What Do You Think? section. Students answer two multiple-choice questions.

## Answer Key

- A. 1. c 2. a 3. b 4. c 5. d  
B. disabled, sorry, close  
C. 1. c 2. a

## LINKS

If you would like the class to do additional research on disabled people, here are some useful links:

Being Blind:

<http://www.nfb.org/images/nfb/Publications/fr/fr10/Issue2/f100213.html>

Being Legally Blind:

<http://www.healthmad.com/Disabilities/Legally-Blind.31875>

Upholding disabled people's rights:

<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/ed20080622a1.html>