Lesson Plan: Help Bea Find a Way

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Accessibility Exercise • The Great Harvest Maze • Bea Butternut • Ages 4–6 • Accessibility



Lesson at a glance

Children roll a toy "Bea" through the classroom, find the places she can't go, and invent fixes so everybody can get in.

Book	The Great Harvest Maze (Pumpkin's Patch) by Robert Ancill
Character	Bea Butternut
Ages	4–6
Theme	Accessibility: making places work for everybody
Time	45 minutes (or two 25-minute sessions)
Group size	Whole class, then teams of 3–4

By the end, children can:

- explain that Bea rolls on wheels instead of walking
- spot a barrier: something that stops Bea getting somewhere
- suggest a fix, like a ramp, a wider gap or a lower shelf
- say why a fix helps more people than just Bea

You will need:

- the book *The Great Harvest Maze*
- 1 toy car or small box on wheels per team, with a paper Bea taped on (template idea: print Bea's character card and cut her out)
- building blocks, books and cushions to make "steps"
- strips of card or thin board for ramps
- masking tape, sticky dots or paper arrows
- the barrier and fix cards below (printed and cut out)

Meet Bea

Bea Butternut doesn't walk. She rolls! Her wheels zip down hills and spin in circles, and in the maze her wheel tracks help her friends see where they have already been.



Say it simply: "Bea's roots never grew quite right, so her legs don't walk. Her wheels are how she gets around, like some people use a wheelchair."

The big idea for today: Bea is not the problem; a step is. When we change the place, Bea can go everywhere her friends go.



In The Great Harvest Maze, Bea's tracks help everybody.

Companion story: in *Bea and the Big Hill*, the stony steps stop Bea, so the friends make a zigzag path. Then Mrs. Marrow and Baby Pip in his pram can get to the top too.





Steps stopped Bea. A path works for everybody.

Step by step

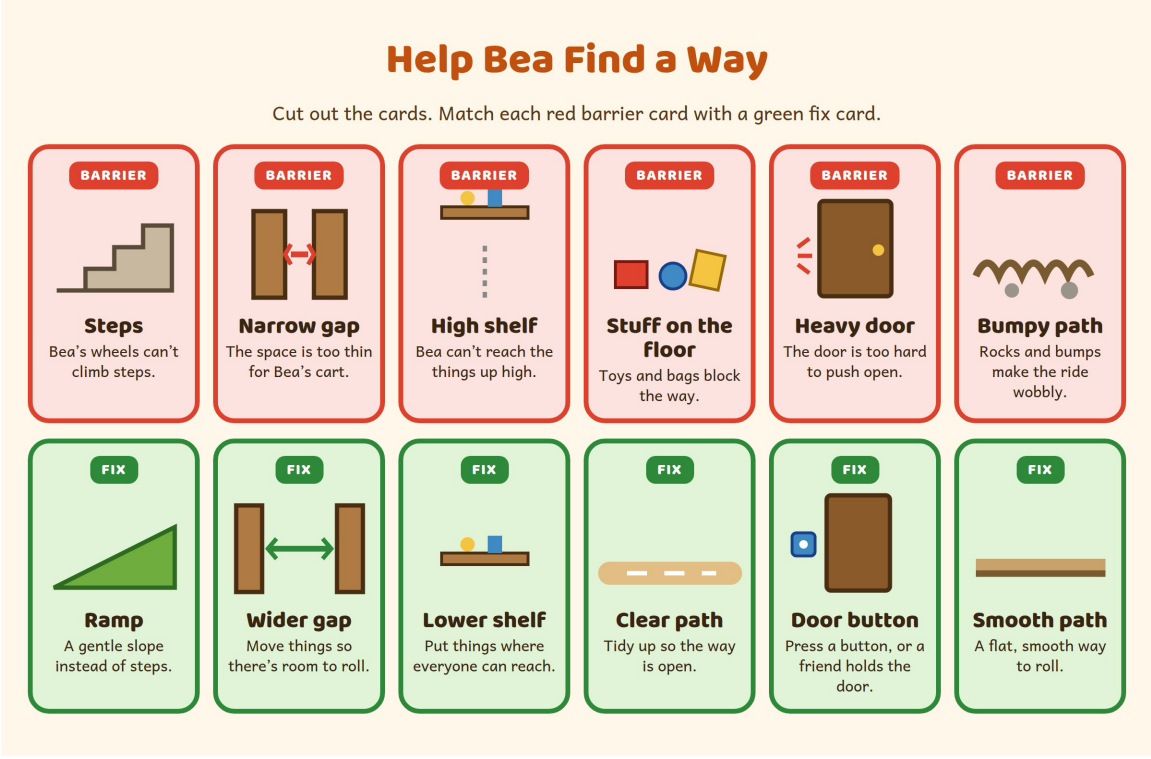
Five parts, 45 minutes in all; the exercise in step 3 is the heart of the lesson.

1. **Warm-up: How do you get around? (5 min)**
    - Ask: "How did you get to school today?" (walking, car, bus, stroller, bike, scooter)
    - "People get around in lots of ways. Some people use wheels, like a wheelchair."
    - Show Bea's card. "This is Bea. She rolls on wheels!"
2. **Read the story (10 min)**
    - Read *The Great Harvest Maze*. Pause on page 3 ("Zoooom!") and page 16 (Bea's tracks).
    - Ask: "How did Bea's wheels help her friends in the maze?"

3. **The exercise: Help Bea Find a Way (15 min)**
    - Before class, set up a short route around the room: the door, the book corner, the snack table and the reading rug.
    - On the route, place 4 or 5 barriers: a step made of books, a gap between chairs too narrow for the car, a basket of toys in the way, a shelf with the snack too high.
    - Teams take turns to roll their toy Bea along the route. When Bea gets stuck, the team shouts "Stop! Barrier!" and puts a red barrier card there.
    - Keep a tally on the board: how many barriers did Bea meet?
4. **Fix-it time (10 min)**
    - Each team picks one barrier and builds a fix: a card ramp over the book step, moving chairs apart, tidying the toys, lowering the snack.
    - They place a green fix card next to it.
    - Roll Bea along the whole route again. Cheer each time she gets through!
5. **Share and celebrate (5 min)**
    - "Who else could use our ramp?" (a friend with a hurt leg, a baby in a stroller, a delivery cart, Mrs. Marrow with her walking stick)
    - Finish with the silent cheer from the book: leaves up high, and wiggle!

Barrier and fix cards

Print this sheet, cut out the 12 cards, and use them in steps 3 and 4; children can also play a matching game with them.



Red barrier card	Green fix card
Steps	Ramp
Narrow gap	Wider gap
High shelf	Lower shelf
Stuff on the floor	Clear path
Heavy door	Door button, or a friend holds the door
Bumpy path	Smooth path

Matching game: lay all the cards face down. Children turn over two at a time and keep any barrier and fix that go together.

Questions to ask

Use these during the exercise and at the end; there are no wrong answers, only good ideas.

While Bea rolls

- "Uh-oh, Bea is stuck! What is stopping her?"
- "Could Bea get to the snack table on her own? Why not?"
- "How would you feel if you couldn't get to the reading rug with your friends?"

At fix-it time

- "What could we change so Bea can get through?"
- "Does Bea need to change, or does the room need to change?"
- "Is there more than one way to fix it?"

To finish

- "Who else does our ramp help?"
- "Can you find a barrier in our school? What could fix it?"
- "In the story, how did Bea help her friends?"

Extensions and support

Adjust the exercise for your group, then check what children learned.

Make it easier (age 4)

- Use 2 or 3 barriers only, all on the floor.
- Do the exercise as one whole group, with the teacher rolling Bea.
- Use only the steps, ramp, toys and clear path cards.

Make it harder (ages 5–6)

- Let children set up the barriers for another team to find.
- Ask them to draw a map of the route and mark each barrier and fix.
- Go on a school walk to spot real ramps, elevators, wide doors and door buttons.

Every child can join in

- Children who use wheelchairs, walkers or crutches can lead the route as the experts, if they would like to.
- Offer picture cards for children who don't speak much or are learning English.
- Keep cheering quiet with the silent cheer for children who find noise hard.

Check understanding

- ☐ Child can point to a barrier and say why it stops Bea
- ☐ Child can suggest a fix
- ☐ Child can name someone else a fix helps
- ☐ Child uses kind words about how people get around

Take-home challenge

Send this home after the lesson.

> ***Today we helped Bea find a way!***
>
> *Bea Butternut, from the Pumpkin's Patch books, rolls on wheels instead of walking. We built ramps and cleared paths in our classroom so Bea could go everywhere her friends go.*
>
> ***Your family challenge:*** *go on a "Bea walk" around your home, street or park.*
>
> - Can you spot a **ramp**?
> - Can you find a **door button** or an **elevator**?
> - Is there a **step** that would stop Bea? What could fix it?
>
> *Draw one thing you found and bring it to class to share.*
>
> *Steps can stop Bea. A path works for everybody.*

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