CAST OF CHARACTERS
(Four Men, Ten Women, Flexible)

JESSICA........................................ Typical high school students. (33 lines)
JEN.............................................. (23 lines)
RANA......................................... (23 lines)
JUDY........................................... (12 lines)
JEFF............................................. (55 lines)
JESSE.......................................... (31 lines)
SCOTT......................................... (13 lines)
ADAM........................................... (33 lines)
TEACHER .................................... It can be a student, but it is more effective if it is an adult. (24 lines)
VOICE.......................................... Male or female. (19 lines)
GIRL #1, #2, #3, #4 ....................... Typical high school students.
(GIRL #1: 2 lines; GIRL #2: 1 line; GIRL #3: 1 line; GIRL #4: 1 line)

EXTRAS....................................... Students.

PRODUCTION NOTES

• The set is simple with a backdrop depicting popular phrases, people, and groups or cliques familiar to the students at your school. Chairs, blackboard, and miscellaneous props.

• Lighting is general except during the “Life” game show scene.

• Sound effects: school passing bell/tone and a microphone off stage for the VOICE.

• This twenty minute play covers an array of issues involving tolerance. Originally performed at Rock Falls High School in Rock Falls, Illinois, the school combined performance of this play with other “tolerance” activities such as a food fair and students holding hands around the school.

• Please update statistics and pop culture references as necessary. The statistics were found at the Children’s Defense Fund web site (CDF: www.childrensdefense.org)
ACT ONE

VOICE: (From offstage microphone.) Ask almost anyone their opinion on prejudice, racism, or sexism in the world today and they’ll reply:
ALL: Yes, it occurs, yes it should be stopped, however stopping it should not interfere with my daily life!

STUDENTS enter alternating from stage right and stage left. They meet, crossing at center stage and stand at various points on the stage.

RANA: Prep!
SCOTT: Skank.
JEFF: Devil boy.
JEN: Freak.
JESSE: Ho!
JESSICA: Dumb jock.
VOICE: (On microphone.) Ask almost anyone at this school about cliques and they’ll reply:
ALL: Yes, it occurs, yes it should be stopped, however stopping it should not interfere with my daily life!
ADAM: Slut.
JUDY: Queer.
SCOTT: Loser.
JESSICA: Hick.
JEFF: Band fag.
ADAM: Drama queen.
JEFF/JESSICA: Prejudice.
JEN/JESSE: Acceptance.
RANA/SCOTT: Intolerance.
JUDY/ADAM: Diversity.
VOICE: (On microphone.) Ask almost any of us if intolerance is a problem and they’ll reply:
ALL: Yes, it occurs, yes it should be stopped, however stopping it should not interfere with my daily life!
VOICE: Welcome to my daily life!

*Offstage bell rings, STUDENTS except JESSE assume classroom positions in chairs downstage left.*

TEACHER: *(Entering stage right.)* Okay, okay, let’s get started here. Attendance. *(Takes attendance.)* Hey great game last night. *(Slaps high five.)*

JEFF: Thanks!

TEACHER: *(JESSE rushes in late upstage right.)* Well I’m glad you could join us *(Under breath.)* finish that cigarette? *(JESSE reacts, shrinks in seat, others look disgusted, other students make sarcastic comments.)*

JESSE: I was in the bathroom.

TEACHER: Whatever. Okay, yesterday we were talking about differences and stereotypes. Today, I’d like to continue our discussion on the subject of *(Writing on board.)* T-O-L-E-R-A-N-C-E. What is tolerance?

JEFF: *(Energetically.)* The ability to accept others for their individual differences and avoid things like stereotypes and prejudice and words like –

TEACHER: Okay, okay, I think we get the point. Now let’s discuss the opposite of tolerance Jesse.

JESSE: Yeah.

TEACHER: What is the opposite of tolerance?

JESSE pauses.

TEACHER: Come on, just two letters, opposite of “out.”

JESSE: *(Embarrassed.)* I don’t know.

TEACHER: It’s not rocket science. How about “in”? *(Writing on board.)*

JESSE: *(Softly.)* Oh.

TEACHER: Boy, talk about a shallow gene pool there.

JESSICA: And no lifeguard on duty! *(Class laughs.)*

TEACHER: You got that right. *(Laughs.)* Today we’re going to do an activity I learned and I invited a special guest to help lead us through it.
MY DAILY LIFE

RANA: *(Stands up from teacher’s chair.)* Actually, I would like to add one thing to what your teacher said in the introduction, another word for tolerance would be diversity and we’re going to begin today’s discussion by identifying what groups are here at Jefferson High School. *(Replace school with name of your school. TEACHER sits at desk with newspaper.)*

STUDENTS list “groups” on the board as other students shout them out. For example, “Preps,” “Jocks.” The “groups” stay on the board for the entire show. Identify cliques familiar to your school.

RANA: *(Passing out papers.)* This explains what’s going to happen and here are the directions. Each one of you is going to take a turn assuming the role of someone not in your “group.” *(Students wad up papers and throw them on the floor.)*

JUDY: How will we know who’s different?
RANA: You won’t know until after the role-play is over. Alright who’s going first?
STUDENTS: What do we do?
RANA: Just draw a piece of paper and that will be the role you will assume.
STUDENTS: How do we know when to start?
RANA: Trust me, you’ll know.

Bell rings, all students except JEN, JEFF, and ADAM turn their backs to the audience. JEFF and ADAM meet at center stage. They cross and bump into each other. ADAM is carrying an instrument and JEFF a basketball. RANA is seated center stage with a remote control and a book.

JEFF: Band geek.
ADAM: Dumb jock. *(The two begin walking towards each other.)*
JEFF: What are you going to do, beat me with your [instrument]???
ADAM: Anyone can bounce a ball.
JEFF: Love the lipstick Satan.
ADAM: Can you spell Satan?
JEFF: You call that crap, music? (JEFF and ADAM should be face to face now.)

RANA stops them and exchanges props between the two.

JEFF: (To audience.) They really do sound great in a parade.
ADAM: (To audience.) I wish I had the coordination to play basketball.
JEFF: I guess it does take guts to stand out so much.
ADAM: It must be hard to keep your grades up during the season.
JEFF: I kinda like classical music but my friends think it’s gay.
ADAM: I don’t think I could lose the weight like they do.

RANA stops them again, smiles, and exchanges props then sits and pushes start.

JEFF: Band’s a sport?
ADAM: Is it fun rolling around with other guys?
JEFF: At least I get medals for doing it.
ADAM: Eleven, is that your number or IQ?
JEFF: Oh yeah, one time at band camp.

RANA throws book down, stops them again.

JEFF/ADAM: (Looking at RANA.) What!

Backing to spots.

JEFF: You expect me to say hello to this goober?
ADAM: He’s cool when he’s not with his friends.
JEFF: If I say “hi” to him, my friends will kill me.
ADAM: He’s such a jerk!
JEFF: It’s either make fun of him or get made fun of.
JEFF/ADAM: We have nothing in common!
JEN: So? (Picks up chair and leaves.)

JEFF and ADAM meet and just walk by.
JEFF: Hey. *(Looks back.)*
ADAM: *(Nods.)* Hey, what’s up?

*Bell rings, STUDENTS turn chairs around.*

TEACHER: Okay, okay let’s get class started.
ANNOUNCEMENT: *(On microphone.)* Good morning. We’d like to congratulate the chess club on their fantastic come-from-behind victory last night. Special recognition to individual champion, Quentin. There will be a fire drill fourth hour and tickets for homecoming will be on sale during lunch.
SCOTT: What about the game on Friday?
TEACHER: There’s a game Friday?
SCOTT: *(Upset.)* Yeah, and it’s a home game.
TEACHER: Oh, I’m just sure they forgot. Hey, Quentin, great match last night. You guys are awesome.
JESSE: Thanks.
SCOTT: I am so sick and tired of sports being ignored around here.
JUDY: Yeah, I mean I play basketball and nobody ever notices us here. Basketball is something you can use in your daily life.
JESSE: Well, chess forces you to use your mind and logical expression which is something you can use in your daily life, too.
JESSICA: Oh yeah? Well there’s been a proven correlation between band and mathematical ability which is something you can always use in your daily life.
RANA: I run cross country and running is something I will do even after high school, every day.
JEFF: What about speech and drama? We use the skills we learn there all the time in our daily lives.
VOICE: Regardless of what you choose to do in high school, we must all remember that it will affect the rest of our lives. The things we learn in school and through extra-curricular activities provide us with the building blocks we need for our future.
TEACHER: Okay, class, let’s get started. *(STUDENTS sit.)*
VOICE: (On microphone.) Good morning. We’d like to congratulate the chess club on their fantastic come-from-behind victory last night. Special recognition to individual champion, Quentin. There will be a volleyball game tonight at seven, a football game Friday, the band will be performing at halftime, the fall play will be in two weeks, and the cross country team is competing on Saturday. Remember, what you choose to do today will affect who you become tomorrow. (STUDENTS should stand as their activity is mentioned.)

Bell rings, JEFF and JESSICA take center stage in two chairs, the rest of the cast turns their backs to the audience.

JEFF: (Pulls in to drive.) Listen, I think we need to talk.
JESSICA: Talk?
JEFF: Yeah, you know about us.
JESSICA: About us? Where are we going?
JEFF: Just over here. Yeah, we’ve been going out for a while -
JESSICA: Yeah.
JEFF: Anyway, you know we make out all the time and stuff but I think it’s time for the next step.

JESSICA: Wait a minute, I know what this is.
JEFF: Alrighty then.
JESSICA: This is the part where you let me know how much you love me and how special it is and blah, blah, blah.
JEFF: What are you talking about?
JESSICA: Listen, I think we really need to talk!
JEFF: About what?

Scene breaks, JESSICA and JEFF switch spots.

JESSICA: Listen, I think we need to talk.
JEFF: Talk?
JESSICA: Yeah, you know about us.
JEFF: About us? Where are we going?
JESSICA: Just over here. Yeah, we’ve been going out for a while -
JEFF: Yeah.
JESSICA: Anyway you know we make out all the time and stuff but I think it’s time for the next step.

JEFF: What do you mean?

JESSICA: You’re an intelligent guy, do I have to spell it out for you? You know we’re right there and all and it’s time to go for the next step. You know you’re the only guy for me, I’ve told you that a thousand times.

JEFF: I wasn’t brought up that way, I was taught that sex was supposed to be something special.

JESSICA: It is special, it’s the most special thing and I think we’re ready for that special thing.

JEFF: I don’t think we’re ready.

JESSICA: Well, if we can’t take that next step, I don’t know how much longer we can do this.

JEFF: So what are you saying?

JESSICA: I’m saying . . . I’m saying that if you really loved me, you’d do this.

JEFF: If you really loved me, you’d wait.

JESSICA: I’ve been waiting two weeks! (One of the STUDENTS walks behind the group with a sign that says, YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED.)

Break to FEMALE STUDENTS the next day sitting and standing around the two chairs at center stage.

JUDY: So did you score last night?

JESSICA: Yeah, he was so good and all over me.

JEN: He’s such a slut, you’re not going to keep seeing him, are you?

RANA: No way, he’s just the disposable kind anyway.

JUDY: Cool, look here he comes.

JEN: Hey Jeff what’s going on? (Giggles.)

JEFF: Hi. (Tries to hold hand, she takes it away.) Can we talk?

JESSICA: (Steps from group to downstage right) Yeah, what do you want?

JEFF: About last night.

JESSICA: What about last night. (Group laughs overhearing.)

JEFF: (Looks uncomfortable.) It’s just it really meant a lot to me.
JESSICA: Look, about that, I don’t think I can see you anymore.  
   (Group laughs.)
JEFF: What are you talking about?
JESSICA: Well, you’re sweet and everything, but I’m kinda busy and all.
JEFF: I don’t understand.

FEMALES walk away stage left, except JUDY.

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