

## Fairness: Equity or Equality?

Does fairness mean everyone gets the same? What about people who have specific needs? In fact, fairness can only mean addressing everyone's specific needs. This is what we call inclusion.

This is one of the most effective and popular activities that help young people understand this notion of fairness – and be able to challenge the “it’s not fair” argument often resorted to by those who in fact are against inclusion and equality.

### Activity: Plasters for All!

Use a large sheet of paper or whiteboard to list some common pains:

- cut finger
- scratched leg
- headache
- elbow ache
- knee ache etc.

If using paper, stick it on a wall where it can be seen by everyone.

Ask the group to shout out one by one an injury or pain they have.

For each response give out a plaster (children love plasters!) whatever the injury or pain is.

Ask them what they thought about getting a plaster each. Some will be confused, wondering why their teacher gave them a plaster for a headache and may ask why.

Just say that it would be unfair if everyone did not get a plaster.

Then initiate questions followed by discussion:

Was it fair everyone getting a plaster?

Was everyone getting a plaster equal?

Did everyone getting a plaster help everyone?

Now, you can move on to a discussion about a child getting additional help in the class because they have a different mother tongue and therefore have difficulty grasping the local language. Here the additional help is the plaster.

Then you can explain that in our schools there are people who have different needs (e.g. people with disabilities, refugees) and if they are not addressed, they are likely to fall behind in their learning.

This will help young people aged 10+ to understand the concept of fairness and the difference between equity and equality.