



Special Olympics

get into it

education and engagement tools
for teachers and students



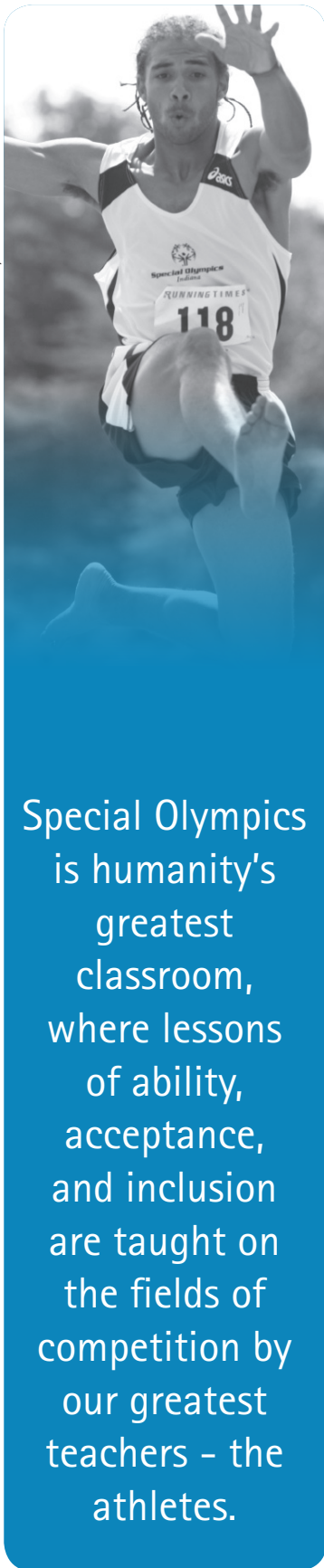
Activity 1: 9-12 Lessons SO...What's the Challenge?

Activity Overview:

This lesson begins with an immersive experience where students are randomly given different rights within the classroom, prompting reflection on the personal and societal impact of treating people differently based on something not in their control. They examine their personal experiences with intolerance, as a victim or a perpetrator, and consider the consequences of standing by as others are targeted. They watch an authentic story about a group of teenagers who mock a young girl because of her intellectual disability and examine examples from history when intolerance and prejudice had a significant negative effect. They identify the roots of intolerance and prejudice, and brainstorm strategies and solutions for overcoming them. They then brainstorm about how intolerance and prejudice could be reversed, particularly with kids their age. Finally, they create a product to influence their peers to show tolerance toward those with intellectual disabilities. This lesson would work well in a unit that explores civic responsibility, societal influence, human experience, or peer pressure.

Activity 1: SO...What's the Challenge?

PHOTO BY: Ryan Eades



Special Olympics is humanity's greatest classroom, where lessons of ability, acceptance, and inclusion are taught on the fields of competition by our greatest teachers - the athletes.

Cross-Curricular Connections:

In addition to language arts, this lesson extends into social studies — particularly civic responsibility — as well as service-learning and technology. Students examine the rights of those with intellectual disabilities and the responsibilities of all citizens to help protect those rights. Students reflect and examine the problems and issues related to tolerance/inclusion within their school and community, which helps them assess the community and begin to address community needs, both parts of a traditional service-learning curriculum. Finally, the lesson's conclusion challenges students to create a technology-related product that helps empower their generation.

Academic Skills Addressed:

- Posing reasoned questions and responses drawn from previous learning and from personal experiences;
- Developing ideas using creative thinking, problem posing, and problem solving strategies;
- Using technologies to explore and communicate;
- Identifying and summarizing similarities and differences among ideas, experiences, opinions, and viewpoints;
- Developing persuasive and reflective texts to change perceptions and behavior; and
- Selecting and using techniques to create impact on an audience.

Desired Outcomes:

Students will:

- Draw conclusions about the personal and societal impact of basing someone's rights on something they can't control.
- Reflect upon the difficulties of standing up for what is right, especially to one's own friends.
- Identify and examine current and historical non-inclusive, intolerant behaviors in their school, their community, and society as a whole.
- Identify the roots and consequences of non-inclusive, intolerant behavior.
- Recognize ways to overcome intolerant behavior.
- Influence others to help reverse the trends of intolerant, non-inclusive behavior toward those with intellectual disabilities.

Time Required:

Two to three 45-minute class periods

Activity 1: SO...What's the Challenge?



"Sports play a critical role in the health and development of all children, including those with disabilities."

Hon. Ann Veneman,
Executive Director,
UNICEF

Materials Needed:

- Index cards and different colored markers or stickers
- Pillows, candy, sodas (optional) for introductory activity
- Computer with access to the Internet
- Copies of Reproducible 1.1, *Do You Have the Right?*; Reproducible 1.2, *R U Ready to Reflect?*; and Reproducible 1.3, *Be the Solution*
- Student journals (for Extension activity)

Background:

- Before beginning the lesson, you may want to watch the speech by Special Olympics Youth Leader and Notre Dame honor student Soeren Palumbo, which students will watch and reflect on during the lesson. Soeren tells the story of an incident that happened to his younger sister Olivia, who has intellectual disabilities, when she was mocked at a store by a group of teens. The speech is close to nine minutes long and can be found at <http://www.specialolympics.org/video.aspx?id=6066&terms=soeren+palumbo>
- Familiarize yourself with the initiatives that are part of the Special Olympics Fan Community at <http://www.specialolympics.org/community>
- Put different colored dots on enough index cards to distribute one to each student. Decide which color dots will represent all or some of the categories below. (The categories are designed to randomly give some students rights that others do not get.)
 - Students will be placed in an area where they have difficulty seeing or hearing you.
 - Students will not be allowed to sit on chairs.
 - Students will be blindfolded.
 - Students will get candy and/or a drink of their choice.
 - Students will get a pillow behind their back.
 - Students will get a free homework pass.
- For more information on service-learning and how to implement service-learning experiences in your classroom, review the *Service-Learning Instructional Planning Guide* available for download at: <https://getintoit.specialolympics.org/educators>
- Refer to the *Teacher Background: Service-Learning Approach* in this guide (Pages 45-46).

Important Terms:

equal rights, intellectual disabilities, inclusion, intolerance, prejudice, stereotypes, tolerance

PART ONE



“Give to every human being every right that you claim to yourself.”

Robert Ingersoll

Activity 1: SO...What's the Challenge?

Activity Steps and Suggestions:

1. As students enter the room, randomly hand them an index card. If possible, distribute an equal number of each type of card. Explain what each card represents, recognizing that students who are deprived of certain rights likely will protest. **(Educate, Motivate)**
2. Distribute Reproducible 1.1, *Do You Have the Right?*, which asks students to reflect on a famous quote and make connections with their own lives. Give students time to complete the reproducible and discuss answers, while still treating them differently based on their colored dots. If time allows, expand the discussion to explore why it's so difficult for kids their age to stand up to their own friends and how they have felt when they have or have not done so. **(Educate)**
3. At the conclusion of this part of the lesson, restore equal rights for all students! Discuss the exercise using the following questions as a guide:
 - a. *How did you feel during the exercise?*
 - b. *What did it feel like to have more or fewer rights based on a random drawing of a card?*
 - c. *For those who had more rights, did you try to fight for those with fewer rights? Why or why not?*
 - d. *How would you relate the exercise to the quote about which you wrote?*
 - e. *How would you relate the exercise to rights or treatment of those around the world based on skin color, religion, gender, or ability?*
 - f. *What is the impact to individuals, the community, and society as a whole when people are denied rights or treated differently based on things they cannot control?* **(Motivate)**
4. Tell students that they are going to watch a speech that illustrates the consequences of treating someone differently based on something they cannot control. Have students watch the Soeren Palumbo speech. You may want to show students the speech in its entirety or break it up using the guide below:
 - a. Stop the speech at 1:28 when Soeren describes the teens teasing an African-American child and using a racial slur. Ask students if they could ever see themselves or their friends doing something similar. They likely will say no, making the story's reveal more powerful.
 - b. Stop the speech at 4:25 after Soeren polls his audience to see if they discriminate based on age, gender, or race. He then asks how many have used or stayed silent when other used the terms or stayed silent when others used the terms, “retard” or “retarded.” Poll your students using the same question.
 - c. Finally, show the final part of Soeren's speech in which he reveals that his younger sister Olivia was the real target of the teenagers at the store. **(Educate, Motivate)**

PART ONE

PHOTO BY: Ryan Eades



How would your life be different if you were judged by just one element of your life, especially if it was one you could not control?

Activity 1: SO...What's the Challenge?

Activity Steps and Suggestions:

5. Hold a class or small group discussion using the following questions as a guide:
 - *Did you predict that the target of the teens' discrimination was Soeren's sister? If not, what was your reaction?*
 - *How do you think the teasing made Soeren feel?*
 - *How would you describe the teens who were teasing Olivia? (Students may use words like "mean," but you may also want to introduce words like "intolerant" and "prejudiced.")*
 - *Why does the use of the R-word demonstrate intolerance?*
 - *Is it just as bad to remain quiet when someone is calling someone the R-word as it is to use the term yourself?*
 - *How does the story relate to the introductory exercise? Why is it so difficult to be an innocent bystander?*
 - *How would your life be different if you were judged by just one element of your life, especially if it was one you could not control?*
 - *How might Soeren's story be different if (1) Olivia had been seen by the teens as more than a "retard" or if (2) One of the teens had stood up to the others?*
 - *What are the important lessons we can learn from Soeren's story?*
(Educate, Motivate)



PART TWO



What conclusions can students draw about the use of the R-word in their school? In their community?

Activity 1: SO...What's the Challenge?

Activity Steps and Suggestions:

1. Have students think about their own experiences with the R-word. Distribute Reproducible 1.2, *R U Ready to Reflect?*, which asks students to reflect upon their own use, active or passive, of the R-word. Give students time to complete the reproducible and then discuss answers as a class. What conclusions can students draw about the use of the R-word in their school? In their community? What about society in general? **(Educate, Motivate)**
2. Break students into groups and have them share examples of when they have been the victim, witness, or perpetrator of intolerance or discrimination of any sort. Based on the examples, would students say that prejudice and intolerance exist at your school? In the community? What about prejudice and intolerance specifically toward those with intellectual disabilities? Do they exist at the school or in the community? **(Educate, Motivate)**
3. Challenge student groups to identify examples from history when intolerance and prejudice had a history-changing negative effect. Examples include the Holocaust, the genocide in Darfur, the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the Rodney King beating, the murder of Matthew Shepard, and the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. Ask:
 - *What happened through this event to change history?*
 - *How were people discriminated against or treated differently because of something they could not control?*
 - *How did the event change history?*
 - *What positive impact, if any, came from this event?*
 - *How might the world be different if this event had never happened?***(Educate)**
4. Refer students back to Soeren's story (or another of the intolerance examples shared during the lesson). Ask questions such as: *Why do you think that the teens were mocking Olivia, considering they did not know her? What possible reasons might cause someone their age to be intolerant of others?* Reasons might include: influence from family, friends, or society; insecurity; fear; unfamiliarity; ignorance; competitiveness; need to conform; need for power; or lack of education. **(Educate, Motivate)**



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PART TWO

PHOTO BY: Richard Corman



"A rewarding life is filled with challenge, so do not pity me. Give me a chance!"

Thomas Gatu, Special Olympics Athlete

Activity 1: SO...What's the Challenge?

Activity Steps and Suggestions:

5. Have students select one of the reasons from their list and come up with 1-3 ways to overcome it. Create a list of student-generated solutions. **(Motivate)**
6. Assuming students believe that intolerance or prejudice toward those with intellectual disabilities is a problem at their school, in their community, or in society as a whole, *whose responsibility is it to find solutions? The principal? Staff members? Parents? Kids themselves? Do students think that their generation can be part of the solution rather than part of the problem? How?* **(Motivate, Activate)**
7. Distribute Reproducible 1.3, *Be the Solution*, which challenges student groups to create a product or project to influence their generation to reverse intolerant, non-inclusive behavior toward those with intellectual disabilities. They can act upon one of the ideas from the list of solutions above or come up with a new one. Their project should be targeted to their peers and should focus on (1) the power of inclusion related to those with intellectual disabilities; (2) the negative impact of prejudice or intolerance toward those with intellectual disabilities; (3) or both. **(Motivate, Activate)**



Activity 1: SO...What's the Challenge?

PHOTO BY: Ryan Eades



"A right is not what someone gives you, it's what no one can take from you."

Ramsey Clark

Reflection:

Using the ideas generated in Step 7, ask students to reflect on the potential reaction of their peers to the project they've designed. *Do they think their friends will be influenced to be more inclusive? What obstacles do they anticipate? How can they overcome these potential obstacles?* Have students pairs write one of two letters from people who are hearing about their project for the first time: the first letter will be from a peer who has the opportunity to be more inclusive and the second is from a person with an intellectual disability who could benefit from the inclusivity resulting from their project.¹

Suggested Assessment:

Challenge students to write a blog entry that answers the question from this activity's title, *SO...What's the Challenge?* Their answer should include examples from the activity and from their own personal experience.

Cross-Curricular Extensions:

Social Studies

- Have students research the historical events they identified in the lesson that demonstrate intolerance and prejudice. *What, if anything, could have prevented the event? What must happen to ensure that history will not repeat itself?*

Service-Learning

- Review the *Service-Learning Instructional Planning Guide* for ideas on introducing students to service-learning. The *Investigation* section on pages 22-29 will help guide students through the process of determining authentic community needs.
- Refer to the *Teacher Background: Service-Learning Approach* in this guide (Pages 45-46).



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¹Adapted with permission from *Connecting Thinking and Action: Ideas for Service-Learning Reflection*. Denver: RMC Research, 2003.

Activity 1:

SO...What's the Challenge?



Consider introducing students to the concept of Special Olympics' Unified Sports Teams. These teams partner students with and without intellectual disabilities.

Inclusive Classroom Modifications:

- For inclusive classrooms, remember that all students can learn from each other, and those who have intellectual disabilities can give unique insight and perspective into the discussion about rights.
- Use peer buddies, read-aloud, and scribes. Pictures and social stories (i.e., simplifying the issues of tolerance and rights) may help explain social situations.
- You may wish to rephrase some of the questions to be more guided. Examples include:
 - For the reflection, prompt students to share their experiences if their feelings have been hurt or they have been excluded.
 - For the Soeren story, ask: *What were the good things that happened? The bad? What would you say to Olivia? The teens?*
 - Consider introducing students to the concept of Special Olympics' Unified Sports Teams. These teams partner students with and without intellectual disabilities.

General Extensions and Modifications:

- Encourage students to take and persuade their friends to take the R-word pledge on the Special Olympics Web site at: <http://www.r-word.org>
- Encourage students to upload their final projects to the Special Olympics Fan Community at: <http://www.specialolympics.org/community>
- Hold a school-or community-wide tolerance day featuring students' persuasive projects.
- Encourage students to research Terry Fox (<http://www.terryfox.org>) and write a magazine or newspaper article describing how this powerful young man was a model of activism and engagement and how he influenced change.
- Learn more about Special Olympics athlete, Loretta Claiborne from her humble and challenged beginnings while a student in York, Pennsylvania to her rise to world prominence. Athlete Loretta Claiborne's story may be one of the most inspiring, especially for young people. As a young person, she was told that her future would be in an institution. After discovering Special Olympics, Loretta became a long-distance runner...and she hasn't stopped since. Over her career, she competed in 25 marathons - twice finishing in the top 100 women runners in the Boston Marathon. The Women in Sports Hall of Fame inducted her as a member, and Runner's World magazine named her Special Athlete of the Quarter Century. Loretta speaks four languages and holds honorary doctorate degrees - the first person with intellectual disabilities known to receive such honors. Her life was the basis for Disney film, *The Loretta Claiborne Story*. In 1996, she received the coveted Arthur Ashe Award for Courage. Learn more about Loretta at <http://www.lorettaclaiborne.com>.

Activity 1: SO...What's the Challenge?

Additional Resources:

- Background information on Special Olympics:
<http://www.specialolympics.org>
- Additional information on intellectual disabilities can be found at:
<http://www.aamr.org> and <http://www.intellectualdisability.info>

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"The right to play on any playing field? You have earned it. The right to study in any school? You have earned it. The right to hold a job? You have earned it. The right to be anyone's neighbor? You have earned it."

Eunice Kennedy Shriver



Do You Have the Right?

Throughout history, people have been awarded certain rights or treated differently based on things they cannot control. Their skin color. Nationality. Gender. Abilities. The quotes below express several people's opinions related to equal rights. Select one quote and answer the questions below it.

- *A right is not what someone gives you; it's what no one can take from you.*
— Ramsey Clark
- *We could learn a lot from crayons: some are sharp, some are pretty, some are dull, some have weird names, and all are different colors...but they all have to learn to live in the same box.* — Author Unknown
- *Give to every human being every right that you claim for yourself.*
— Robert Ingersoll
- *I am the inferior of any man whose rights I trample underfoot.*
— Horace Greeley
- *He who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as he who helps to perpetrate it.* — Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

1. Put the quote in your own words. What do you think its author was trying to say?

2. Do you agree or disagree with the author, and why?

3. What actions (or inactions) have you witnessed or been a part of at your school or in your community that relate to the quote?

R U Ready to Reflect?

Think about your own thoughts and actions (or inactions) with regard to intolerance and prejudice toward others. Then rate yourself using the scale below and answer the questions that follow:

- 1 - I never or almost never do this.
- 2 - I sometimes do this.
- 3 - I frequently do this.
- 4 - I always do this.

_____ I make fun of people for things like race, religion, gender, body size, or physical or mental ability.

_____ I treat people differently if they are or have a different race, religion, gender, body size, physical, or mental ability than I do.

_____ I use the R-word (retard, retarded) to refer to people who have intellectual disabilities.

_____ I use the R-word (retard, retarded) to refer to people or things that I think are silly or stupid.

_____ I laugh when my friends use the R-word.

_____ I remain quiet when my friends use the R-word.

_____ I discourage my friends from using the R-word.

Chose one of the statements from above for which you rated yourself a 2, 3, or 4, and reflect on why you believe you did the action. Would you do it again? Would there be a value in not doing it? What would that value be?

Unfortunately prejudice and intolerance toward those with intellectual disabilities has been part of our society for many years. Through this lesson, you have explored and reflected upon many examples of this including the teenagers mocking Olivia; the hurtful use of the R-word in school, community, and society; historical examples of intolerance and prejudice; and your own personal experiences. The good news is that your generation has the power to become part of the solution in reversing these long-standing trends. You can do this by making inclusion a part of your life, influencing others to do the same, and explaining the consequences of intolerance and prejudice.

For this activity, you will create a speech, video, song, blog, or advertisement to influence your peers to help reverse the trends of intolerance and prejudice against those with intellectual disabilities. You may wish to explore the Special Olympics Fan Community (<http://www.specialolympics.org/community>) to see products created by other young people, including songs, films, photos, and messages.

Your project should be targeted to high school kids and should focus on:

- The power of inclusion related to those with intellectual disabilities
- The negative impact of prejudice or intolerance toward those with intellectual disabilities
- Or both.

For your project, think about the following:

1. What examples of intolerance and prejudice against those with intellectual disabilities have I experienced or witnessed at our school or in our community?
2. Why might the perpetrators from Soeren's story have acted intolerant or prejudiced? What were their goals?
3. What might help or persuade them to change their behavior?
4. How can I use this information to create a persuasive project?



Special Olympics

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Activity 2: 9-12 Lessons

What Does My Community Look Like?

Activity Overview:

In this lesson, students take a literal and figurative snapshot of their community with regard to tolerance/inclusion of those with intellectual disabilities. They start by creating a picture of their community based on their own perceptions. Then they repeat this exercise as if they were someone with an intellectual disability to see how the experience changes. Student groups design a method to assess current attitudes, access, and programs for those with intellectual disabilities in their community and then assess how their community is doing in these areas. Finally, students report their results to the community. This lesson would work well in a unit that explores social justice or service-learning.

Activity 2:

What Does My Community Look Like?

Cross-Curricular Connections:

In addition to language arts, this lesson extends into mathematics, visual arts, technology, and service-learning. Students can use visual arts skills such as sketching, photography, technology, and video skills when they create the pictures of their community. This lesson also serves as the investigation portion of a traditional service-learning process.

Academic Skills Addressed:

- Posing reasoned questions drawn from previous learning and from personal experiences;
- Using an inquiry process and research strategies to explore a topic;
- Receiving, exploring, and evaluating the ideas and opinions of others;
- Developing creative and reflective texts;
- Synthesizing data to conduct an evaluation; and
- Generating information to share in the greater community.

Desired Outcomes:

Students will:

- Reflect upon the current environment of tolerance/inclusion toward those with intellectual disabilities in the community.
- Understand how a person with intellectual disabilities might see the community.
- Assess the community's current attitudes, access, programs, and climate.
- Communicate the results of the above assessment.

Time Required:

Three to four 45-minute periods, plus additional time outside of class



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PHOTO BY: Richard Corman



Let me win. But
if I cannot win,
let me be brave
in the attempt.

Special Olympics
Athlete Oath

Activity 2:

What Does My Community Look Like?

Materials Needed:

- Art materials, cameras, and/or video equipment
- Copies of Reproducible 2.1, *A Picture of Your Community*

Background:

- Before beginning this lesson, you will want to think about options for defining “community.” It may seem like a daunting task to create a picture of your entire town or city so a neighborhood or zip code may be a better option. You may wish to research the answers to some of the questions that your students will research. This will help you guide their question development and research plans. You may also want to determine if there are specific resources/ staff that can help them learn the answers. For example, there may be special education staff or guidance counselors who could come to the class to be interviewed.
- For more information about assessing and reflecting upon the existing community and identifying community assets, refer to (pages 22-29) the *Investigation* section of the *Service-Learning Instructional Planning Guide*. This supplemental guide is available for download at: <https://getintoit.specialolympics.org/educators>
- Also refer to the *Teacher Background: Service-Learning Approach* in this guide (Pages 45-46).

Important Terms:

asset, inclusion, intellectual disability, mainstream, perceptions, tolerance

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“We could learn a lot from crayons; some are sharp, some are pretty, some are dull, some have weird names, and all are different colors...but they all have to learn to live in the same box.”

Author Unknown



PHOTO BY: Ryan Eades

PART ONE



How can people who live in the same community see it from completely different perspectives?

Activity 2: What Does My Community Look Like?

Activity Steps and Suggestions:

1. Write the word, “community” on the board and ask students to share their perceptions of what their community is. Come up with a definition or parameter on which the class can focus. For example, will you consider “your community” the town in which you live, a particular neighborhood, or something else? **(Educate)**
2. Once students have defined “community,” ask them to close their eyes and visualize their community. Have them answer the following questions:
 - *If you were asked to describe your community using three words, what words would you choose?* Challenge students to go beyond “obvious” words like “big,” “cold,” or “small.”
 - *What assets does the community have that help to make it unique?*
 - *What’s something you’d like to learn about your community?*
 - *If you were choosing a place to live, would you choose your community? Why or why not?*
 - *If you were to give your community a “grade,” what might it be, and why?* **(Educate)**
3. Challenge students to draw, photograph, or videotape a “picture” of their community from their own perspective. (Encourage students to take a community walk or observe different areas within the community before completing this step.) **(Educate)**
4. Have students present the images they’ve created. Did any students create the exact same image? Ask students: *How can people who live in the same community see it from completely different perspectives?* Answers could include practical reasons such as living in different parts or being involved with different places, or it could include intangible reasons such as being part of a certain group. **(Educate, Motivate)**
5. Challenge students to repeat the visualization exercise from the beginning of the lesson, but this time, they will visualize their community through the eyes of someone with an intellectual disability. (If students are not familiar with what an intellectual disability is, a definition is included in Activity 3.) *Is this exercise challenging or easy? Do you know whether there are community residents with intellectual disabilities? What do you know about the programs, resources, assets, perceptions, and opportunities in the community for people with intellectual disabilities? Would knowing this information help to give you a clearer picture?* **(Educate, Motivate)**

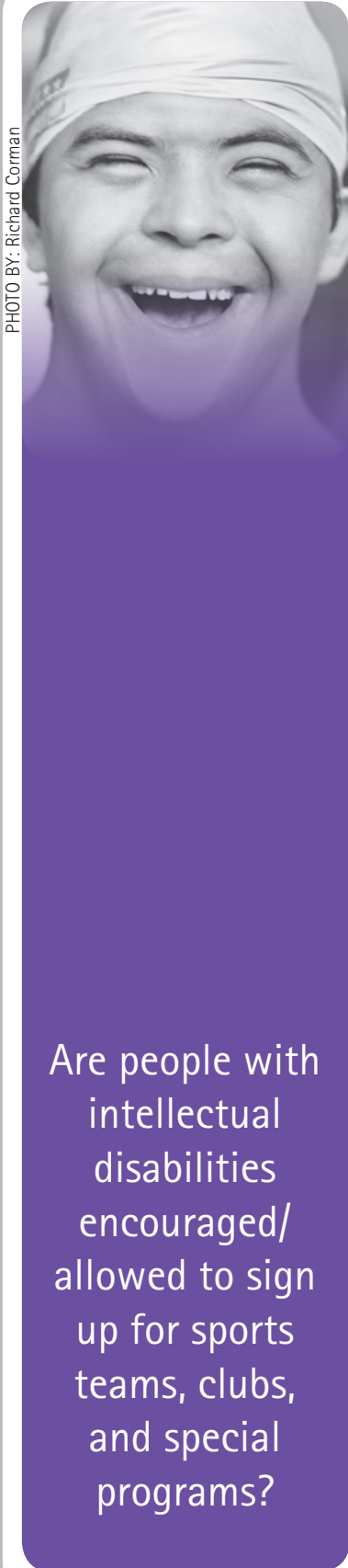


PHOTO BY: Richard Corman

Are people with intellectual disabilities encouraged/allowed to sign up for sports teams, clubs, and special programs?

Activity 2: What Does My Community Look Like?

Activity Steps and Suggestions:

1. Tell students that this activity will help them get a clearer picture of what their community looks like to those with intellectual disabilities. Have students create a list of questions that will help them form a clearer picture. Possible questions include:
 - *Do people in our community think it's okay to use the R-word?*
 - *Do people in our community know what an intellectual disability is?*
 - *Do people in our community know anyone with an intellectual disability?*
 - *How many people in our community have an intellectual disability?*
 - *What evidence is there that people in the community are tolerant and inclusive of those with intellectual disabilities?*
 - *Are there specific programs for those with intellectual disabilities?*
 - *Are people with intellectual disabilities encouraged/allowed to sign up for sports teams, clubs, and special programs? If so, do they participate?*
 - *Do people with intellectual disabilities have access to jobs within the community?*
 - *What are the perceptions of community members regarding those with intellectual disabilities?*
 - *Are there opportunities for people with and without intellectual disabilities to interact and get to know one another? What programs bring people together?*
 - *Are there opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities to share their talents and strengths with other students?*
 - *Do people with intellectual disabilities feel welcomed and included in the community? What programs exist to help them feel welcomed and included? **(Educate)***

2. Separate students into groups of three or four. Distribute Reproducible 2.1, *A Picture of Your Community*, which challenges students to develop a research plan to learn more about inclusiveness for those with intellectual disabilities in their community. It also challenges them to use this information to conduct an assessment of how their community is doing with regard to tolerance and inclusiveness. You will see that there is a step in the plan where students must get your signature. You may want to consider the following before signing off:
 - a. Will the questions they've chosen help them learn more about inclusiveness and tolerance related to intellectual disabilities in your community?
 - b. Can the questions be answered?
 - c. Is their plan reasonable and well-thought-out?
 - d. Can it be completed within the timeframe you've set? **(Educate, Motivate)**



"If people would believe in us like Special Olympics and see what we can do, they would be amazed. My ambition in life is to turn 'no' into 'yes.' If someone says I can't do something, I want to prove I can."

Suzanne O'Moore,
Special Olympics
Australian Athlete

Activity 2: What Does My Community Look Like?

Activity Steps and Suggestions:

Part Three

Give students ample time and assistance with resources to help them answer their questions. This may require time outside of class. You may also want to ask community members and/or those with intellectual disabilities to come to class to be interviewed. **(Educate, Motivate)**

Part Four

1. Challenge students to use the answers they've uncovered to create a picture of their community, related to inclusiveness of those with intellectual disabilities. They can create this picture through words (e.g., a newsletter, paragraph, speech, etc.) or images (e.g., a drawing, photo essay, video, etc.). This may also require time outside of class to complete. **(Motivate, Activate)**
2. Have students present and explain their pictures to the rest of the class and/or to another class within the school. **(Activate)**



Activity 2:

What Does My Community Look Like?

PHOTO BY: Ryan Eades



Encourage students to think creatively about how inclusiveness contributes to the economic health of the entire community and write their reflections in their journals.

Reflection:

When exploring issues in their community, students are often unaware of the economic implications. Ask students to reflect on the community maps presented by their classmates and create a list of ways the current state of inclusiveness of those with intellectual disabilities affects the economic health of their community. For example, is there a workforce that is being underutilized? Services that could be performed more inclusively? Duplication of services between agencies or other community entities? Encourage students to think creatively about how inclusiveness contributes to the economic health of the entire community and write their reflections in their journals.

Suggested Assessment:

Based on what they've learned, have students rate/assess their community with regard to inclusiveness of those with intellectual disabilities. They can base their assessment on a grade similar to a report card, a numeric system, or a descriptive rating ranging from "excellent" to "poor." Their rating should include an explanation with evidence from their research.

Cross-Curricular Extensions:

Mathematics

- Have students design, graph, and analyze a survey as part of their research.

Civics

- Challenge students to interview government officials and community leaders as part of their research process.

Visual Art

- Have students use the visual images they've created to design a mural that represents their vision for a more inclusive community.



Activity 2:

What Does My Community Look Like?

PHOTO BY: Richard Corman



Invite local Special Olympics athletes to the school to learn what would make them feel more included at their school or place of work.

Inclusive Classroom Modifications:

- The first activity may be a bit abstract for those with intellectual disabilities. In inclusive classrooms, you could ask students to write descriptive words or draw a picture of the place that they think of when they think of community. You may wish to provide some suggestions.
- It may be helpful to have guests/resources come to the classroom first to help define community. They can also help define issues in the community, especially those who are involved in serving individuals with intellectual disabilities.
- Students can use the concept of Global Messengers to report the results of their research to stakeholders.
- For the assessment, you may wish to provide a grading system along with specific descriptions for each grade.

General Extensions and Modifications:

- Have students report the results of their research to community stakeholders such as government officials, community leaders, business owners, and parents.
- Invite local Special Olympics athletes to the school to learn what would make them feel more included at their school or place of work. Find your Special Olympics Program here:
http://www.specialolympics.org/program_locator.aspx
- Encourage students to start an inclusiveness/tolerance club to discuss issues and ideas to make the community more inclusive to all.

Additional Resources:

- Additional information about intellectual disabilities can be found at:
<http://www.aamr.org> and <http://www.intellectualdisability.info>
- Explore Special Olympics studies conducted on youth attitudes and other topics of interest here:
http://www.specialolympics.org/research_studies.aspx
- Youth Attitudes towards People with Intellectual Disabilities
- Changing Lives Through Sport
- Media Portrayals of People with Intellectual Disability
- Impact of the Special Olympics World Games on the Attitudes of Youth in China

A Picture of Your Community

During this lesson, you created a "picture of your community," based on your own perspective. That image was probably different from those created by other students in your class. Now your challenge is to create a second picture from the perspective of someone with an intellectual disability. How might the image look the same? How might it look different? What information can help you best create that picture? Below is a list of steps that will help you complete this assignment.

1. Identify 1-3 questions that could help you see the community through the eyes of someone with an intellectual disability. Choose questions from the list you developed with your teacher or create your own. Think about questions that will broaden your perspective. For example, simply identifying the number of community residents with an intellectual disability will not necessarily give you insight into how those residents see the community. However, it can help lead you to other questions. Write your questions on the lines below:

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

2. Create a plan to help you answer those questions. The plan may include interviews, surveys, observation, a series of photographs, or video. Include a timeline to help you implement your plan. Write your plan and timeline below (or on a separate sheet of paper), and then get approval from your teacher.

Teacher Signature: _____

3. Implement your plan.
4. Based on what you've learned, create a picture of your community through the eyes of someone with an intellectual disability. You can create your picture through words, photos, video, a drawing, or another product. Be sure to include information about inclusiveness and tolerance.
5. Your final step is to use this information to rate or assess your community with regard to inclusiveness and tolerance for those with intellectual disabilities. Choose a grading system similar to a report card; a rating system ranging from "excellent" to "poor;" or a numeric system with "10" being the best possible score. Include a justification for your answer.



Special Olympics

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education and engagement tools
for teachers and students



Activity 3: 9-12 Lessons

Making a Difference

Activity Overview:

In this lesson, students will reflect on their own perceptions of those with intellectual disabilities. They then will be challenged to complete an extraordinarily challenging task and relate the experience to the frustrations and feelings that those with intellectual disabilities are often faced with daily. Student groups will then complete a jigsaw activity to learn about intellectual disabilities and will watch videos featuring Special Olympics athletes from around the world. Students revisit their initial perceptions to see if and how they've changed. They reflect on what Special Olympics means to athletes and their families, and how it promotes understanding, acceptance, inclusion, and respect for those with different abilities. This lesson would work well in a unit that explores civic responsibility, inclusion, or social justice.

Activity 3: Making a Difference



"I was once very shy and not willing to talk with others. Special Olympics changed my life and my love of sports and helped me achieve all this unimaginable success."

Xu Chuang, Special Olympics China Athlete and International Global

Cross-Curricular Connections:

This lesson extends into language arts, social studies — particularly social justice — health/science, and technology. Students explore how sports can be an equalizer for those who may struggle in other areas. They learn about the physical causes and effects of an intellectual disability. They are challenged to use digital tools to gather, evaluate, synthesize, and report on information about those with intellectual disabilities. The lesson also includes an infusion of videos as part of the learning, and students are encouraged to create a technology-related product in the final assessment that communicates the spirit of Special Olympics athletes.

Academic Skills Addressed:

- Understanding, acquiring, and using new vocabulary;
- Reading, comprehending, and connecting informational texts to prior knowledge;
- Developing new understandings based on informational texts;
- Posing reasoned questions drawn from previous learning and from personal experiences;
- Researching information to gain new understanding of topics;
- Generating informed questions and using an inquiry process to explore a new topic;
- Communicating effectively to audiences about complex topics; and
- Using a variety of techniques for oral presentation.

Desired Outcomes:

Students will:

- Identify characteristics of intellectual disabilities.
- Appreciate the contributions of Special Olympics athletes.
- Synthesize their appreciation by designing an initiative to recognize Special Olympics athletes.

Time Required:

Three to four 45-minute periods



Activity 3: Making a Difference



"Go for the gold, we keep telling our athletes. But it is the volunteers of Special Olympics who walk away with the gold, richer for the experience."

L.Tusak, Special Olympics
Coach and Volunteer

Materials Needed:

- Computer with access to the Internet
- Copies of Reproducible 3.1, *Special Olympics, The Global Movement* and Reproducible 3.2, *Quotes by and about Special Olympics Athletes*
- Chart paper and markers (optional)
- Art materials
- Video equipment (optional)

Background:

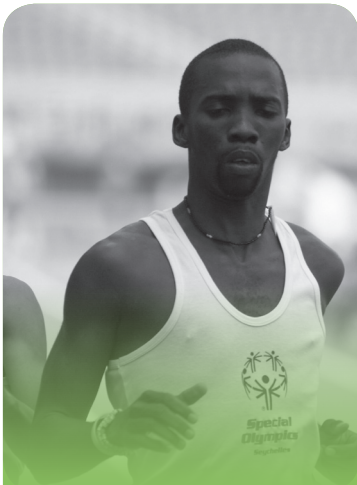
- Before implementing the lesson, familiarize yourself with videos of Special Olympics athletes, which you can show students during the lesson. These can be found on the Special Olympics website at: <http://www.specialolympics.org/videos.aspx> (We would suggest the videos featuring Andy Miyares, Charles Howard, Maicon Santana and Jua Qi Hui.)
- For more information on service-learning and how to implement service-learning experiences in your classroom, review the *Service-Learning Instructional Planning Guide* available for download at: <https://getintoit.specialolympics.org/educators>
- Refer to the *Teacher Background: Service-Learning Approach* in this guide (Pages 45-46).

Important Terms:

intellectual disabilities, mainstream, perceptions, social justice



PART ONE



Either I shall
find a way or I
will make one.

Activity 3: Making a Difference

Activity Steps and Suggestions:

1. As students enter the room, challenge them to complete one of the following activities. Tell them that they will have two minutes to complete the assignment. (You may wish to tell them that their answers will count for a grade. This is not true but will help to establish a sense of urgency.)

- a. *Translate the following Latin phrase into English:*

aut viam inveniam aut faciam.

Answer: Either I shall find a way or I will make one.

- b. *Solve the following physics problem:*

A pig is launched at a 43-degree angle at a velocity of 35 m/s. What is the pig's horizontal velocity?

Answer: 23.86

After a few minutes of trying, discreetly distribute answer sheets to some groups but not others. Once time is up, ask students to discuss or journal about their feelings about the exercise. Tell students that these feelings will serve as a springboard for the rest of the lesson and to keep the exercise in mind as they move forward. Ask: *How did the exercise make you feel? Did you sincerely try to complete the challenge? For those that did not get the answer sheets, did it increase your frustration when other groups got the answer and you didn't?* Tell students that these feelings will serve as a springboard for the rest of the activity.

(Educate)

2. After completing the activity, ask students to get out a sheet of paper and write the first thing that comes to mind when you say the phrase, "intellectual disability." (Note: Another option here is to conduct a "whip" activity where you say the phrase, "intellectual disability," and students go around the room quickly and say the first thing that pops into their minds.) Share students' answers and have students draw conclusions about class responses. *Would they characterize most responses as positive or negative? Did responses show weaknesses or strengths? Did they focus on what those with intellectual disabilities "have" or what they "do not have?" How would they describe their existing perceptions of those with intellectual disabilities?* **(Educate, Motivate)**



PART ONE



"I've learned so much from Adam and I'm sure he's learned some from me. If you take the time to make them your friend, they're the same as everyone else."

Tommy Oreste, Special Olympics Youth Summit Participant

Activity 3: Making a Difference

Activity Steps and Suggestions:

3. Ask students to share how they'd define an intellectual disability. Then put the following definition on the board.

According to a definition by the American Association of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, a person is considered to have an intellectual disability based on the following three criteria:

- *Intellectual function level (IQ) is below 70-75.*
 - *Significant limitations exist in two or more adaptive skill areas (e.g., communication, self-care, home living, social skills, leisure, health and safety, self-direction, functional academics, community use, and work).*
 - *The condition manifests itself before the age of 18. (Educate)*
4. Ask students if they know anyone with an intellectual disability. If so, encourage them to describe this person and share their experiences with them. Based on what they know, how might the introductory activity connect to the feelings and experiences of those with intellectual disabilities? **(Educate)**
 5. Tell students that this lesson will hopefully broaden their existing perceptions about people with intellectual disabilities. Challenge students to share everything they already know about intellectual disabilities. This list could include factual information, historic perceptions, how people with intellectual disabilities are treated, emotions, etc. Create a list on the board or on chart paper with this information. **(Educate)**
 6. Then challenge students to create a second list with questions for which they'd like to learn the answers. Encourage them to create questions that help to give them a balanced picture of those with intellectual disabilities. **(Educate, Motivate)**
 7. Once the class list has been developed, organize questions into categories or topic areas. Examples might include, "Local, National, International Statistics;" "Causes;" "Historic Perceptions;" "Capabilities;" or "Feelings." Each category will then have a few different questions under it. Challenge each group to select one of the categories/questions to research. Encourage students to use the Internet or print resources; to conduct interviews, if possible, with local organizations, educators, or people with intellectual disabilities; and/or to use observation if available. **(Educate)**

PART TWO



What characteristics do you think describe Special Olympics athletes? Why does it take a special kind of bravery to do what they do?

Activity 3: Making a Difference

Activity Steps and Suggestions:

1. Once student groups have completed their research, mix up the groups so that the new groups include one person from each original group. Have each group member teach or share his/her original group's research with the new group. **(Educate)**
2. Then, have the class come back together and ask students to share something they've learned that has changed or broadened their perceptions about intellectual disabilities. **(Educate)**
3. Ask students to share what they know about Special Olympics. Distribute and have students read Reproducible 3.1, *Special Olympics, The Global Movement*. **(Educate)**
4. Instruct students to watch one (or more) of the videos about Special Olympics athletes, which can be found at:
<http://www.specialolympics.org/videos.aspx>
After watching, repeat the exercise from earlier in the activity where students shared one word to describe people with intellectual disabilities. *Did the words change? Why or why not?* **(Educate, Motivate)**
5. Then ask:
 - *How do these videos change their perceptions of those with intellectual disabilities?*
 - *What characteristics do they think describe Special Olympics athletes? Why does it take a special kind of bravery to do what they do?*
 - *In what ways do sports and particularly Special Olympics help those with intellectual disabilities to change their perceptions of themselves?* **(Educate, Motivate)**
6. Introduce the term, "social justice" to students. Social justice is about making sure people in a society are treated fairly and justly despite their race, religion, economic or educational status, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, and so forth. It is about equality and fair distribution of social values, such as freedom, income and wealth, and the opportunity to take equal part in society. *Do students think that those with intellectual disabilities are always treated fairly and justly in our society? Why or why not? How can sports and Special Olympics in particular help to promote social justice for those with intellectual disabilities?* **(Educate, Motivate)**

Activity 3: Making a Difference

PHOTO BY: Richard Corman



When students think of Special Olympics athletes, what words come to mind? How would they describe the spirit of Special Olympics athletes and the work Special Olympics does?

Reflection:

Challenge students to complete this sentence, “People with intellectual disabilities...”

Suggested Assessment:

When students think of Special Olympics athletes, what words come to mind? How would they describe the spirit of Special Olympics athletes and the work Special Olympics does? Distribute Reproducible 3.2, *Quotes by and about Special Olympics Athletes*. Have students read the quotes. Have them consider how each represents the spirit of Special Olympics athletes. Then challenge them, individually or in groups, to create a project inspired by one of the quotes on the list, or another quote from the Special Olympics website (<http://www.specialolympics.org>). Their project can take any form, including a painting, poster, collage, video, poem, photographic essay, song, or any other creative product. **(Motivate, Activate)**

Cross-Curricular Extensions:

Social Studies

- Students research and report on other groups in your community or nationally that help to promote social justice.
- Students research how access, opportunities, and equal rights have changed for those with intellectual disabilities in the past 25 years. Research can include Internet and print resources and interviews.

Inclusive Classroom Modifications:

- For inclusive classrooms, you may want to alter the difficulty of the activities in the introductory exercise. Activities could be presented with increasing levels of difficulty so that everyone can be successful up to a point. You can also include physical challenges to demonstrate the point.
- For the research section, students with intellectual disabilities can be a resource and share what they’d want others to know about intellectual disabilities. Students can interview others within their own classroom, but they should also be encouraged to research outside the classroom. There is a variety of abilities and strengths among students with intellectual disabilities.
- In Part Two, allow Special Olympics athletes to bring in their medals, photos, videos, and other mementos that demonstrate their achievements.
- Consider including the physical education staff in this activity and playing Unified Sports.

Activity 3: Making a Difference



Invite local Special Olympics athletes, coaches, or volunteers to the class to speak with students about the organization, and the training and experiences of those involved.

General Extensions and Modifications:

- If possible, invite local Special Olympics athletes, coaches, or volunteers to the class to speak with students about the organization, and the training and experiences of those involved.
- Encourage students to follow local athletes as they prepare for their competition in regional and national Special Olympics competitions and hold countdown events to help build excitement and interest.
- Have students imagine that they have been asked to write a speech for the Opening Ceremonies of the 2010 Special Olympics World Summer Games. Have them write a 3-5 minute speech that inspires athletes, reinforces the Special Olympics mission, and captures the spirit of the Games.
- Host a showing of the film, *The Ringer* (<http://www.foxsearchlight.com/theringer>), for the school community.
- Have students research Special Olympics Unified Sports® programs to see if there are ways to get involved (http://www.specialolympics.org/unified_sports.aspx). Or encourage the Physical Education teacher to play a Unified Team Sport during class. Learn more about Unified Sports studies here: http://www.specialolympics.org/research_studies.aspx
 - An Evaluation of a Unified Sports® Football Pilot Project
 - National Evaluation of the Special Olympics Unified Sports Program
- Watch the 2009 Global Youth Rally. Actor Johnny Knoxville, with Eddie Barbanell as his side, both stars of Fox Searchlight's film *The Ringer*, spoke about his genuine friendship with Barbanell. Barbanell exhorted everyone to bury the R-word. "The word that we should use is respect," he said. http://www.specialolympics.org/2009_youth_rally.aspx



Activity 3: Making a Difference



"From now on, all young people, both those who compete as athletes and those who serve with them, can be a part of the Special Olympics family through SO Get Into It."

Timothy Shriver,
Special Olympics
Chairman and CEO

Additional Resources:

- Background information on Special Olympics:
<http://www.specialolympics.org>
- Additional information about intellectual disabilities can be found at:
<http://www.aamr.org> and <http://www.intellectualdisability.info>
- Be a Fan PSA video (30 sec):
<http://www.facebook.com/video/video.php?v=26663070286>
- 3 Word video (2:45):
<http://www.facebook.com/video/video.php?v=135014990286>
- Inclusion in Panama video (2:29):
<http://www.facebook.com/video/video.php?v=126509085286>
- Running in Africa video (2:37):
<http://www.facebook.com/video/video.php?v=126508045286>
- Eunice Kennedy Shriver Tribute video (3:51):
<http://www.facebook.com/video/video.php?v=220804995286>
- "R word" speech by Soeren (9:52):
<http://www.facebook.com/video/video.php?v=149050755286>
- Family Inspiration video (2:34):
<http://www.facebook.com/video/video.php?v=129922390286>
- See the Athlete 1st video (31 sec): <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bv4fzNYxstc>
- Joe Jonas Run for Special Olympics video (2:04):
http://community.specialolympics.org/_Joe-Jonas-iWIn-Fun-Run-for-Special-Olympics/video/893530/82244.html
- End the R-word with Joe Jonas video (13 sec):
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8doRD9MB0Qw>
- Special Olympics Athlete Profiles — Andy Miyares (2:34):
http://www.specialolympics.org/video_miyares.aspx



PHOTO BY: Ryan Eades

Special Olympics, The Global Movement

With sports at the core, Special Olympics is a leader in the field of intellectual disability and the world's largest movement dedicated to promoting respect, acceptance, inclusion, and human dignity for people with intellectual disabilities. With programming in the areas of health, youth and education, family support, research and policy change, Special Olympics has...

- More than 3.1 million athletes
- 228 Special Olympics Programs
- 30 Olympic-type summer and winter sports
- 7 regional offices around the world, including Ireland, Egypt, South Africa, Singapore, China, Panama, and the United States
- More than 750,000 volunteers
- More than 300,000 coaches
- More than 30,000 competitions around the world each year

Special Olympics Mission

To provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.

Special Olympics Vision

The Special Olympics movement will transform communities by inspiring people throughout the world to open their minds, accept and include people with intellectual disabilities and thereby celebrate the similarities common to all people.

Eligibility

To be eligible to participate in Special Olympics, an athlete must be at least eight years of age and identified by an agency or professional as having one of the following conditions: intellectual disability, cognitive delays as measured by formal assessment, or significant learning or vocational problems due to cognitive delay that have required specially designed instruction.

Competition

Special Olympics athletes are divided to compete in categories based on gender, age, and ability level. All Special Olympics activities reflect the values, standards, traditions, ceremonies, and events embodied in the modern Olympic movement. These Olympic-type activities have been broadened and enriched to celebrate the moral and spiritual qualities of persons with intellectual disabilities so as to enhance their dignity and self-esteem.



Reproducible 3.1

Special Olympics, The Global Movement

History and Leadership

Special Olympics began in 1968 with the First International Special Olympics Games at Soldier Field in Chicago. Since then, millions have benefited from the movement.

J. Brady Lum is President and Chief Operating Officer.

Timothy P. Shriver is Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of Special Olympics Board of Directors.

The Lead Board Director and Vice Chair is **Stephen M. Carter**, Chief Executive Officer, Superior Essex, Inc., the Board Vice Chairs are **Nadia Comaneci**, Olympic Gymnastics Gold Medalist; and **Raymond J. Lane**, Partner, Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers.

Eunice Kennedy Shriver founded Special Olympics in 1968.

Special Olympics Initiatives

Special Olympics Healthy Athletes™ is an initiative designed to help Special Olympics athletes improve their health and fitness, leading to an enhanced sports experience and improved well-being. Athletes receive health services at Special Olympics competitions, while healthcare professionals learn about the health needs of Special Olympics athletes, gaining confidence in volunteering their skills to an underserved population and thus creating more inclusive medical practices.

Youth and Schools Outreach – Special Olympics is leveraging sports as a platform to teach acceptance and inclusion to young people around the world. Project UNIFY® is a program which builds Special Olympics in schools and is engaging, motivating and activating young people through many existing programs including the **Get Into It®** K-12 service-learning curriculum, **Special Olympics Unified Sports™** and the "R-Word" campaign which is building respect through language. Global Youth Summits are also held to unite youth from throughout the world in the spirit of change. In addition, the **Special Olympics Young Athlete Program** provides opportunities for young athletes between the ages of 2 ½ and 7 years of age to learn basic sports skills and motor activities to prepare them for Special Olympics competition.

Special Olympics Athlete Leadership Programs (ALPs) offer athletes the opportunity to take active leadership roles both on and off the playing field. Athletes serve on the Boards of Directors, officiate competitions, coach other athletes, act as spokespersons and make decisions about the future of Special Olympics.

Special Olympics Unified Sports® is a program that brings together people with and without intellectual disabilities on the same athletic team.

Family Support Network gives families support in communities within Special Olympics. Understanding the challenges of raising a special needs child, Special Olympics has created the Family Support Network to provide a connection for families of Special Olympics athletes. There are more than 100 networks in more than 60 countries.

Special Olympics, The Global Movement

Benefits of Special Olympics

Individuals who compete in Special Olympics develop improved physical fitness and motor skills and greater self confidence. They exhibit courage and enthusiasm and build lasting friendships. These life skills enhance their ability to live normal productive lives. More than ever, Special Olympics athletes hold jobs, own homes, go to school and successfully confront life challenges on a daily basis.

Through millions of individual acts of inclusion where people with and without intellectual disabilities are brought together through Special Olympics programs, longstanding myths are dispelled, negative attitudes changed, and new opportunities to embrace and celebrate the giftedness of people with intellectual disabilities are created. Ultimately, the Special Olympics movement can transform communities by inspiring people throughout the world to open their minds, accept and include people with intellectual disabilities and thereby celebrate the similarities common to all people.

Funding

Special Olympics receives funding in support of the movement from individuals, corporations, foundations, government and restricted grants. The vast majority of funding received is from individuals through the Special Olympics direct mail program.

The Law Enforcement Torch Run® for Special Olympics is the movement's largest grass-roots fundraiser and public awareness vehicle for Special Olympics in the world, made up of more than 85,000 law enforcement officers in all 50 U.S. states, eleven Canadian provinces and 43 countries. Since 1981, the Law Enforcement Torch Run® for Special Olympics has raised more than US\$272 million, with a record US\$34 million raised in 2008 alone.



PHOTO BY: Richard Corman

Quotes by and about
Special Olympics Athletes

A rewarding life is filled with challenge: The effort creates fires that temper us and strengthen our spirit. So do not feel pity for me.
Give me a chance.

– Thomas Gathu, Special Olympics Kenya athlete and coach

Disabilities are yet another manifestation of global diversity. Let us always be committed to the fundamental principles of dignity and equality for all human beings.

– Kofi A. Annan, Secretary-General, United Nations

Let me win. But if I cannot win let me be brave in the attempt.

– Special Olympics Athlete Oath

The right to play on any playing field? You have earned it. The right to study in any school? You have earned it. The right to hold a job? You have earned it. The right to be anyone's neighbor? You have earned it.

– Eunice Kennedy Shriver, Founder of Special Olympics

My ambition in life is to turn 'no' into 'yes.'
If someone says I can't do something, I want to prove I can.

– Suzanne O'Moore, Special Olympics Australia athlete



Special Olympics

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education and engagement tools
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Activity 4: 9-12 Lessons

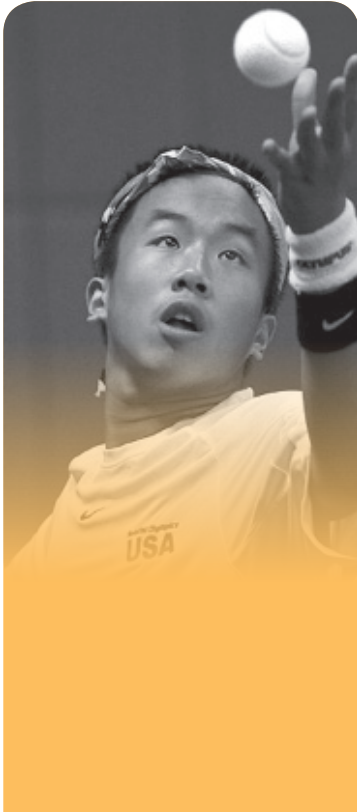
How Can I Create Change?

Activity Overview:

In this lesson, students will be introduced to the story of Eunice Kennedy Shriver, the founder of Special Olympics, to illustrate what is possible when someone sees what is, imagines what can be, and then makes it happen. They then will reflect and make connections between her story and what is happening within their own community. They select an issue or problem from their community assessment in Activity 2 that they'd like to change or affect in some way. Students develop a plan to create change including a timeline, list of steps and stakeholders, and measures for success. They will also create a method for sharing their actions with others and celebrating their success. This lesson would work well in a unit that explores civic responsibility, social justice, or service-learning.

Activity 4:

How Can I Create Change?



“Playing sports with Special Olympics has given me the opportunity to express myself like many other athletes...”

Anthony Green, Special Olympics Athlete

Cross-Curricular Connections:

This lesson extends to social studies, particularly social justice, and service-learning. Students experience a traditional service-learning process as they identify a problem, learn about it, identify a solution, create a plan, implement that plan, and celebrate success.

Academic Skills Addressed:

- Using critical thinking to analyze texts, including identifying and evaluating multiple perspectives;
- Identifying, summarizing, and justifying an issue or problem;
- Engaging in an inquiry process that includes generating questions and conducting research to learn the answers;
- Using creative, problem-solving processes individually and collaboratively to explore and contribute to issues, problems, and questions;
- Carrying out collaborative processes for problems and projects;
- Synthesizing data to conduct an evaluation;
- Writing and following a detailed plan; and
- Summarizing and reporting information to others.

Desired Outcomes:

Students will:

- Make connections between Eunice Kennedy Shriver’s vision and actions to create Special Olympics, and their own qualities and possible actions.
- Identify one problem or challenge within their community related to tolerance/inclusiveness for those with intellectual disabilities.
- Work collaboratively in the planning and implementation of a plan to change or positively impact the problem or issue they chose.
- Communicate their progress and consider how they can sustain their efforts.

Time Required:

Three to four 45-minute class periods for investigation, plus additional time (one semester or more) to implement and assess their project



Activity 4:

How Can I Create Change?



“Disabilities are yet another manifestation of global diversity. Let us always be committed to the fundamental principles of dignity and equality for all human beings.”

Kofi A. Annan, Secretary-General, United Nations

Materials Needed:

- Computer with access to the Internet
- Copies of Reproducible 4.1, *What Is? What Could Be? How Can I Make It Happen?*; and Reproducible 4.2, *Creating a Positive Change in Your Community*

Background:

- Before beginning this lesson, you may want to review stories and videos about Eunice Kennedy Shriver on the Special Olympics website. The following links are recommended:

http://www.specialolympics.org/eunice_kennedy_shriver_biography.aspx

http://www.specialolympics.org/eunice_kennedy_shriver_how_it_began.aspx

<http://www.eunicekennedyshriver.org/sitemap/videos>

- For more information on service-learning and how to implement service-learning experiences in your classroom, review the *Service-Learning Instructional Planning Guide* available for download at:

<https://getintoit.specialolympics.org/educators>

- Refer to the *Teacher Background: Service-Learning Approach* in this guide (Pages 45-46).

Important Terms:

service, stakeholder, visionary



PART ONE



"You are the stars and the world is watching you. By your presence, you send a message to every village, every city, every nation. A message of hope. A message of victory."

Eunice Kennedy Shriver

Activity 4: How Can I Create Change?

Activity Steps and Suggestions:

1. As students enter the room, have them listen to the audio recording of an excerpt from Eunice Kennedy Shriver's opening remarks at the Opening Ceremonies for the 1987 Special Olympics World Games (<http://www.eunicekennedyshriver.org>). The recording says, "You are the stars and the world is watching you. By your presence, you send a message to every village, every city, every nation. A message of hope. A message of victory. The right to play on any playing field? You have earned it. The right to study in any school? You have earned it. The right to hold a job? You have earned it. The right to be anyone's neighbor? You have earned it." **(Educate)**
2. Ask students what words they would use to describe the excerpt, how the speaker's words likely made the audience feel, and what the speaker's purpose may have been. Then ask if they know whose voice they are listening to, what event the words are from, or who the audience is. Share with students that the speaker is Eunice Kennedy Shriver, Founder of Special Olympics. The excerpt was from her speech at the Opening Ceremonies from the 1987 Special Olympic World Games and the audience was the Special Olympics athletes themselves. **(Educate)**
3. Ask students: *What do you know about Eunice Kennedy Shriver? What words might you use to describe her? What do you know about her legacy? Her family? Her accomplishments?* **(Educate)**
4. Distribute Reproducible 4.1, *What Is? What Could Be? How Can I Make It Happen?* Read the directions with students. Instruct them to read articles and watch videos about Eunice Kennedy Shriver from the Special Olympics website (see Background information above) in order to complete the activity sheet. Discuss the answers. **(Educate)**
5. At the Opening Games in 1968, the Mayor of Chicago turned to Mrs. Shriver after she declared the games open and said, "The world will never be the same." *What did he mean by this? What type of person sees what can be, rather than what is, and works to make it happen?* Ask students for the names of others – whether they know them personally or not – who have displayed these same qualities. *What positive changes have these people created? How might the world be different had these people not made their visions a reality? Do you think you possess these same qualities? Why or why not?* **(Educate, Motivate)**



How would you describe "what is" with regard to tolerance and inclusion in your community?

Activity 4: How Can I Create Change?

Activity Steps and Suggestions:

1. Have students refer back to their community assessment from Activity 2. Ask: *How would you describe "what is" with regard to tolerance and inclusion in your community? Do you think "what is" is good enough? What improvements could be made to create a more inclusive environment for those with intellectual disabilities? (Motivate, Activate)*
2. Distribute Reproducible 4.2, *Creating a Positive Change in Your Community*. Challenge student groups to select one issue, problem, or challenge related to inclusion/tolerance in their community that they would like to change or affect in some way. Before beginning, you will want to think about whether to allow students to select their own groups or whether to assign them. As with any project, groups should be set up to work collaboratively and effectively. The activity sheet asks them to justify the issue they've chosen, conduct research, determine how they can positively change/impact the problem, and create and implement a detailed action plan and timeline for doing so. The process is broken down into steps. Below you will find tips to help you move students through the process. More information about service-learning and additional guidance about each step can be found in the *Service-Learning Instructional Planning Guide*. **(Motivate, Activate)**
3. You will notice that there are ideas for student reflection after each step below. Thoughtful reflection allows students to deliberately think about their process, their role within the project, and more importantly their role within their community. It is most useful when it is intentional and continuous throughout the experience. Students can reflect verbally or through writing, or with a combination of the two.

Step 1: Select a Problem or Issue

- The first step is often the most difficult. Some groups won't know where to start. Others will have difficulty agreeing. You may want to start this step by creating a class list of problems from Activity 2 from which groups can choose. Challenge groups to select a problem that is authentic, that they can truly impact, and that is interesting and meaningful to them. Encourage them to write a problem statement that justifies their choice.

Reflection Questions: *Why did you choose this problem? Why is it meaningful to you? What influenced your group's final decision? What will happen if no one addresses it? How can addressing it make a difference?*



Develop a club or team where high school athletes help coach children with intellectual disabilities.

Activity 4: How Can I Create Change?

Activity Steps and Suggestions:

Step 2: Learn about the Issue

- This will be one of the most time-consuming steps and likely will require time outside of class to complete. Help students understand the benefit of learning as much as they can about their issue. Give them access to as many resources as possible. Encourage students to interview students with intellectual disabilities, community members, and other stakeholders. Additional ideas to help students investigate their issue can be found in the *Action Plan* section of the *Service-Learning Instructional Planning Guide*.

Reflection Questions: *How did you feel about the research process? What went well? What challenges did you face? What surprised you? What did you learn about your community? What did you learn about yourself? How can what you've learned help you?*

Step 3: Identify a Solution

- Help students assess several options to come up with the best solution. Benchmarks are included in the worksheet. You may want to have them share ideas with each other to assist the process. Examples of solutions include:
 - *A community campaign to end the use of the R-word.*
 - *A community tolerance day where community members are encouraged to work alongside people of different abilities to accomplish a task.*
 - *Development of a buddy program where children with intellectual disabilities are paired with an older teen.*
 - *Ability Awareness Day, where those with intellectual disabilities share their strengths and talents with community members.*
 - *Elementary School Blitz, where high school students speak about tolerance at local elementary schools.*
 - *Development of a club or team where high school athletes help coach children with intellectual disabilities.*
 - *Raising money to support a Special Olympics athlete.*
 - *Decorating community store windows to encourage tolerance.*

Additional ideas to help students identify their solution can be found in the *Decision-Making Process* section of the *Service-Learning Instructional Planning Guide*.

Reflection Questions: *How did you come up with your solution? How will it impact the problem or issue? How will your community look different if it works? How will this make you feel?*

PART TWO



All parties involved should be encouraged to share what they have learned, celebrate the results of the service project, and look ahead to the future.

Activity 4: How Can I Create Change?

Activity Steps and Suggestions:

Step 4: Create a Plan

- Here is where students will create their plan for making change, the timeline, and the benchmarks for success. Encourage students to present their plans to another group to help them consider possible challenges and obstacles. Additional ideas to help students create their plan can be found in the *Action Plan* section of the *Service-Learning Instructional Planning Guide*.

Reflection Questions: *What are you most looking forward to about your plan? How will you define success? Will you be able to make adjustments if necessary?*

Step 5: Implement the Plan

- This too will be a time-consuming step in the process. Students will need ample time to complete their plan. Encourage them to assess the plan along the way and to make whatever adjustments can help them be successful.

Reflection Questions: *How is your plan working? Is your group working well together? Does your plan need to be adjusted? Can anyone outside the group help you? What have you learned?*

Step 6: Demonstrate Outcomes and Celebrate Success!

- Regardless of the specific outcome, the process of trying to change “what is” to make a more inclusive community should be shared and celebrated by students. Although this step is listed at the end of the process, both sharing and celebration can be done throughout the process rather than at the end. All parties involved should be encouraged to share what they have learned, celebrate the results of the service project, and look ahead to the future.

Reflection Questions: *What can you be proud of? Who have you helped? How have you helped to get closer to “what can be?” How can you extend this to other areas of your life? Whose responsibility is it to help improve your community? What lessons can you share with others? What skills have you learned?*



Invite Special Olympics athletes to class to share input on and ideas about the projects.

Activity 4: How Can I Create Change?

Suggested Assessment:

Have students use the original three questions of the lesson (*What Is?*, *What Could Be?*, *How Can I Make It Happen?*) to report on their project to others in the school or community. Along with answering these questions, their communication should include what they've learned and how the project can extend to other areas of their life. **(Motivate, Activate)**

Cross-Curricular Extensions:

Technology

Encourage students to create a video and present what “was,” what now “is,” and how change happened.

Inclusive Classroom Modifications:

- Build on the community connections established in Activity Two. Those working on behalf of individuals with intellectual disabilities will have a good idea of what needs to happen in the community.
- Include the concept of Global Messengers in this activity.

General Extensions and Modifications:

- Have students generate ideas for sustained, student-led community improvements.
- Have students write press releases about their projects to send to local news media.
- Have students present their projects to school and district/county leaders; community leaders; and local government officials.
- Invite Special Olympics athletes to class to share input on and ideas about the projects.
- Have students plan a parent/community night to share what “was,” what now “is,” and what made change happen.
- For inclusive classrooms, ensure that students of different abilities collaborate together to create change.

Additional Resources:

- Background information on Special Olympics: <http://www.specialolympics.org>
- Additional information about service learning: <http://www.servicelearning.org>
- Information about service-learning published by the National Youth Leadership Council: <http://www.nycl.org>

What Is? What Could Be? How Can I Make It Happen?

Eunice Kennedy Shriver was a visionary who dedicated her adult life to making the world a better place for those who are intellectually disabled. She saw what was, imagined what could be, and did all she could to make it happen. Read the articles and watch the videos on the Special Olympics website about Mrs. Shriver (www.eunicekennedyshriver.org). Then complete the questions below:



WHAT IS? What was life like for people with intellectual disabilities that inspired Eunice Kennedy Shriver to want to change things?

WHAT COULD BE? In what ways did she think their lives could be better? What did she think was possible?

HOW CAN I MAKE IT HAPPEN? How did she make her vision a reality?



Reproducible 4.2

Creating Positive Change in Your Community

In this activity, you and your group will select a problem or issue in your community that you would like to positively impact, related to tolerance/inclusion for those with intellectual disabilities. The activity is broken down into several steps to help guide you along the way.

Step 1: Select a Problem or Issue

In this step, you and your group should identify a problem or issue in your community related to inclusion/tolerance for those with intellectual disabilities. Along with identifying the problem, you must also justify why you chose it as a problem or issue to change/impact. You may want to refer back to the community assessment you completed in Activity 2. Or you can conduct interviews with people who could help you select an issue. This may include your parents, neighbors, those with intellectual disabilities, family members of those with intellectual disabilities, government and community leaders, those working in related organizations, and teachers at your school. Since you are working as part of a group, it may be difficult to agree on one issue. Therefore, you may want to take some time to list all options and discuss the pros and cons of choosing each. Don't forget to listen to all group members and compromise when possible. The issue you choose should:

- Be important and meaningful to all group members.
- Be something that you can truly impact or change.
- Be an authentic need or problem in your community.

The issue/problem we have chosen is: _____

I know it is a problem because: _____

Step 2: Learn about the Issue

Knowledge is power! Now that you have selected the issue, spend time learning about it. You can learn from online or written resources, human resources (people), and community resources. Develop a list of questions and find the answers. This will help lead you to a solution. The research can include:

Creating Positive Change in Your Community

- What you already know.
- The history of your issue or problem, and what's already been done.
- The current situation.
- Interviews with potential stakeholders/collaborators.

Step 3: Identify a Solution

Here's where you begin to move from "what is" to "what can be!" First brainstorm several ideas for solving/impacting the problem with your group. Then evaluate how each idea will positively impact the problem, foster an environment of tolerance/inclusion, help those with intellectual disabilities, whether it is feasible, whether you have the resources and time to implement it, and whether you will enjoy doing so, etc.

Our solution is: _____

Step 4: Create a Plan

Now it's time to create a plan to implement your solution. Your plan should include the steps you will take, your timeline, who can help you, what you will need to implement your plan, what challenges you may encounter, how you will overcome them, and how you will know when you've reached success.

Step 5: Implement the Plan

Follow the steps and timeline you've developed. You will want to assess your plan along the way to make sure that you are moving toward your goals. Your plan may need to be adjusted as you implement it. Just make sure that all group members are aware of any changes.

Step 6: Demonstrate Outcomes and Celebrate Success

In what ways have you moved from "What Is?" to "What Can Be?" What specific progress can we identify along the path toward, "What Can Be?" What challenged you, and what can you learn from those challenges? How can you share your progress and strategies with others within and outside of your school?

Background on Service-Learning (NYLC Standards)

National K-12 Service-Learning Standards for Quality Practice guide educators in their integration of service-learning experiences. These lessons include all of the elements that are necessary for a meaningful and effective service-learning experience. What follows are suggestions for using these resources as a launching point for service-learning.

The Standards include:

1. Service-learning actively engages participants in meaningful and personally relevant service activities.
2. Service-learning is intentionally used as an instructional strategy to meet learning goals and/or content standards.
3. Service-learning incorporates multiple challenging reflection activities that are ongoing and that prompt deep thinking and analysis about oneself and one's relationship to society.
4. Service-learning promotes understanding of diversity and mutual respect among all participants.
5. Service-learning provides youth with a strong voice in planning, implementing and evaluating service-learning experiences with guidance from adults.
6. Service-learning experiences are collaborative, mutually beneficial and address community needs.
7. Service-learning engages participants in an ongoing process to assess the quality of implementation and progress toward meeting specified goals, and uses results for improvement and sustainability.
8. Service-learning has sufficient duration and intensity to address community needs and meet specified outcomes.

For more information on service-learning and how to implement service-learning experience in your classroom, review the **Service-Learning Instructional Planning Guide** available for download at: <https://getintoit.specialolympics.org/educators>

Suggested Steps to Develop Service-Learning in this Unit

Work Collaboratively

- Students collaborate with each other throughout the activities but also collaborate with those in the community in Activities 2 and 4.

Capturing Student Voice

- From Activity 1: **SO...What's the Challenge?** Introduce the Soeren Palumbo story. Consider beginning with Steps 1 and 2 from Part One and then jumping to Steps 1 and 2 from Part Two.

Promote Understanding and Diversity

- All lessons are designed to promote understanding and diversity, particularly for those with intellectual disabilities. However, Activities 1 and 3 focus on reflecting upon and expanding existing perceptions.
- Complete all of Activity 2.

Addressing Community Needs

- Complete Steps 4 – 7 in Part Two of Activity 1.
- Consider Activity 3 for students to better understand the subject of intellectual disabilities. Note: Students may not need the entire activity, but part of the process for addressing the community needs will have to include some work on researching the topic and interviewing people whose experience and insight will help students better understand intellectual disabilities.
- Complete Activity 4, as well as consider elements from the end of Activity 1.