

WNY Blue Rose Foundation

For all age levels

Girl Scouts of Western New York (Legacy Council Girl Scouts of Buffalo and Erie County)

The Blue Rose Patch Daisies, Brownies and Juniors will develop a deeper understanding and respect for others as well as themselves. They will have an opportunity to share and express their feelings about disabilities and to better understand that everyone has strengths and weaknesses.

Cadettes, Seniors and Ambassadors will see how the topic of developmental disabilities can be exemplified through the arts – a story, musical composition and a theatrical performance. They will delve into the motivations behind the author, composer, photographer, model and others who have contributed to *The Blue Rose* in various ways. They will learn the terminology, history, prevalence and current practices related to developmental disabilities.

DAISIES

After someone has read *The Blue Rose* to you –

Discover – Complete one of the following activities:

1. Talk about what you think Jenny feels. Have you ever felt like she does? If you did, what did you do? What should Jenny do?
2. Everyone has strengths and weaknesses. Name one of Jenny's strengths and one of her weaknesses. Name one of your strengths and one of your weaknesses.
3. Make a blue rose out of paper and pipe cleaners (design provided by The Blue Rose Foundation) or create your own kind of blue rose. Why are people interested in things that are different (e.g. a blue rose)?
4. Draw a picture that has to do with Jenny's story (i.e. Jenny playing with the kitten or a gardener trying to grow a blue rose). Draw yourself in the picture.

Connect – Complete one of the following activities:

1. Pretend you are Jenny's friend. What can you do to show that you are a really good friend?
2. Draw a picture that shows you, Jenny and other children playing together. What are some happy words that you can use to describe your picture?
3. How do you think Jenny feels when other children call her names? How would you feel if you were called names?

Take Action – Complete one of the following activities:

1. When you are sad, how do you want people to help you? If you met Jenny and she said she was sad, what would you do for her? What would you say?
2. What kinds of things do you think you and Jenny would enjoy doing together? If you went to Jenny's birthday party, what would you like to give her?

Special Combined Option (Discover, Connect, Take Action): If *The Blue Rose* is being performed near you, attend the play and talk about it with others.

BROWNIES

After someone has read to you *The Blue Rose* or you have read *The Blue Rose* -

Discover – Complete one of the following activities:

1. Explain what you liked about the story. If there is anything you didn't understand, ask someone to help you with the answer.
2. What did you learn about Jenny's disabilities? What did you learn about Jenny's abilities? Everyone has strengths and weaknesses. What strengths and weaknesses do you have?
3. Why is the story of Jenny important? Why should people read *The Blue Rose*?

Connect – Complete one of the following activities:

1. If you were Jenny, how would you like to be treated by your family and friends?
2. If Jenny were in your class, would you invite her to your birthday party? Why or why not?
3. What would you say to someone who is afraid of people with disabilities and doesn't understand them?

Take Action – Complete one of the following activities:

1. Discover two ways that you can help children with disabilities in your school.
2. Decide what you would say or do if you hear someone being mean to a person with disabilities.

Special Combined Option (Discover, Connect, Take Action): If is being performed near you, attend the play. Prepare 2 questions for the Question and Answer session. If you do not get your answers at the play, find out the answers later with your troop. What did you learn from *The Blue Rose* book and *The Blue Rose* play?

JUNIORS

After reading *The Blue Rose* -

Discover – Complete two of the following activities:

1. There are many things to be learned about disabilities through the story of Jenny in *The Blue Rose*. Name five.
2. What are 2 characteristics about Jenny that are similar to yours? What are 2 characteristics about Jenny that are different from you?
3. Find a definition of developmental disabilities that is used today. Find out what terms were used for disabilities 50 years ago or more.

Connect – Complete one of the following activities:

1. For the 2008 edition of *The Blue Rose*, Kelsie, a child with disabilities, volunteered to be photographed for the book as the model for Jenny. Why do you think she did this? If you were Kelsie, would you have done the same thing?
2. You decide to audition for *The Blue Rose* play. You are chosen to be one of the friends in the play. How do you think you should act?

Take Action – Complete one of the following activities:

1. Find a group of children younger than you and read *The Blue Rose* to them. Make a list of questions for them ahead of time. Write down their responses after the reading. Write down what you learned from them.
2. Find out from your parents, grandparents or other adults how children with disabilities were treated when they were in school. How were things different then from how they are today?
3. Talk with a friend and decide what to do if you hear someone calling someone else a name or bullying them. Ask your scout leader if your idea is a good one.

Special Combined Option (Discover, Connect, Take Action): If is being performed near you, attend the play. Prepare 2 questions for the Question and Answer session. If you do not get your answers at the play, find out the answers later with your troop. What did you learn from *The Blue Rose* book and *The Blue Rose* play? Would you like to have been in the play? Why or Why not?

CADETTES, SENIORS and AMBASSADORS

Discover – Cadettes complete one; Seniors complete two; and Ambassadors complete three of the following activities:

1. Find out why Gerda Weissmann Klein wrote *The Blue Rose*. Look up several articles about her and then decide what characteristics best describe her. Gerda often says that she, too, is like a blue rose. Explain in your own words why she would say that.
2. Errol Daniels was the photographer for *The Blue Rose*, 2008 edition. Look up some information about him. What characteristics does he have that helped him achieve the best photos of the model, Kelsie, as Jenny in the book? List at least three.
3. When Vincent Ho was a teenager, he read *The Blue Rose* while waiting for his music lesson. He was so moved by the story, he wrote the music, *The Blue Rose*, for woodwind quintet. He gave the music to *The Blue Rose* Foundation. Listen to the music. How does the music relate to the story? What message does he have in the music?
4. Find a copy of the 1974 edition of *The Blue Rose* or the Reader's Digest version, 1978. Compare it with the 2008 edition. Describe three ways they are alike and three ways they are different.

Connect and Take Action – Cadettes complete one, Seniors complete two and Ambassadors complete three of the following activities:

(Proper permission and clearances should be obtained and documented by/for the Girl Scout Leader)

1. Interview a person who works in the field of disabilities. Ask that person to:
 - Describe his/her job and explain why they chose to work in this field
 - Explain what is being accomplished for persons with disabilities
 - Outline what needs still exist

Write a brief report. Make your own comments regarding what you learned. Write a thank you note to the person.

2. Visit a group home. Talk with at least two members of the staff and two people living there. Prepare at least five questions ahead of time. Write a brief report. Make your own comments regarding what you learned. Write a thank you note to the group home.
3. Look up disabilities statistics on the internet and find data on the international, national, state and county levels. Put them in a chart. Share them with your troop and with your school. Describe your reaction to your findings.
4. Find a support group for teens with disabilities, teens who have siblings with disabilities or other group approved by your scout leader. Get permission to attend a meeting. Write a brief report including what you learned and what were your reactions. Write a thank you note to the group.
5. The use of language changes over time. Sometimes a good word later becomes a bad word. Look up these terms that are part of the history of disabilities: imbecile, idiot, moron, "ship of fools". Look up today's meaning of mental retardation. The term, "retard" has been called the most offensive word. (It is included in *The Blue Rose* book to emphasize this fact.) What do you think should be done to change this? Write a report

including the definitions of the words above and include what actions you think should be taken.

6. If *The Blue Rose* is being performed near you, attend the play. Prepare three questions for the Question and Answer session at the end of the play. Take notes on all the answers to the questions of the audience. For each question and answer (do at least five), explain why you think the person asked the question; describe the answers and whom it was that gave the answer. Summarize your own thoughts about the performance and question and answer session.

Special option in place of all the above:

With your troop's support and the permission of *The Blue Rose* Foundation, arrange for a performance of *The Blue Rose* and/ or *The Blue Rose* music.