



GUIDELINES AT A GLANCE FOR IMPLEMENTING THE LESSONS AND ACTIVITIES

The **Get Into It** curriculum consists of four lesson plans, a guide to alignment with national standards, a service-learning guide, and online resources and interactives available at www.specialolympics.org/getintoit.

The curriculum was designed to be taught in general education and inclusive classrooms. The lessons place a special emphasis on language arts with other cross-curricular connections, extensions and modifications. The curriculum could also be offered with both a regular education teacher and a special education teacher team teaching the program.

Goals

The specific goals of the lessons are to:

- Identify and respect differences in individuals' talents, skills and abilities;
- Motivate and activate students to make a difference in their school communities
- Learn how to identify issues in school climate, develop a plan, and work with others to create positive change;
- Become involved in a service-learning project or activity related to Special Olympics that addresses issues such as bullying, stereotypes or obesity;
- Learn about and become involved in Special Olympics sports and events such as Unified Sports or a youth rally for respect.
- Develop an appreciation and understanding of Special Olympics athletes and the role of Special Olympics in promoting acceptance and awareness

Unit Sequence and Structure

The four-lesson unit follows a logical progression in which the lessons build on each other, often each lesson will take up multiple class periods. Each lesson has a similar sequence, which includes:

- **Cross-Curricular Connections**
- **Academic Skills Addressed**
- **Desired Outcomes & Expectations**
- **Materials**
- **Background Information**
- **Terms**
- **Steps of the lesson**
- **Opportunities for Reflection**
- **Inclusive Modifications & Extensions**
- **Additional Resources**

The Importance of Building Toward a Service-Learning Project

It is especially important to begin the unit by emphasizing that students will be involved in at least a brief service-learning activity. This should not be introduced as an afterthought, as it will be the culmination of the lessons. The service-learning project provides a great inclusive collaboration opportunity for special education and general education teachers to work together, and for special education and general education students to discover and work together as equal partners on class projects. Please see the service-learning guide for further information about how to anticipate and plan for students' involvement in service-learning.

Special Considerations in Teaching the *Get Into It* Lessons

The ***Get Into It*** lessons include specific information and content about a variety of topics:

- Intellectual disabilities;
- Stereotypes, the harm they can cause, and ways to avoid them;
- Acceptance of individual differences;
- Goal setting;
- Individual Special Olympics athletes who have succeeded with courage and determination;
- Special Olympics movement
- Ways to work together and create positive change in the school and community.

Some teachers may find it relatively easy to teach the lessons and interact with students in a context that focuses on character development and group relationships. Others may find the approach unfamiliar. Whichever category you are in, it will be helpful to keep the following considerations in mind as you prepare to teach the ***Get Into It*** lessons.

- **Avoid being judgmental.** In these lessons there are no right or wrong answers. Students may say things that surprise you. Encourage a classroom climate of openness and acceptance.
- **Be aware of the need to approach sensitive issues and topics with care.** If students seem uncomfortable discussing matters related to their families or to people they know who have disabilities, including their own disabilities, do not press the issue. It's more important to foster a comfortable classroom climate that stresses acceptance of individual differences



- **Build a support network.** Since a major goal of **Get Into It** is to involve students in bringing Special Olympics Project UNIFY initiatives into their schools, it is important to make use of available people and resources. These may include special education teachers, physical education and adapted physical education teachers, staff, and volunteers who are already involved in Special Olympics in your community. These individuals can help in forming unified sports teams, youth rallies, fans in the stands teams and other activation opportunities.

E-Tools

The **Get Into It** website has both a teacher and student portal. Beyond access to the free curriculum and resources, the teacher portal has an online community where educators can share best practices with one another. The student portal includes educational games for students as well as an opportunity for them to join the Special Olympics fan community.

The inclusion of videos and other online resources with the **Get Into It** materials offers a variety of options in teaching and expanding on the lessons. Previewing the videos and other resources on the website will be an important step in your decision about how to use them. Teachers who have used the videos have found them highly motivating and engaging for students, but they will require additional time if you decide to show them.

Teacher Review of Other Materials

It will be important for the teacher to review supplementary materials (books, videos, Web sites, etc.) as much as possible to ensure that students are referring to accurate information that is aligned with school and district guidelines and policies. Similarly, when students use resources outside of school (e.g., community agencies that agree to assist with service-learning projects), the teacher should make sure in advance that these resources are appropriate and also meet school and district guidelines and policies.

For more information about this curriculum or about Special Olympics, contact:

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