About the Article

Levels
Lexile Range: 800L-900L
Guided Reading Level: T
DRA Level: 50

Learning Objectives
Students will find the main idea that two articles share about people with intellectual disabilities.

Content-Area Connections
Social-emotional learning: empathy, respect for others

Key Skills
Main Idea, synthesizing, vocabulary, summarizing, key details, compare and contrast, inference, evaluating, narrative and explanatory writing

Standards Correlations
This article and lesson support the following Common Core anchor standards: R.1, R.2, R.3, R.4, R.9, W.2, W.3, SL.1, L.6
Check our website for more standards information.

Your Teaching Support Package
Here’s your full suite of materials, all of which you’ll find at storyworks.scholastic.com:

Audio:
- On-level version
- Lower-Lexile version

Differentiated article:
- Lower-Lexile version (printable)

Activities to print or project:
- Vocabulary
- Close-Reading and Critical-Thinking Questions*
- Core Skills Workout: Main Idea/Synthesizing, Summarizing,* Inference*
- Comprehension Quiz*
- Questions for English Language Learners

*Available on two levels
syndrome is a condition some people are born with, which causes them to learn more slowly. It can also cause physical problems, such as weak muscles and problems with digestion.

• What did people commonly believe about those with DS before the 1970s? Compare these attitudes with the way Bobby’s family treated him. (compare and contrast) Before the 1970s, many thought that people with DS couldn’t learn and should be sent away to live in hospitals, forgotten by their families. Bobby’s family refused to do that. Instead, Bobby’s parents cared for him at home, where they loved and supported him. Today, Bobby shares a home with four other men with DS.

• Reread the section “Isaac’s Magic.” How did the teachers and students at New Richmond Elementary help Isaac? How did he help them? (main idea) The teachers and students supported and encouraged Isaac to help him thrive at school. Teachers worked closely with Isaac on his learning, and the other kids were kind and loving toward him. Isaac has a special quality about him that “makes people feel peaceful and loved.” Because of this, people want to be around him.

“A Very Special Olympics” Close-Reading Questions
• What is the main idea of “A Very Special Olympics”? (main idea) The main idea is that Special Olympics has succeeded in changing ideas about people with intellectual disabilities. The participants have “helped weaken decades of prejudice” by showing what they’re capable of.

• Who started Special Olympics? Why? (key details) Eunice Kennedy Shriver started Special Olympics 50 years ago. She wanted to change how people with intellectual disabilities, like her sister Rosemary, were viewed and treated.
• How many people volunteer for Special Olympics? Why might someone want to be a part of this program? (inference) More than a million people from all over the world volunteer, including doctors, coaches, and pop stars. Volunteers probably enjoy helping the athletes improve their skills and watching them have fun at competitions. The volunteers might also want the world to see how capable and amazing people with intellectual disabilities can be.

**Critical-Thinking Questions**

• What do both articles say about the potential of people with DS and other intellectual disabilities? (main idea/synthesizing) With the right support and encouragement, people with intellectual disabilities have the potential to learn and thrive—as Isaac, Bobby, and the Special Olympics athletes have shown. Both articles describe how this was not a commonly held idea in the past.

• Based on what you read, what role do you think other people can play in the success of those with disabilities? (synthesizing) Like Isaac’s classmates, teachers, and “the I team,” others can help people with disabilities succeed by being patient and accepting, and by realizing that people with disabilities can succeed. Eunice Kennedy Shriver set an example by creating events in which people with intellectual disabilities can have fun, learn sports, compete, and succeed, and in which other people can help make the events happen.

• Did reading these articles change your view of people with disabilities in any way? Explain. (evaluating) Answers will vary.

3. Skill Building

**Featured Skill: Main Idea**

• Have students complete our main idea/synthesizing activity, then respond to the writing prompt on page 20.

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**Differentiate and Customize**

**For Struggling Readers**

Put students in pairs to reread the first article. Have one person underline details that show how Isaac’s personality and efforts help him succeed at school, while the other focuses on how others help Isaac flourish. (Remind them to read the photo captions too.) Then have them share what they underlined and work on the writing prompt as a team.

**For Advanced Readers**

Have students go to www.specialolympics.org to learn more about Special Olympics, like its history or which sports are represented in the World Games—or to meet one of the Special Olympics athletes. Invite students to choose a topic to research. Ask them to present what they learned to the rest of the class.

**For ELL Students**

Some terms, such as shine a spotlight and deep prejudice, may be difficult for ELLs. Read the articles together slowly, inviting students to place sticky notes next to terms they have trouble with. Then discuss the meanings of the flagged items as a group.

**For Guided Reading**

Work with individual groups on one section at a time, focusing on identifying the key events or details in each section. As you work with groups, have other students answer some or all of the close-reading and critical-thinking questions (activity sheet online).