

## Lesson Plan on Special Olympics Connection in Perfect Game

- ★ Common Core connection (Grades 4-6): Meets “Integration of Knowledge and Ideas” standard for integrating two different texts on the same topic.

### Introduction:

Before author Fred Bowen started writing **Perfect Game**, he did a lot of research. He knew part of his story would include writing about a fictional Special Olympics Unified Sports team so he spent many weekends sitting in the bleachers watching a real Unified Sports basketball team in action. The team was made up of kids with and without intellectual disabilities. He interviewed some of the players and parents. And he read the Unified Sports handbook and mission statement. Student can now judge whether Mr. Bowen succeeded in portraying the players accurately. This lesson asks students to first read **Perfect Game** and then read the excerpts below and consider how the story and the excerpts compare with each other.

### Writing Prompt/Discussion Question #1

*How do specific players on the basketball team in **Perfect Game** change in the story? Do they change in ways described in the Handbook excerpt and Mission Statement below?*

#### **From the Special Olympics Unified Sports Handbook®**

Special Olympics Unified Sports creates unique teammate bonds through sports experiences just like any other sports team. These experiences create a culture of inclusion and foster understanding in schools and communities.

Participation in Unified Sports leads to new friendships, improved self-esteem and positive changes in attitude, behavior and performance for all students involved. The program creates a lasting impact on all those participating and is a great addition to any education environment.

#### **Mission Statement of Special Olympics**

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.

### Writing Prompt/Discussion #2

*How do the players on the basketball team in **Perfect Game** live up to (or not live up to) the expectations listed below?*

#### **Expectations of Athletes and Partners** (from Special Olympics Unified Sports Handbook®)

- Treat teammates with respect.
- Encourage teammates when they make a mistake.

- Treat opponents with respect: shake hands prior to and after contests.
- Respect judgment of contest officials, abide by rules of the contest and display no behavior that could incite fans.
- Cooperate with officials, coaches or directors and fellow participants to conduct a fair contest.
- Do not retaliate (verbally or physically) if the other team demonstrates poor behavior.
- Accept seriously the responsibility and privilege of representing Special Olympics.
- Define winning as doing your personal best.
- Live up to the high standard of sportsmanship established by your coach.

For more information about Unified Sports, please visit  
<http://www.specialolympics.org/unified-sports.aspx>