

Perfect Game Review
From:
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Look!

A book that has a young man with fragile X syndrome in it!

Isaac is a good pitcher whose sole focus is to pitch a perfect game: no hits, no runs, no walks, and no errors. He gets close a couple of times, but he never quite gets that perfect game. When the coach sees the pressure to pitch a perfect game begins to affect Isaac in a negative way, he decides Isaac needs to get some perspective. The coach introduces Isaac to a Special Olympics Unified Sports team that plays basketball. It is at these basketball practices that Isaac meets a group of people with different disabilities, and he becomes interested in one young man who has fragile X syndrome. When Isaac learns that some people get excited by something as simple as making a basket, he realizes that there is more to life than pitching a perfect game. It is this young man with fragile X syndrome who shows Isaac a whole new way to think about perfect.

Thank you Fred Bowen for including a young man with fragile X syndrome in your book. There are still many people who have never heard of the condition, and this is a great way to raise awareness. When one child in the book uses the “R” word to describe one of the students with a disability, the other children let him know that it is not okay. Mr. Bowen has a reference to the “Spread the Word to End the Word” campaign for more information. He also includes a description of the history and value of Special Olympics and I hope this encourages others to join as “partners.” And then there is always The Real Story behind Perfect Games in baseball. Fascinating!

My interview with Fred Bowen:

*How did you learn about Unified Sports and at what point did you decide to incorporate it into the book?

I'm not sure when I discovered Unified Sports. But I always had planned for a Special Olympics athlete to be one of the main characters. I started the book 13 years ago, but that effort wasn't very good so I put it aside. When I took up the book again, part of my research was watching Unified Sports basketball games and it was clear to me then that the Special Olympics athlete would be playing on a Unified Sports team.

*Why did you decide to focus on a young man with fragile X syndrome?

I hadn't planned for the character to have fragile X syndrome; in fact, I did not know anything about fragile X syndrome. I discovered it by talking with parents and coaches of the Unified Sports teams that I observed and I wanted Isaac, the main character, to discover it the way that I did.

*Where can we get your book?

Perfect Game (and all my books) is widely available at most online booksellers and in bookstores.

This book is geared for children in the upper elementary to middle school age level. It is a great book to give as a gift to your family, friends and teachers!