



## Sport of the Month



bowling

# November

This month's theme: **fairness**

### Goals:

- Help students understand the meaning and value of fairness in sports as well as in daily life.
- Help students to understand that fair play is as important as competition and effort.
- Help students to recognize when fairness is not a part of competition and how to correct it.

### Bowling in Special Olympics

Although bowling is not part of the Olympics, it is among the most popular sports in Special Olympics. Participants of many different ages and with different degrees of athletic ability can participate. They benefit not only from the exercise but also from the social aspects of the game.

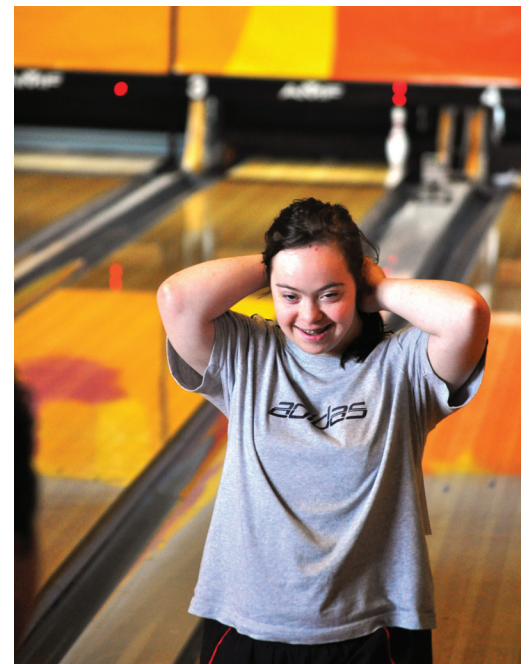
How do Special Olympics activities impact students? Here's how one teacher answered:

*"We have created an expectation in our school community—all students should be included, respected, and treasured whenever it is in the best interest of the kids. Our administration and staff are very supportive."*

### Week 1:

Share Special Olympics' video "Sport Teaches Us" with your class. (Video can be found at <http://www.specialolympics.org/educators>.) Engage students in a discussion: *Why was Special Olympics formed? How are Special Olympics athletes like you? What do you have in common?*

Next, share Special Olympics' video "It's All About Unity" with your class. (Video can be found at <http://www.specialolympics.org/educators>.) Engage students in a discussion: *What does the word unity mean to you? How are unity and fairness related? How important are the words unity and fairness in Special Olympics? How would a sport like bowling positively impact a Special Olympics athlete? What about a sport like cycling, soccer, or volleyball?*





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## Take Action!

- Explain to students that anyone is invited to cheer on the athletes at a Special Olympics event. Share the dates for upcoming local events and encourage students to gather a group of friends and make plans to be Fans in the Stands at a local Special Olympics event!



## November events:

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### Week 2:

This week, begin by asking your students if they have ever taken an oath. Discuss the following questions:

- What is an oath?
- Can you think of others who are required to take an oath? (presidents, public officials, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, witnesses in a courtroom)
- Why do people take oaths?

Read aloud as you write the Special Olympics Athlete Oath on the board:  
*Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt.*

Explain that Special Olympics participants take this oath before competing and that gladiators spoke these same words in ancient Rome as they entered the arena and prepared for battle. Ask students, “What do you think this oath means?” and have them relate the oath to sports or competitive activities in which they’ve participated. Continue the discussion with questions like these:

- What is it like to want to win?
- How does it feel to lose?
- How is a sports competition like a battle?
- Why must athletes be brave?
- Why must Special Olympics athletes be brave? What challenges might they face while competing?

Finally, divide your class into small groups and challenge each group to come up with a short, well-written oath of their own. The oath should include the words *unity* and *fairness* and refer not just to sports in their school and community, but to the way they treat friends and classmates as well. Have the entire class vote on a favorite oath and post it in your classroom.

### Week 3:

Review what the students have learned about Special Olympics and Special Olympics athletes in the first two weeks of November. You may want to review the videos from Week 1. Also, be sure to review the oath that the class selected from Week 2.

As a class, watch the online videos “I Am Eric” and “Not Acceptable” (links are available at <http://www.specialolympics.org/educators>). Then, in their writing journals, have your students reflect on what these videos mean to them and what additional steps they may be able to take both within the school community and the community at large to continue to treat others with fairness each day.



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Week 4:



## Project UNIFY®

Special Olympics Project UNIFY uses sports and education programs to activate young people to develop school communities where all students are agents of change—fostering respect, dignity, and advocacy for people with intellectual disabilities. Learn more about Project UNIFY at <http://www.specialolympics.org/educators>.

It's time to gather students together and take the next step in planning a "Spread the Word to End the Word" campaign, which you'll implement in March.

Use resources available at <http://www.specialolympics.org/educators>. Assign small groups to review different resources and report the information back to the group. Brainstorm a list of what your class campaign might include; then create a timeline of things to do leading up to the March event. Form committees to take care of promotions, social media (as appropriate for your students' ages), communicating information about Special Olympics, outreach and volunteer sign-ups, and so forth.

