Ripley’s Believe It or Not! St. Augustine features an incredible collection of over 800 UNIQUE, BIZARRE and INCREDIBLE artifacts. Our goal is to INSPIRE, INTRIGUE and SURPRISE guests with remarkable oddities of nature, science, art, history and humanity.

Our entire company is founded on the principle that all people are created equal and deserve to be treated as such. We should celebrate the fact that all people are not the same rather than exploit or abuse those who differ in appearance. We hope you will utilize these lessons in an effort to help children come to accept and celebrate all people from all walks of life. After all, we at Ripley’s believe that ‘ODD IS IN!’
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Robert Leroy Ripley was many things to many people. He was an artist, an entrepreneur, and a world traveler. He spent much of his adult life traveling the globe searching for exciting new cultures, rituals, and people! One thing Robert Ripley was not, was a bully. Through his travels, Ripley met some of the most interesting people from around the world. People who were tall, short, big, small, some who ate bugs, some who pierced their bodies with bone, and others who had spent their lives being ridiculed for their physical differences. He met women with full beards, men whose faces were entirely covered with hair, people that were over 8 feet tall, and those who were barely more than two feet tall. In the end, Robert Ripley welcomed them all into his home, on board his ship, and into every fiber of his life. In fact, he made them his life.

Ripley was very protective and caring towards those who were “different” than what our society says that they should be. In that day, sideshows featured what they called “Freaks.” Ripley would have none of that. To this day, the word has been banned from the company’s vocabulary. Our entire company is founded on the principle that all people are created equal and deserve to be treated as such. We should learn to appreciate the fact that all people are NOT the same and celebrate these differences rather than exploiting them or abusing those who differ in appearance or lifestyle. We hope that you will utilize these lessons in an effort to help children come to accept and celebrate all people from all walks of life. After all, we at Ripley’s believe that “ODD IS IN!”
Overview – Odd is IN! Bullying is OUT!

We all have a picture in our heads of what a bully is like. Unfortunately, these old school assumptions are usually wrong. Bullies don’t necessarily stalk kids during recess anymore. With the increase of technology in our lives, bullies are much more creative and have many more resources at hand by which to make other children (and adults!) feel out of place. This packet includes the following lessons about bullying:

• Identify the 4 different types of bullying.
  - Worksheets asking the kids to identify the types of bullying and to give examples of each.
• How to deal with bullying.
• Consequences of bullying and positive conflict resolution.
• Embracing our differences.

The very sad fact is that children are now turning to very real, very drastic measures to keep from being bullied. Some of these reactions are permanent and cause pain to families and friends who love them.

This is a great opportunity to have students share their thoughts and begin a real dialogue about how people are bullied and how it makes people feel. It is also time to stress that bullies aren’t just people who stuff kids in lockers and tie your shoelaces together! Bullying takes place in many forms, and they are all equally as damaging and wrong!
Physical Bullying: This is bullying by physical force, or the threat of using physical force.

a. What are some examples of physical bullying?

b. How do you think someone who is being physically bullied feels?

c. How would you react to being physically bullied?

d. What are some possible consequences of reacting that way?

e. What are some positive ways to deal with someone who is a physical bully?
Verbal Bullying: The act of using harsh or threatening words to make someone feel bad, or to intimidate them into doing something that they don’t want to do.

a. What are some examples of verbal bullying?

b. How do you think someone who is being verbally bullied feels?

c. How would you react if someone were verbally bullying you?

d. What are some possible consequences of reacting that way?

e. What are some positive ways to deal with someone who is bullying you verbally?
**Indirect Bullying**: This is when someone spreads rumors or gossip about a person to try to ruin their reputation or make them seem like a bad person.

a. What are some examples of indirect bullying?

b. How do you think that these behaviors might make a victim feel?

c. How would you react if someone was doing this to you?

d. What are some possible consequences of reacting that way?

e. What are some positive ways to deal with someone who is gossiping or spreading rumors about you?
Cyber Bullying: This is when people use computers, social media or other technology to harm people in a hostile manner.

a. What are some examples of cyber bullying?

b. How do you think this would make the person being bullied feel?

c. How would you react if someone were using the internet to bully you?

d. What are some possible consequences of reacting that way?

e. What are some positive ways to deal with cyber bullies?
Dealing with Bullying

Bullying is a big problem, one that many children do not yet possess the social skills to deal with in a positive manner. Bullying can make children feel inadequate, embarrassed, sad, hurt, or even make them physically sick. These are emotions that are hard for adults to deal with, much less children. One way to give children the emotional building blocks they need to deal with bullying is to build their self-esteem by showing that all people have worth and are exceptional in their own way. A good way for children to feel empowered and to learn the conflict resolution skills they need to deal with bullies is by role playing.

Now that the students have identified bullies and have discussed some positive ways to deal with them, let’s watch them put these solutions into action! On the next page are a few scenarios for the students to act out. When setting up the role playing, be very careful not to type-cast! Have the shy child play the bully, or vice versa.

Each role playing group should have 5 people:
- The bully
- The “supporter” who encourages the bully
- The “silent observer” who stands by and does nothing
- The victim.
- You can also come up with some of your own based on real life situations that you have encountered in your classroom!
Role Play Script

Scenario: A bully is using verbal and physical bullying to get another student to give him his lunch money.

Bully – “Hey, you, you look like you don’t need any lunch today. Give me your lunch money!”

Supporter – “Yeah give it to him”

Victim – (Trying to walk away) NO!

Bully – (jumps back in front of victim and knocks his books down) “I said give it to me now or I am going to punch you in the face in front of all of your baby friends.”

Victim – (Turns to look for help from the silent observer)

Silent Observer – (Doesn’t walk away, but looks downward as if to avoid the confrontation)

Bully – “I am counting to three, on three. Before I get there, I’d better have your cash!”

Victim – gives the bully his money

Discussion Questions

• What types of bullying did the bully use?
• How do you think the victim felt during the attack? How did he/she feel later that night? How did he/she feel coming to school the next day?
• Why do you think the supporter was helping the bully?
• How do you think the ‘Silent Observer’ felt?
• What could any of the participants done to help this situation either during the attack, or after?
• Why do you think the bully was acting like this?
• What did the bully’s supporter get out of helping him/her?
Embracing Our Differences

The truth is that everyone shares 99.99% of their genes! That makes all of us .01% uniquely individual!

How can we help children to appreciate their differences rather than abusing people for being different?

Ripley’s offers a wide variety of examples of people and animals that do not fit the customary “norms” of society. Many of these people were great ambassadors for people who are different. On the next page, you will find some examples of how genes make us uniquely who we are and this helps children realize that we have no control over many of these characteristics. There are also some examples of famous people within the Ripley world who have embraced their differences and have made a difference in the lives of millions of people who visit Ripley’s and enjoy “Embracing their inner odd!”
Hey, What Are Genes and Where Did They Come From?

Using the Internet or a dictionary, look up the following words and write the definitions:

Genes: ____________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________

Traits: __________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________

Mutation: ______________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________

Anomaly: _______________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________

Questions

1. Where do our genes come from?

2. Can we pick what genes we are born with?

3. Can we change our genes?

4. List some things about you that were determined by your genes.
None of us is perfect! We are all born with different traits that make us who we are. Even though some traits may not be visible right now, they can change as you get older! Here are some interesting statistics:

- **Believe It or Not...**

  - **75% of all adults require glasses, contacts or some kind of vision correction.** That is three out of every four people!
  - **Close to 20% of our world population is born with a disability!** That’s two out of every ten people.
  - **About 80% of people residing in the United States have imperfect teeth and could benefit from having braces.** That is eight out of every ten people!
  - **64% of our population is considered overweight or obese.** That means that more than half the people in the country are considered overweight!
  - **Over 130 million people in the United States have freckles!**
  - **Approximately 1% of the population in the world has a speech impediment.**
  - **4% of children under the age of 6 have crossed eyes.**
  - **One in every 600 babies in the world is born with extra limbs like arms, legs or even a tail!**
  - **75% of all adults require glasses, contacts or some kind of vision correction.** That is three out of every four people!
Robert Wadlow was the tallest documented man in history, standing at 8 feet, 11 inches. He had a genetic mutation called "hyperplasia" which caused his pituitary gland to release too much growth hormone. Robert continued to grow throughout his life, right up until the time of his death at the age of 22. In his later years, he required leg braces in order to help support his massive size.

Robert never gave up or used a wheelchair. He always insisted on walking, even when it made him uncomfortable. In spite of people who used to stare or make rude comments, Robert Waldow was commonly referred to as a “Gentle Giant.” His kindness towards everyone made him one of Ripley’s favorite characters.

DISCUSSION:
Some genetic anomalies can create physical pain or discomfort. Why would people feel good about themselves staring at or making fun of someone who is already in pain or has challenges to deal with?
Ching Foo of Shensi, China was born with a blue face that lasted throughout his life, and he isn’t the only one! There is actually an entire extended family that resides in the state of Kentucky and they, and many of their descendants, have blue skin! When asked about their condition, one person stated that there was pain associated with this condition. It was not an ache or pain that could be solved in a hospital lab. It was the pain of growing up blue in a world full of people who were all shades of beige, brown or black.

**Discussion Topics**

- What do you think the person meant by that statement?

- How would you feel if you had blue skin?

- How would you treat a new classmate if they came in to school today and they were blue?
Khagendra Thapa Magar is a tiny teen with a huge heart! Khagendra held the title as the world’s smallest teenager! Khagendra has a condition known as “Primordial Dwarfism.” This condition begins before birth and continues throughout the life span. Magar didn’t let his size hold him back! When Khagendra was born, he weighed only a little over a pound! When asked about his stature, he replied “I don’t consider myself a small man, I am a big man!”

Khagendra has a very important point when he said that he was a “Big man!” It is important in life that everyone sees themselves as “Big.” Everyone in this world has a voice and is important and deserves to be treated this way! A good way to start changing things in your world is to 1. See yourself as “Big!” You are important, you are special and you are uniquely you! 2. Treat others with respect because they are all “Big” too! Instead of bullying, embrace your inner odd and love the traits in you that make you special!
Supporting Cast at Ripley’s Believe It or Not!

If you live near an area with a Ripley’s Believe It or Not! you can see all of these genetic anomalies and many, many more! Many of our museums are home to wax figures of these and other individuals as well as animals that display genetic anomalies such as 6-legged cows, sheep with rabbit ears, and much, much more! Each of these displays offer show cards with definitions and descriptions to further the student’s education in dealing with people who may not be like themselves.

This opens many doors for further discussion in the classroom. You may want to use the scavenger hunt sheets for your visit to help increase awareness while the students are here. Thank you so much for taking part in Ripley’s “ODD IS IN” anti-bullying lessons and activities. It is important to us that all people see themselves as amazing additions to our planet. Everyone is different. We are all “Odd” in some respect. We want to encourage young people in particular to embrace their differences, or their “Inner odd,” and appreciate it in both themselves and others. Thank you and we hope you enjoyed the program!
Scavenger Hunt

1. List five characters you found in the museum that were born with a genetic anomaly and tell what trait led to them being displayed in Ripley’s.

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<th>Genetic Anomaly</th>
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2. List any animals that you found in the museum that displayed gene mutations and what trait that mutation caused.

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3. If you found any items used to cause harm or injury to another person because of their beliefs, nationality, religion, or appearance, what were they?

4. How do you think the people on the receiving end of the injuries felt?
5. **Scavenger Hunt**

Why do you think people would attack or harm people due to their appearance, beliefs, color, religion or appearance?

6. Find one person in the museum who survived and thrived even though they were different, and write a paragraph below on the individual. Make sure to answer all of the important questions such as:
   a. **Who** was it?
   b. **When** were they alive?
   c. **Where** did they live?
   d. **Why** did this happen?
   e. **What** happened to this person?