

# The Recess Revolution: Design for Justice

**Time:** 25 Minutes | **Target Age:** 11 Years Old

## Materials Needed

- Blank paper or a notebook
- Pens, pencils, or colored markers
- A timer or stopwatch
- Optional: Post-it notes

## Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Distinguish between **Equality** (everyone gets the same) and **Equity** (everyone gets what they need to succeed).
- Apply **Justice**-based thinking to remove barriers in a school setting.
- Create an inclusive action plan for a community scenario.

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## 1. Introduction: The Cookie Dilemma (3 Minutes)

**The Hook:** Imagine your teacher has a box of 10 cookies for a class of 10 students. However, two students have severe nut allergies, and these cookies have walnuts. One student hasn't had breakfast and is dizzy with hunger. Another student just had a huge birthday cupcake and isn't hungry at all.

**The Question:** If the teacher gives exactly one cookie to every person, is that fair? Why or why not?

*(Think-Pair-Share or Mental Reflection):* Most people think "fair" means "equal," but true justice means making sure everyone actually gets to eat safely and stay healthy!

## 2. Body: I Do & We Do (7 Minutes)

**I Do (The Concept):** To solve problems like the cookie dilemma, we use three lenses:

- **Equality:** Giving everyone the exact same tool (Even if the tool doesn't work for them).
- **Equity:** Giving different tools so everyone has the same opportunity to reach the goal.
- **Justice:** Fixing the system so the "barrier" isn't there in the first place.

**We Do (Quick Practice):** Let's look at a school library that is only open during the 20-minute morning recess.

- *The Barrier:* Students who have band practice or extra math help during that time can never check out books.
- *The Equal Solution:* Keep the hours exactly the same for everyone. (Doesn't help!)
- *The Just Solution:* What could we change? (Ideas: Online book requests, a mobile book cart that visits classrooms, or opening the library before school starts).

### 3. The "You Do" Challenge: The Recess Revolution (10 Minutes)

**The Scenario:** Your school is building a brand-new "Adventure Zone" playground. The principal has released the first draft of the rules and design:

1. Only the 5th and 6th graders get to use the climbing wall (because they are the tallest).
2. The "Quiet Zone" for reading and drawing is located right next to the loud basketball court.
3. The ground is covered in deep woodchips, which makes it impossible for students using wheelchairs or crutches to move around.
4. There is only one soccer ball for 50 kids.

**Your Mission:** You are the "Chief Inclusion Architect." On your paper, create a **Justice Plan** to fix this playground. You must address at least three of the issues above.

#### Task Requirements:

- **Sketch or List:** Draw a quick map or write a list of your changes.
- **The "Why":** For each change, write one sentence explaining how it makes the school more inclusive or just.
- **The Decision:** If you can only afford one major upgrade, which one do you pick and why?

*(Set a timer for 10 minutes. Go!)*

### 4. Conclusion: Recap & Feedback (5 Minutes)

**Recap:** You've just moved from being a student to being a decision-maker! You looked at a system that worked for some people but left others out, and you used **Justice** to redesign it.

#### Success Criteria Check:

- Did your plan remove a barrier (like the woodchips or the height rule)?
- Did you consider students with different needs than your own?
- Can you explain the difference between giving everyone the "same" and giving everyone "access"?

**Final Reflection Question:** Think of one thing in your real life (at home, in sports, or at your community center) that feels "unfair." Based on what you learned today, what is one small change that could make it more "just" for everyone?

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### Differentiation & Adaptations

- **For Advanced Learners:** Add a "Budget Constraint." You have \$500. A ramp costs \$200, new soccer balls cost \$20 each, and moving the Quiet Zone costs \$100. Prioritize your spending and justify the cost.
- **For Learners Needing Scaffolding:** Use these sentence starters: "The woodchips are a barrier because..." and "My solution is to change the ground to..."
- **For Group Settings:** Have students present their "Top 1 Change" to the group and vote on which change has the biggest impact on inclusion.