



## **BEING DIFFERENT IS DELICIOUS**

Several years ago, I made this fun little educational activity to help the students at my child's school to learn more about how to treat others with differences. What began in Ayden's classroom as a way to share dwarfism awareness and acceptance has now been shared in countless schools around the Puget Sound area.

Start by giving each student a paper cup with an average Oreo and a mini Oreo. I carry backups of fun size and mini 3 musketeer candies for those who are gluten free. Then begin some great dialogue....

OK .... today we are going to break the rules! Do you know how we are going to break the rules? We are going to play with our food. And I promise that very soon you are going to get to eat the food we are about to play with.

I have given you two Oreo cookies in a paper cup. We are going to use our senses to examine the cookies.

First, we are going to look at them. What do you see? (allow the students to offer observations)

They both have the word Oreo on them. They are both made up of two chocolate cookie wafers and they both have vanilla frosting in the middle.

Next let's touch them. What do you feel? (once again seek student input). They are both bumpy and they leave little crumbs on the end of your fingers. They both feel round

Now let's smell them. Oh goodness... they smell soooo good. The smell makes your tummy want to eat them so bad! I promise we will eat them soon. Do they smell the same or different? (engage in student feedback)

Next, we do the Oreo twist. Who knows how to do the Oreo twist? When we twist the two cookies apart you see that lots of frosting stays on one side of the cookie and only a little stay on the other side. It does that on both cookies, right? So, they are both exactly the same inside. They are filled with that yummy vanilla frosting.

So, what is the difference between the two Oreos?? One is an average Oreo and one is a mini Oreo. The only difference is the size, other than that they are exactly the same.

OK so now that we've determined that the two cookies are the same except for their size what do you think the Oreos want? " The unanimous answer will be .... "They want to be Eaten!" Would you eat the two cookies in a different manner? We are going to eat them exactly the same. We will chew them up, swallowed down and turn them to goosh in our stomach in the exact same manner. And they will taste so delicious when we do.

So now let's change it up a bit. Because, after all, there's mint, and birthday cake and double stuff and chocolate covered. So many yummy Oreo flavors. What's your favorite flavor of Oreo? (every kind under the sun will be mentioned)

What makes a mint Oreo look different... green frosting. How about birthday cake? .... it has sprinkles. How about pumpkin spice? It has pumpkin flavor and orange frosting. So, let's pretend for a minute that instead of us being people we are Oreo cookies and every different cookie is a unique quality in each of us. Sprinkles are glasses, vanilla Oreos are blonde hair, double stuff are kids extra big and mini are extra small.

Our world is a great big bag of Oreo people. Some have mint filling, some have sprinkles like those yummy birthday cake Oreos, some of us are mini and some are double stuff. We may have different flavors or colors. We all are different but, in the end,, we are all yummy people. Remember how we decided the cookies were all the same on the inside? So are all of s. We all want the same thing too. Do we wanted to be treated with kindness? Do we want to feel safe? Do we want to be pointed at or laughed at? Do we want to be included in activities on the playground? Do we want to be happy? So, what we've decided is that no matter what flavor of Oreo we are, we all want to be treated exactly the same.

Let's make a deal. Let's all agree to treat all the other Oreo people in our world with the same kindness we want for ourselves and let's seal the deal by eating our cookies! Ready.... 3...2...1 eat your delicious cookies!

Over the last few years I've shared a whole lot of Oreos and the kids were really happy to be able to eat them. But in the end... I hope a couple little cookies in a cup will give them a smile and help them remember that being different is delicious!



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