

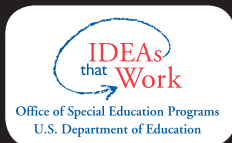


Special Olympics

get into it

ACTIVE!

Brought to you by:



The U.S. Department of Education, through the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs, is a major funding source for Special Olympics Project UNIFY.

Grades K-2

Grades 3-5

Grades 6-8

Grades 9-12

Resources

Get Into It® is a set of free, K-12 service learning lessons and resources designed to advance student's civic knowledge and skill development, while promoting acceptance and understanding to motivate youth to become advocates for and together with all people. The content of these lessons are based on the ability, dedication, and inspiration found in the millions of Special Olympics athletes around the world. Though it all starts with sports, Get Into It® and Project UNIFY®- the Special Olympics youth engagement initiatives – activate young people around the country to develop school communities where all young people are agents of change.

Get Into It® Active is a condensed version of the Get Into It® lessons with a focus on physical activities and discussions. While Get Into It® lessons and resources are used in classrooms around the country, Get Into It® Active is designed for homeroom, after-school programs, recess, or other less-structured environments. Get Into It® Active is also designed as an enhancement to inclusive sporting activities, taking place in a physical education class, or on a Special Olympics Unified Sports® Team.

At the end of the activities, we hope your group of young leaders is empowered and excited to make a difference in their school and community. The fourth activity in each level asks the group to begin developing an action plan about how they can get involved. A great way to activate your group is to connect them locally at www.specialolympics.org.



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Grades K-2

At this age, Get Into It® Active is helping the group to start thinking about the similarities and differences they see in their peers. The activities discuss the meaning of perseverance and introduce the Special Olympics Oath, “Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt”. Each activity includes at least one physical component and so can easily be integrated into a recess or physical education period. The group is called to action and asked to consider how best they can include others and support a friend or teammate as they reach for a new goal.



Lesson 1: We're All Alike...We're All Different

Opening

Each of us is different, we call that being *unique*. Today we're going to think about ways that we are the same and ways that we are different. *In what ways are you and your peers different or the same?* (Remember there are similarities and differences that we can see and that we can't see.)

Team-Up Activity

Have the group stand side-by-side in a line or a large circle. Explain that they will need to listen carefully and respond to sentences that describe them – their individual traits, experiences, likes and dislikes – by stepping forward. Begin with a simple directive, such as: *Step right up if you are wearing sneakers*. Allow time for everyone to respond; instruct children to look at the two groups that are created and then have them return to their original spots. Continue calling out different categories, beginning with external characteristics (physical descriptions and experiences) and progressing to internal characteristics (preferences and abilities). Make sure all children are represented in a number of statements and include several statements that include the entire group to highlight both similarities and differences.



Lesson 1: We're All Alike...We're All Different

Reflection

Help the group process the experience by asking questions like: *Did you learn anything new about one another? How much can you tell about people just by looking at them? Which similarities and differences can you see and which ones can't you see? Were the groups that stepped forward always made up of the same people? Some groups were small and some groups were large – which did you like being in?*

Action

Think about the special talents that each member of the group has. *What are some things that we are able to do as a whole group because at least one person in the group possesses a particular skill, interest, or ability?* For example, if one person is tall, the whole group has access to things that may be out of reach for some. The same is true for a child who could teach others how to dance. Brainstorm one special skill or ability that another individual has that you would like for him or her to teach you.



Lesson 2: The Meaning of Perseverance

Opening

Ask the group if they know about the story of the tortoise and the hare. Have children communicate with one another and the group to re-tell the story (you can fill in any gaps). Talk about how the tortoise showed *perseverance* and discuss as a group what that might mean. Then have them think about: *What are some ways that Tortoise showed hard work and perseverance? What things do you think Tortoise's friends did to help and encourage him?*

Team-Up Activity

Tell children that they will all have a chance to practice perseverance. Put them in pairs and have them learn to do a 180-degree jump turn. Demonstrate how they should stand with feet shoulder-width apart and jump while turning their bodies 180 degrees, landing with their feet facing the opposite direction. If children can do this, ask them to try a 360 degree jump turn (full turn), landing with their feet facing in the same direction that they started. One partner encourages the other as he or she practices the jump. Give the first group several minutes to practice this challenging game (gauge the time according to the success and/or frustration) and signal partners to switch roles.



Lesson 2: The Meaning of Perseverance

Reflection

Have the group discuss their experience, asking questions such as: *How did it feel being unable to accomplish what seemed like a simple activity? When something is difficult, does it mean that you can't do it or that you won't ever learn to do it? Does practice make a difference? Did you work hard and persevere, or did you give up? Did you and your partner encourage one another? How would you feel if someone made fun of you when you were trying your best?*

Action

Ask the group to think about the Special Olympics Athlete Oath: *Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt.* Have them share times when they've seen someone be brave, or show perseverance. *How did people react? How should they have reacted?* Commit as a group to encourage and support perseverance in each other. Ask them to look for other situations around school or home where someone is showing perseverance and decide how best they can support them.



Lesson 3: Go for the Gold!

Opening

Have the group think about the word Gold. *Why do people want gold? What makes gold valuable? What does a gold medal mean?* Have them think about how they might encourage each other to “go for the gold”.

Team-Up Activity

Present different scenarios and have children think about what they would say if: *Someone looks tired and looks like they're ready to give up. Someone scores the winning goal. Someone wins a prize. Someone is really upset and says they no longer want to play.* Individuals can take turns acting out the scenarios and practicing the responses. If there is time (and supplies) they can work in pairs to design posters with these encouraging phrases on them. They can be used on sidelines, to cheer on a fellow team or to be put up in a school or common area.



Lesson 3: Go for the Gold!

Reflection

Tell the group to think again about the meaning of the word gold. Have they ever heard the expression “a heart of gold”? What does this mean? Lead this into a discussion on caring. *How do you know if someone cares about you? What does that feel like?*

Action

End the discussion talking about the golden rule: *Treat others the way you want to be treated.* (Either work with the group to design and create a “Heart of Gold Medal” or have one made/purchased to bring in for this part of the lesson.) Inform the group that after each session, they will identify one individual to go home with the “Heart of Gold Medal”. You may have to practice how to give compliments to one another, but you can continue this tradition, passing the medal on to a new person each time you meet.



Lesson 4: Be A Fan! Project

Opening

Ask the group to think about the activities they've just done. *What have these experiences taught them about friendship, caring, and perseverance?*

Action

Ask the group to brainstorm: *What are the current needs in our community? Who is left out? How can we promote inclusion and acceptance for everyone in our community? How can we share our experience with others?* List their ideas, and think of how these can be combined or further researched. Help individuals plan out their ideas and work out the steps to make them happen. Projects can be small (write and perform a cheer or song for another Special Olympics team) or large-scale (work together to develop a year-long campaign on respect).



Lesson 4: Be A Fan! Project

Reflection

Individuals should engage in reflection throughout the project, having discussions with each other and even making regular entries into their journals. They should explore changes in their knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes. *What did you learn? What is the most exciting part of working together? What surprised you? Have we accomplished our goals? How did the experience make you feel? How have we helped others? Are there other ways that we can continue to help?*



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Grades 3-5

In Grades 3-5, Get Into It® Active challenges the inward focus of this age group by talking about the invisible and visible differences among peers. After reading the poem titled “I Am” the group is challenged to consider their similarities and create a series of unifying “We Are” statements. Additional topics include the meaning of respect and inclusion. At this level, activities focus around one main physical component and can be integrated into a physical education period or team practice. The group is called to consider how they can make a difference by including others in their school and community.



Lesson 1: A World of Difference

Opening

We see each other all the time but how much do we really know about each other? Engage the group in a discussion about how much we can and can't tell about others simply by looking at them. What kinds of similarities and differences are visible? What kinds of similarities and differences are invisible?

Team-Up Activity

Individuals have to move around and identify others who share a specific personal characteristic. Some characteristics are visible while some are not. The leader calls out categories, one at a time: *Team up with others who have the same color eyes as you. Team up with others who like the same topping on their pizza.* Keep the game moving along at a good pace. Pause the action at various points to have groups shout out the preference or characteristic that they share (e.g. We all like pizza with pineapple! We all like pepperoni!)



Lesson 1: A World of Difference

Reflection

Help the group process the experience asking questions like: *Were you always teamed up with the same people? Some groups were small and some groups were large – in which size did you like being? Once you learned more about others, were you surprised by any of your similarities? What happens when you think only about those similarities and difference you can see?* Ask people to define the word *unique* (as it applies to an individual) and *diversity* (as it applies to a group) and write these definitions in their journal.

Action

Read the Mattie Stepanek poem (found in references section) *I AM* to the group. Have the children think about whether this poem is about an individual or a group. Re-read the poem and have individuals write down the words that apply to them in their journal. Then, have them brainstorm new words that describe or pertain to the group as a whole. Make a list of these adjectives and phrases as a group, and commit to a series of statements that begin with “*WE ARE*” (e.g., *We are friends. We are supportive. We are tough.*) You can lead this into a discussion about the commitment that the group has with one another. These statements can be typed up into a finalized version and distributed or displayed in a central location.



Lesson 2: What is a Winner?

Opening

Ask the group to think about what it means to be a winner. *Does it feel good to be a winner?*

Team-Up Activity

Read *The Sneetches* by Dr. Seuss (found in references section) and have individuals re-enact the story.

Ask them to think about: *Why did one group of Sneetches think they were better than the others? Were their differences visible or invisible... external or internal? What kind of differences might the green stars represent in the real world?*



Lesson 2: What is a Winner?

Reflection

Have children define the word “respect” in groups. Ask them to think of a time they saw someone being teased or called a disrespectful, hurtful name. *Did you say or do anything in response? Why is it often hard to speak up? What is the best way to respond?*

Action

Have the group discuss what they know about Special Olympics. Have them consider, *as Special Olympics athletes and partners, what does it mean to be brave? What does it mean to be a winner?* Have them brainstorm and commit to real ways they can start to stand up to bullying.



Lesson 3: Inclusion Rules!

Opening

Read Troy Daniel's speech (found in references section).

Ask: *What does it mean to be included?*

Team-Up Activity

Have the group engage in inclusive games, such as Cooperative Volleyball (two groups pass a playground ball back and forth using a large blanket), Inclusive Races (groups of players race to a finish line with members standing side-by-side, keeping the sides of their feet joined together with players' feet on either side), or Frozen Bean Bag (players dance to music with bean bags on their heads. If a player's beanbag falls off, he/she freezes until another player retrieves the dropped beanbag and places it back on his/her head. If the helper's beanbag falls, the helper also becomes frozen until someone rescues both players.)



Lesson 3: Inclusion Rules!

Reflection

After the game have the group discuss their reactions: *What was the best part of the experience and why? What were the challenges (if any)? How did you offer encouragement and help to others? Did others offer you help? What did you learn?*

Action

Have the group think of examples of exclusion and inclusion that they see every day. What can they do to better include others? Have each person commit to try one act of inclusion and report back at the next meeting.



Lesson 4: Taking Action Project

Opening

Ask the group to reflect on the previous activities. Describe to them the opportunity they now have to make a difference in their school and/or community.

Team-Up Activity

Ask them to brainstorm: *What are the current needs in the Special Olympics community? How can we use our leadership skills to promote inclusion and acceptance for everyone in our community?* List their ideas, and think of how these can be combined or further researched. Help individuals plan out their ideas and work out the steps to make them happen. Projects can be small (write and perform a cheer or song for another Special Olympics team) or large-scale (work together to develop a year-long campaign on respect).



Lesson 4: Taking Action Project

Reflection

The group should engage in reflection throughout the project, making regular entries into their journals. They should explore changes in their knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes. *What did you learn? What is the most satisfying aspect of working together? What surprised you? Have we accomplished our goals? How did the experience make you feel? How have we helped others? Are there other ways that we can continue to help?*



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Grades 6–8

At this level, Get Into It® Active works to fulfill this age group's need for affirmation and peer relationships. The first activity asks individuals to think about the different “pieces” of themselves. This discussion transitions into the concept of “labeling” and the hurtfulness of name-calling, like the use of the word “retard(ed)”. Individuals are given an opportunity to experience hands-on the difficulties and frustrations of people with intellectual disabilities and are challenged to consider their own reactions and responses to bullying. The activities in this section are based more on discussion and experiences and so would be most effective in a homeroom or free period setting or could be combined with more physically-oriented teambuilding exercises. The group is asked to think critically about their environment and work to brainstorm, plan, and execute an initiative to improve their school and community.



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

Opening

Write the following quote on a chalkboard or poster board and have it on display as individuals arrive. *“There are all kinds of courage. It takes a great deal of courage to stand up to our enemies, but just as much to stand up to our friends.”* (Harry Potter fans will recognize the quote from Dumbledore in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone*.) Have individuals discuss or write in their journal: *What does this quote mean to you? Do you agree or disagree with it? How does it relate to an experience in your own life?*

Team-Up Activity

Explain to the group that they will be brainstorming about the different “pieces” of them. Divide participants into five different groups and assign each group to think about one category: physical traits, personality traits, interests, things I’m proud of, or things I’d like to work on. Explain that each individual has to think of one word to describe themselves but based on their groups the word can only be in that particular category. Have people share (or act out/demonstrate) their identifying word. Ask the groups: *What would it be like if you were only identified and judged by one piece of yourself? What were your reactions to the different categories?*



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

Reflection

Talk to the group about the power that one word can have as a label on other people. Ask how many people have heard the word “retard” before. *Do they hear the R-word used in movies or songs? How about in school? Have they used it? Is it just as bad to remain quiet when someone is calling someone a “retard” as it is to use the term yourself? How does this relate to Dumbledore’s quote?*

Action

Then have the group reflect in their journals (either with words or pictures) about an experience from their own lives, at school, or in their community when they either:

- Discriminated against someone
- Stood by quietly as a friend discriminated against someone, or
- Were a victim of discrimination



Lesson 2: Changing Perceptions

Opening

Ask the group if they think it is actually possible to reverse the trends of intolerance related to intellectual disabilities. *If so, whose responsibility is it?* Have individuals complete the following sentence in their journals, “*In order for my generation to help reverse stereotypes against those with intellectual disabilities...*”

Team-Up Activity

After discussing their answers tell the group that you are going to give them a difficult but important assignment, that they will have five minutes to finish, and that there is a prize for those who complete it (you are looking to establish a sense of urgency and competition).

Have them either:

- Translate the following Latin phrase into English:

Aut viam inveniam aut faciam

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

- Compute the following math problem: The sum of the first and twice the second is 100, and the product is a maximum. What are x and y ?

Answer: $x=50$, $y=25$

After a few minutes of trying, discreetly distribute answer sheets to some groups but not others.



Lesson 2: Changing Perceptions

Reflection

Once time is up, ask individuals to discuss or journal about their feelings about the exercise. Ask: *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? How might this relate to the feeling of having an intellectual disability?*

Action

Share some facts about Special Olympics with the group from the Special Olympics Fact Sheet (found in references section). Ask them to think about: *How do sports help those with intellectual disabilities to change their perceptions of themselves? What type of impact does Special Olympics have on those who have never met someone with an intellectual disability?* Tell the group to go to www.specialolympics.org/videos.aspx or www.youtube.com/SpecialOlympicsHQ. Have them identify and share 1-2 videos with friends that may have never experienced Special Olympics.



Lesson 3: What Does my School Look Like?

Opening

Ask the group to close their eyes and think about their school. Have them answer the following question: *If you were asked to describe your school using three words, what words would you choose?*

Before they share their responses, divide the group into pairs and have each partner take turns trying to guess the other person's favorite and least favorite parts of school. (You can turn this into game show style where the partners write down their answers separately and get points for how many answers they get correct about the other person).

After individuals compare their perspective, ask them: *How can people who go to the same school see it from completely different perspectives?*

Team-Up Activity

Tell the group they are going to spend some thinking about how their school may “look” to someone with an intellectual disability. Have them work together in pairs or small groups (preferably inclusive ones) to think about related questions they need to better understand their school from this perspective:

- *How many students at our school have intellectual disabilities?*
- *Are students with intellectual disabilities mainstreamed into general classes?*
- *Are there staff members dedicated to those with intellectual disabilities?*
- *Are students with intellectual disabilities encouraged/allowed to sign up for sports teams, clubs, and special programs? If so, do they participate?*
- *What are the perceptions of other students regarding those with intellectual disabilities? Do they interact during classes? Sit together during lunch? Participate in extracurricular activities?*
- *Are there opportunities for students with and without intellectual disabilities to interact and get to know one another?*
- *Do students with intellectual disabilities feel welcomed and included at school?*



Lesson 3: What Does my School Look Like?

Reflection

Have the groups brainstorm about what they would do with an unlimited budget to make their school more inclusive toward those with intellectual disabilities. Have them write about and describe what programs they would implement and the strengths and weaknesses of each. If they could only choose one, which would they choose?

Action

Have the groups share their ideas with one another and select a few ideas that they might be able to work on together. Have them discuss strategies about how to put these ideas in place, the steps needed as they move forward, and how they can measure their success.



Lesson 4: How Can I Create Change? Project

Opening

Share Eunice Kennedy Shriver's opening remarks for the 1987 Special Olympics World Games. She said, *"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."*



Lesson 4: How Can I Create Change? Project

Reflection

Individuals should engage in reflection throughout the project, making regular entries into their journals. They should explore changes in their knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes. *What did you learn? What is the most satisfying aspect of working together? What surprised you? Have we accomplished our goals? How did the experience make you feel? How have we helped others? Are there other ways that we can continue to help?*

Action

Ask the group to think about these three questions: *What Is? What Could Be? How Can I Make It Happen?* Help them brainstorm: *What are the current needs in the Special Olympics community? How can we use our leadership skills to promote inclusion and acceptance for everyone in our community? How would you describe “what is” with regard to tolerance and inclusion at school? Do you think “what is” is good enough? What improvements could be made?* Ask the group to reflect on the previous activities. Describe to them the opportunity to make a difference in their school or community. List their ideas, and help them plan out their ideas and work out the steps to make them happen. Projects can be small (write and perform a cheer or song for another Special Olympics team) or large-scale (work together to develop a youth-led rally for respect).



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Grades 9-12

This section of Get Into It® Active capitalizes on the need for independence of this age group, transforming that passion into a desire to bring about great change. Lesson one introduces the topics of social justice and bullying. The activities discuss the use of the word “retard(ed)” and the way language reflects underlying prejudices. The group is asked to think critically about their community and what type of services and opportunities are missing. At this level, the activities are based on discussion, experiences, and group research and so would be most effective in a homeroom or free period setting or could be combined with more physically-oriented teambuilding exercises. The group is asked to brainstorm, plan, and execute a new project or program to transform their environment.



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

Opening

Start the following discussion: *How many of you have heard someone say the word “retard(ed)” before? What was the context? What did the person mean by it?*

Team-Up Activity

Tell the group that you are going to be giving them a difficult but important assignment, that they will have five minutes to complete it, and that there is a prize for those who finish (you are looking to establish a sense of urgency and competition).

Have them either:

- Translate the following Latin phrase into English:
Aut viam inveniam aut faciam
Answer: Either I shall find a way or I will make one.*
- Solve the following physics problem:
A pig is launched at a 43-degree angle at a velocity of 35m/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 those individuals are finished, assign them as “teasers” to mock those individuals who are still working.



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

Reflection

Once time is up, ask the group to discuss or journal their feelings about the exercise. Ask: *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? How did it feel to be teased by others who had already finished? Did anyone confront the teasers? Did anyone defend those who were still working?*

Have the group think about the following quote by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. "He who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as he who helps to perpetrate it." *How does this quote relate to their experience? Does it relate to the use of the "R-word"?*

Action

Have the group brainstorm ways they can become part of the solution towards eliminating prejudice and intolerance toward those with intellectual disabilities. Have them think about where they hear words like the "R-word" in their daily life (movies, actresses, classmates) and how they might be able to better educate people on the impact of this word. Encourage them to visit www.r-word.org.



Lesson 2: Making a Difference

Opening

Ask the group to think about what social justice means. *Where have they heard the word before? Can they think of other social justice movements?*

Team-Up Activity

Randomly hand each individual an index card. Explain what each card represents, recognizing that those who are deprived of certain rights likely will protest. *(Prior to the start of the session, put different colored dots on groups of index cards. Decide which color dots will represent all or some of the categories, such as: Individuals are placed in an area where they cannot easily hear/see everyone else. Individuals are blindfolded. Individuals get a candy/drink of their choice. Individuals have to run extra laps. Individuals get to sit in a comfy chair.)*



Lesson 2: Making a Difference

Reflection

After the exercise, have the group reflect: *How did you feel during the exercise? What did it feel like to have more or fewer rights based on a random drawing of a card? For those who had more rights, did you try to fight for those with fewer rights? Why or why not? How would you relate the exercise to rights or treatment of those around the world based on skin color, religion, gender, or ability? 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?*

Action

Share some facts about Special Olympics with the group from the Special Olympics Fact Sheet. Ask them to think about: *How do sports help those with intellectual disabilities to change their perceptions of themselves? What type of impact does Special Olympics have on those who have never met someone with an intellectual disability?* Ask the group to go to www.specialolympics.org/videos.aspx or www.youtube.com/SpecialOlympicsHQ. They should identify and share 1-2 videos with friends that may have never experienced Special Olympics.



Lesson 3: What Does My Community Look Like?

Opening

Ask the group to think about their community as a whole. Tell 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?*
- *What assets does the community have that help to make it unique?*
- *If you were choosing a place to live, would you choose your community?*
- *If you were to give your community a “grade,” what might it be, and why?*

When people compare their perspective, ask them: *How can people who go to the same school see it from completely different perspectives?*

Team-Up Activity

Tell the group they are going to spend some time thinking about how their community may “look” to someone with an intellectual disability. Have them work together in pairs or small groups (preferably inclusive ones) to think about questions to better understand their community from this perspective:

- *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?*
- *How many people in our community have an intellectual disability?*
- *What evidence is there that people in the community are 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?*
- *Are there opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities to share their talents and strengths with others?*
- *Do people with intellectual disabilities feel welcomed and included in the community? What programs exist to help them feel welcomed and included?*



Lesson 3: What Does My Community Look Like?

Reflection

Have the groups brainstorm and explore more about the issues in their community. Challenge people to use this new picture of their community as a point of reflection. Have them create a list in their journals of how 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?

Action

Based on what they've learned, have individuals rate/assess their community with regard to inclusiveness of those with intellectual disabilities. What small steps can they suggest to improve their community's grade?



Lesson 4: How Can I Create Change? Project

Opening

Share Eunice Kennedy Shriver's opening remarks for the 1987 Special Olympics World Games. She said, *"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."* Ask individuals what they know about Eunice Kennedy Shriver and her legacy.



Lesson 4: How Can I Create Change? Project

Reflection

Individuals should engage in reflection throughout the project, making regular entries into their journals. They should explore changes in their knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes. *What did you learn? What is the most satisfying aspect of working together? What surprised you? Have we accomplished our goals? How did the experience make you feel? How have we helped others? Are there other ways that we can continue to help?*

Action

Challenge the group to think about: *What Is? What Could Be? How Can I Make It Happen?* and to begin thinking about how Eunice Kennedy Shriver's legacy can be continued in their own work. Help the group brainstorm: *What are the current needs in the Special Olympics community? How can we use our leadership skills to promote inclusion and acceptance for everyone in our community? How would you describe "what is" with regard to tolerance and inclusion at school? Do you think "what is" is good enough? What improvements could be made?* Describe to them the opportunity they have to make a difference in their school or community. List their ideas, and think of how these can be combined or further researched. Help individuals plan out their ideas and work out the steps to make them happen. Projects can be small (write and perform a cheer or song for another Special Olympics team) or large-scale (work together to develop a year-long fundraising plan).



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"I Am"

Poem by Mattie Stepanek

I am black.

I am white.

I am all skin in between.

I am young.

I am old.

I am each age that has
been.

I am scrawny.

I am well fed.

I am starving for
attention.

I am famous.

I am cryptic.

I am hardly worth the
mention.

I am short.

I am height.

I am any frame or
stature.

I am smart.

I am challenged.

I am striving for a
future.

I am able.

I am weak.

I am some strength.

I am none.

I am being.

I am thoughts.

I am all things, said and
done.

I am born.

I am dying.

I am dust of humble
roots.

I am grace.

I am pain.

I am labor of willed
fruits.

I am a slave.

I am free.

I am bonded to my life.

I am rich.

I am poor.

I am wealth amid strife.

I am a shadow.

I am glory.

I am hiding from my
shame.

I am hero.

I am loser.

I am yearning for a
name.

I am empty.

I am proud.

I am seeking my
tomorrow.

I am growing.

I am fading.

I am hope amid the
sorrow.

I am certain.

I am doubtful.

I am desperate for
solutions.

I am leader.

I am student.

I am fate and evolutions.

I am spirit.

I am voice.

I am memories not
recalled.

I am chance.

I am cause.

I am effort, blocks and
walls.

I am him.

I am her.

I am reasons without
rhymes.

I am past.

I am nearing.

I am present in all times.

I am many.

I am no one.

I am seasoned by each
being.

I am me.

I am you.

I am all souls now
decreeing.

I am.



"Inclusion Is Not a Place; It Is a Feeling" Speech by Troy Daniels

My name is Troy Daniels, but my friends call me TD. I have Down syndrome. Because my heart is bad, I use a wheelchair. I do not speak very well and sometimes I use Libby [a speech device].

I am a person with disabilities and when I say 'my friends' I mean friends, real friends just like everyone else, I have friends. Most of you think all people have friends, but for people with disabilities friends are not always real. I want you to know why I have friends.

Not too long ago, people with disabilities could not go to school with other kids. They had to go to 'special schools.' They could not have real friends. They call people like me 'retard.' That breaks my heart.

When I came to school, there is law that says all kids go to school in the place they live. I started school right here in Northfield with all the senior class. We were little kids together. The law says that I can come to school, but no law can make me have friends.

But then some kids started to think that I was okay, first it was just one or two kids who were nice to me. They found out that I cared about them and I loved my school. I told them I want to have real friends. Others started to hang out with me, and they found out we could be friends. We started to learn together that in some ways we were different but in some ways we were the same. They called me friend and made sure that I was in everything that school. I cared about them and they cared about me.

I want all people to know and to see that these students I call my friends are the real teachers of life. They are showing you how it should be. They are the teachers for all of you to follow their lead.

Yes, I am a person with a disability. The law says that I am included, but it is my friends who say... 'TD, come sit by me.'



The Sneetches

By Dr. Seuss

Now, the Star-Belly Sneetches had bellies with stars.
The Plain-Belly Sneetches had none upon thars.
Those stars weren't so big. They were really so small.
You might think such a thing wouldn't matter at all.

But, because they had stars, all the Star-Belly Sneetches
Would brag, "We're the best kind of Sneetch on the beaches."
With their snoots in the air, they would sniff and they'd snort
"We'll have nothing to do with the Plain-Belly sort!"
And, whenever they met some, when they were out walking,
They'd hike right on past them without even talking.

When the Star-Belly children went out to play ball,
Could a Plain Belly get in the game? Not at all.
You only could play if your bellies had stars
And the Plain-Belly children had none upon thars.

When the Star Belly Sneetches had frankfurter roasts
Or picnics or parties or marshmallow toasts,
They never invited the Plain-Belly Sneetches
They left them out cold, in the dark of the beaches.
They kept them away. Never let them come near.
And that's how they treated them year after year.

Then ONE day, it seems while the Plain-Belly Sneetches
Were moping and dopping alone on the beaches,
Just sitting there wishing their bellies had stars,
A stranger zipped up in the strangest of cars!



The Sneetches

By Dr. Seuss

“My friends”, he announced in a voice clear and clean,
“My name is Sylvester McMonkey McBean.
And I’ve heard of Your troubles. I’ve heard you’re unhappy.
But I can fix that, I’m the Fix-It-Up Chappie.

I’ve come here to help you.
I have what you need.
And my prices are low. And I work with great speed.
And my work is one hundred per cent guaranteed!”

Then, quickly, Sylvester McMonkey McBean
Put together a very peculiar machine.
And he said, “You want stars like a Star-Belly Sneetch?
My friends, you can have them for three dollars each!”

“Just pay me your money and hop right aboard!”
So they clambered inside. Then the big machine roared.
And it klonked. And it bonked. And it jerked. And it berked.
And it bopped them about. But the thing really worked!
When the Plain-Belly Sneetches popped out, they had stars!
They actually did. They had stars upon thars!

Then they yelled at the ones who had stars at the start,
“We’re still the best Sneetches and they are the worst.
But now, how in the world will we know”, they all frowned,
“If which kind is what, or the other way round?”



The Sneetches

By Dr. Seuss

Then up came McBean with a very sly wink.
And he said, “Things are not quite as bad as you think.
So you don’t know who’s who. That is perfectly true.
But come with me, friends. Do you know what I’ll do?
I’ll make you, again, the best Sneetches on the beaches.
And all it will cost you is ten dollars eaches.”

“Belly stars are no longer in style”, said McBean.
“What you need is a trip through my Star-Off Machine.
This wondrous contraption will take OFF your stars
so you won’t look like Sneetches that have them on thars.”
And that handy machine working very precisely
Removed all the stars from their tummies quite nicely.

Then, with snoots in the air, they paraded about.
And they opened their beaks and they let out a shout,
“We know who is who! Now there Isn’t a doubt.
The best kind of Sneetches are Sneetches without!”

Then, of course, those with stars got all frightfully mad.
To be wearing a star was frightfully bad.
Then, of course, old Sylvester McMonkey McBean
invited THEM into his Star-Off Machine.

Then, of course from THEN on, as you probably guess,
Things really got into a horrible mess.



The Sneetches

By Dr. Seuss

All the rest of that day, on those wild screaming beaches,
The Fix-It-Up Chappie kept fixing up Sneetches.
Off again! On again! In again! Out again!
Through the machines they raced round and about again,

Changing their stars every minute or two. They kept paying money.
They kept running through until the Plain nor the Star-Bellies knew
Whether this one was that one or that one was this one. Or which one
Was what one or what one was who.

Then, when every last cent of their money was spent,
The Fix-It-Up Chappie packed up. And he went.
And he laughed as he drove In his car up the beach,
“They never will learn. No. You can’t Teach a Sneetch!”

But McBean was quite wrong. I’m quite happy to say.
That the Sneetches got really quite smart on that day.
The day they decided that Sneetches are Sneetches.
And no kind of Sneetch is the best on the beaches.
That day, all the Sneetches forgot about stars and whether
They had one, or not, upon thars.



The Special Olympics Movement unlocks the joy of sport to inspire people throughout the world to open their minds to human giftedness and to accept, include and value people with intellectual disabilities in all aspects of life. Today, Special Olympics is more than an event: it is one of the world's most powerful and effective social movements.

- Nearly four million athletes
- Nearly 50,000 competitions around the world each year
- More than 136 competitions hosted each day
- More than one million coaches and volunteers
- 32 Olympic-type summer and winter sports
- Special Olympics Accredited Programs in more than 170 countries
- Seven Global Regional Offices: China, Egypt, Ireland, Panama, Singapore, South African and the United States

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 Values

- Sportsmanship with Joy
- Athlete Leadership
- Unity
- Bravery
- Perseverance

Special Olympics' Impact

Special Olympics is forever changing the way individuals with intellectual disabilities are perceived and treated. Special Olympics is the world's largest sports community for people with intellectual disabilities, helping to improve the health, self-esteem and self-confidence of all who participate. Special Olympics is the world's largest public health organization for people with intellectual disabilities, providing access to free health services for a population with many unmet needs. Special Olympics has influenced policies that have resulted in better health, education and employment opportunities for individuals with special needs. Special Olympics' educational programming leverages sports as a platform to teach acceptance and inclusion to young people around the world. Young people are now leading the charge to create more accepting and inclusive communities that welcome people with intellectual disabilities.



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.

History

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

Advancing Sports Excellence For All

The Special Olympics **Young Athletes™** initiative introduces young children with intellectual disabilities ages two through seven to the world of Special Olympics by engaging them in active play.

Unified Sports® places individuals with intellectual disabilities (athletes) and individuals without intellectual disabilities (partners) side-by-side on competitive sports teams.

Every two years, the world comes together for the **Special Olympics World Games**. Alternating between Summer and Winter Games, these are flagship events for the Special Olympics movement.

Building Communities

Young people are among the most open-minded audiences for social change. Using sports as its platform **Project UNIFY®** is a dynamic collaboration between Special Olympics and school communities that engages young people with and without intellectual disabilities to promote attitudes and behaviors of acceptance and inclusion in schools.

Special Olympics Healthy Athletes™ is the world's largest public health program for people with intellectual disabilities – a population that faces dramatically greater health issues than others, yet frequently receives inadequate care or no care at all. At Health Athletes events, volunteer healthcare professionals provides athletes with free screenings and services in seven clinical areas.

Special Olympics also looks to build communities through **Family Engagement and Leadership** initiatives as well as through **Research and Policy**.

Changing Attitudes

The **Spread the Word to End the Word® Campaign** is a grassroots effort to get people around the world, including the entertainment industry, to stop using the “R-word” (“retard” and comparable words in different cultures).

Athlete Leadership Programs train Special Olympics athletes to hold meaningful roles as public speakers, board members, sport officials, coaches, photographer and more. By participating in the Special Olympics movement as leaders, not just recipients of services, athletes help shape the public's perceptions about what they can do and gain skills that help them excel off the playing field.



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Questions or Comments?
Contact getintoit@specialolympics.org