



# Flip the Script

## Learning Guide

*Flip the Script* is a short film designed with and starring people with disabilities. Using a lens of comedic irony, the film speculates what the world of romance might look like if nondisabled people faced the same ableist experiences that disabled people often do in their relationships. Using humor both as entertainment and education, the film empowers viewers to confront everyday ableism and support diversity in romantic relationships.

When discussing *Flip The Script*, students should watch the video twice. Before watching the first time, provide minimal explanation. Only after viewing, hand out the guide for students and work through the initial discussion questions. Then watch a second time, pausing after each scene to work through the detailed discussion questions.



### Initial Discussion

1. What stands out to you in the video? What was the first thing this video brought to mind?
2. Was there anything that surprised you? Was there anything that confused you?
3. Which scene stood out to you as the most disempowering towards Ash? Why?
4. How would you summarize the overarching problem present in these scenes? *Ash is treated as though he is a burden instead of an equal partner with wants and needs. This de-humanizes Ash and doesn't recognize his autonomy.*
5. This video highlights ableism and ableist behaviors. How would you define ableism? *Ableism describes behaviors that treat disabled people as less important or capable than nondisabled people.*
6. Have you ever seen similar scenarios in your community?



## Detailed Discussion

1. What is the problematic behavior happening in each scene? How is this behavior harmful towards disabled people?
  - *Ash is disregarded as a worthy dating partner*
  - *He is treated like a child by Marin when crossing the street and is directly referred to as a "burden" by a stranger. This stranger can't conceive that Marin would date someone like Ash, which is a harmful assumption.*
  - *Ash is given a children's coloring sheet at the restaurant and Marin tries to order for him. The waiter also looks to Marin to order for Ash.*
  - *A student and teacher at school don't believe Ash needs his crutches (assistive device) for an injury he incurred. The teacher inappropriately takes Ash's crutches away from him.*
  - *The store clerk doesn't sell Ash condoms as he doesn't believe Ash is mature enough to use them, even though interest in sex is developmentally appropriate for someone Ash's age.*
2. In the opening scene, Marin receives a lot of praise for asking Ash to the prom. How could over-celebrating people who are interested in disabled partners be harmful? *Over-celebrating this reinforces the idea that someone with a disability is not a worthy dating partner and that they don't bring value to relationships.*
  - *How might this kind of attitude contribute to other harmful sexual health perceptions of people with disabilities? Believing that disabled people aren't worthy or cannot offer anything to others de-humanizes and belittles them. This attitude may lead caregivers and other professionals to withhold basic sexual health information, such as consent and healthy relationship education as well as STI and pregnancy prevention practices. Everyone is deserving of this necessary education as it helps ensure individuals' safety.*
3. How is Ash treated as a romantic partner by Marin? *Ash is treated as if he is not an equal part of the relationship and is under the care of Marin. This subjugates Ash as a person and does not respect his autonomy.*
4. How is Ash treated as a romantic partner by others? *Ash is disregarded entirely as a dating partner and is treated as too immature for dating or having an interest in sex.*
5. How would you rewrite each scene to show more respectful behavior to Ash?

## 1 **Breakout Activities**

**Option 1: Find Examples** – By searching online and thinking about social media and TV you've seen related to relationships or sexuality, find two examples of posts or actions that are ableist or discriminatory to people with disabilities. Explain what is problematic in each one and what would be a better choice.

- *Example:*
  - *Wheelchair Rapunzel – Disability and Pregnancy*

**Option 2: Action Project** – Write a plan for one small way you can promote equality and access for disabled people in your everyday life. After confirming it with your teacher, find an opportunity to put this plan into action over the next week, and write about how it went.

- *Make a plan for a respectful and fact-based way to respond the next time you hear or see someone make an ableist statement or action. If the target of the comment is present, check with them to make sure they want your help.*
- *If you notice inaccessible places or practices in your community, share this information with community leaders and advocate for accessibility.*
- *Share what you learned in class today with two friends. Write about how the conversation went.*