



Understanding Equality vs. Equity

This activity helps students understand the difference between equality and equity using a visual representation of different-sized bicycles and a wheelchair-accessible bike. Through personal reflection and discussion, students explore moments when they felt treated unfairly and consider how different needs require different support.

For example, a student might feel that a classmate is getting special treatment—perhaps they are given extra time on a test or are excused from certain tasks. However, what they may not realise is that the teacher has a reason for this, such as a learning difficulty, personal challenge, or external responsibility that requires different expectations.

By engaging with the Equality vs. Equity graphic, students gain a deeper awareness of fairness, perspective-taking, and inclusion. The activity is designed to be completed in 10-15 minutes and encourages meaningful discussions about how different students have different needs and how fairness doesn't always mean treating everyone exactly the same.

Time: 10-15 minutes

Materials Needed: Equality vs. Equity Bicycle Graphic (display on screen or print copies)

Step 1: Personal Reflection & Discussion (5-7 mins)

1. Ask students to think about a time when they felt they were treated unfairly.
2. In small groups, have them discuss:
 - What happened?
 - How did it make you feel?
 - What did you want to happen instead?

Step 2: Introducing the Graphic (3-5 mins)

1. Display the Equality vs. Equity graphic.
2. Ask: What do you notice? What is the difference between equality and equity in this image?
3. Explain: *Equality* means everyone gets the same thing, but *equity* means people get what they need to be successful.

Step 3: Seeing the Full Picture (3 mins)

1. Discuss: Sometimes, we don't see the full picture—different people have different needs.
2. Ask:
 - Have you ever judged a situation without knowing the full story?
 - How can understanding equity help us be more supportive of others?

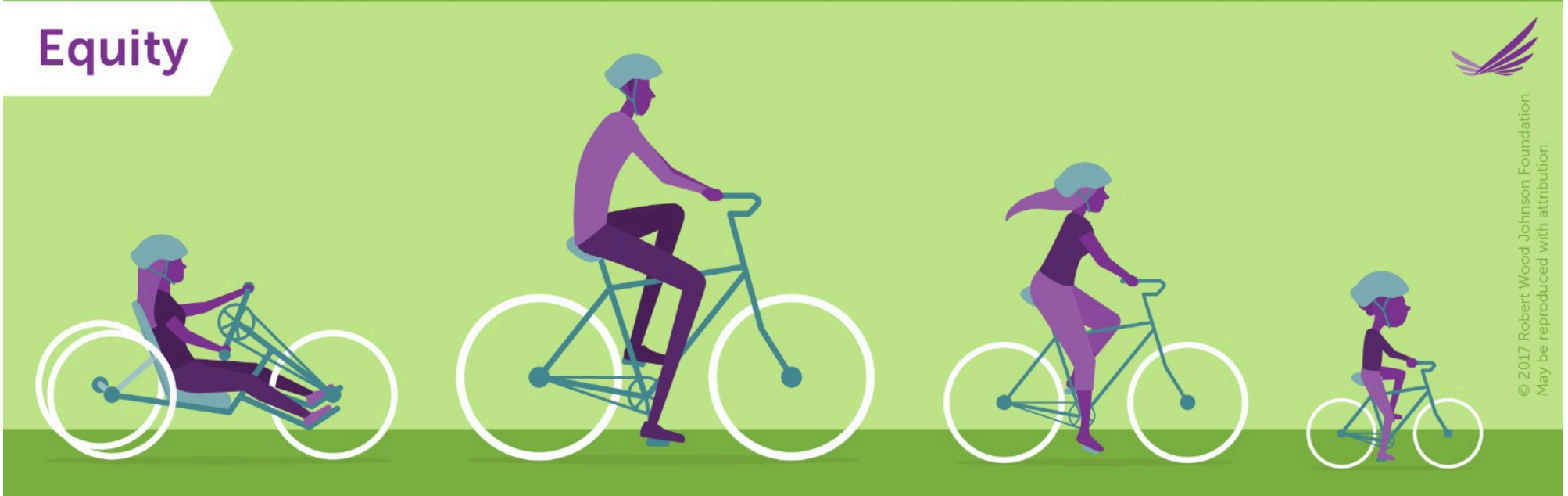
Wrap-Up:

Encourage students to think about how they can apply this to their friendships, group work, and school life.

Equality



Equity



© 2017 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.
May be reproduced with attribution.

Source: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

<https://www.rwjf.org/en/insights/blog/2022/11/we-used-your-insights-to-update-our-graphic-on-equity.html>