



“Together We’re Better” Inclusive Education Awareness Campaign and Artwork Contest

Diversity Celebration Toolkit

The Arc Maryland, in partnership with the Maryland State Department of Education, Maryland Department of Disabilities, and the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council, is pleased to announce its 2019-2020 “Together We’re Better” Inclusive Education Awareness Campaign and Artwork Contest **in honor of National Inclusive Schools week (December 2nd – 6th)**. National Inclusive Schools Week highlights and celebrates the progress schools have made in providing a supportive and quality education to all students, including those with disabilities. This year’s theme is ***Charting the Course for Inclusive Schools***.

Just like the mariners of old, we know we must chart our course for increasingly successful inclusive schools and societies. What tools do we need? What questions must we ask and answer? The 2019 theme for Inclusive Schools Week provides educators, students, parents, schools, agencies, and communities with the opportunity to think about our current philosophies and practices regarding inclusion and to plan for “next steps” in the process. Many of us have seen positive changes in awareness of inclusion as a requirement for achieving greater access, equitable opportunities, and more authentic relationships. Most of us recognize that we have many more steps to take to reach our goal of fully inclusive school cultures. Whether we are ambitiously charting our course for deep space, medical advancement, new worlds, or inclusive schools, we recognize that we have work to do, experiences to enjoy, and meaningful friendships to build!

Inclusive Schools are characterized by:

- Making every student feel welcome and providing the supports they need to learn
- Embracing the understanding that every student is unique, and therefore, learns differently
- Understanding that all children learn better if teaching is tailored to their abilities and interests
- Collaborating with families and holding high expectations for student success

Improving Education: The Promise of Inclusive Schooling book includes a long list of more than two dozen practical ways educators can make their classrooms more inclusive. Some of the practices include:

- LESS whole-class, teacher-directed instruction
- LESS classroom time devoted to fill-in-the-blank worksheets
- LESS tracking or leveling of students into “ability groups”
- MORE active learning in the classroom
- MORE emphasis on higher-order thinking and learning of key concepts and principles
- MORE responsibility transferred to students for their work
- MORE attention to affective needs and the varying cognitive styles for individual students
- MORE delivery of aid and help to students in general education classrooms

The Arc Maryland and its partners are pleased to provide you with an extensive **Diversity Celebration Toolkit** at (www.thearcmd.org) and activities that align with Maryland State Curriculum Indicators for teachers, counselors, volunteers, and other staff in preparing lesson plans and activities for students in grades K-5 and 6-8 to celebrate inclusive schools and diverse abilities of all students. Also, this year’s 2019-2020 Diversity Celebration Toolkit contains resources to plan activities and tools aimed to guide your **students in participating in our Artwork contest. (See flyer for full details regarding the Artwork Contest)**

RESOURCES AND ACTIVITIES - Aligned with Maryland State Curriculum Indicators

Health Education

1. Mental and Emotional Health

Additional Subject Area Connections: Art

Outcomes

1. Students will demonstrate ways to communicate respect for diversity, including mental and physical disabilities, culture, and race/ethnicity
2. Students will communicate their understanding of what bullying is, and how using certain labels to describe people with disabilities is hurtful

Art

3.2.a Identify sources for ideas and describe the processes used to create artworks based on those sources

Unit Title: Disability Awareness

Unit Description: Students will participate in activities that promote disability awareness and celebrate diversity.

Experiences

- Students participate in disability awareness activities (e.g., guest speakers and published sample activities in suggested resources)
- Students read books related to disability awareness and acceptance
- Students view videos (links shown below) to understand disabilities
- Students design and create artwork demonstrating knowledge and ideas gained
- Students complete one-page post-activity surveys to demonstrate attitudinal changes and increased knowledge following campaign activities

Presentations/Assemblies

- Sponsor a Disability Awareness Day. Invite guest speakers to come to your school – including individuals with disabilities as well as representatives from nonprofit and community service agencies.
Contact Sharon Dols at The Arc Maryland to make arrangements at sdols@thearcmd.org.

Resource Links & Websites for Teachers (ie- sample activities, lesson plans, etc)

http://www.uh.edu/cdi/diversity_education/resources/case-studies/activities.pdf

Diversity and Inclusion Activities

http://ici.umn.edu/products/inclusive_schools.pdf

Inclusive School Communities for Students with Disabilities: 10 Reasons Why

<http://www.thearc.org/learn-about>

Learn about different conditions of disability for better understanding and find various resources about inclusion and disabilities

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<https://www.cec.sped.org/Tools-and-Resources>

The Council for Exceptional Children - offers educators many aids to assist them in providing the best of special education services. (publications and tools to use in the classroom each week as well as the latest in education policy news and information on the Department of Education resources)

<https://www.ppmnd.org/resources/>

Helpful Teacher Resources: Autism Spectrum Disorder; Amazing Me: Developmental Milestones Book for Children; Bullying; Bullying Among Children and Youth with Disabilities and Special Needs; Warning Signs that a Child is Being Bullied; Epilepsy; Epilepsy Factsheet

<http://inclusiveschools.org/inclusive-schools-week/>

Inclusive Schools Week: Teacher Planning/Activity Tools

<https://inclusiveschools.org/inclusive-schools-week/isw-activities-and-lessons/>

Inclusive Schools Week: Celebration Activities & Lesson Plans

<http://www.wholechildeducation.org/what-works/resources>

Inclusive Learning: Meeting Each Student's Special Needs... Creating an inclusive environment where each student feels safe and supported in an engaging and appropriately challenging environment is rarely an easy feat, yet it is essential to educating the whole child. Regardless of strengths and challenges, each student needs and is deserving of full membership within the classroom and school community. While each student benefits from this inclusive environment, it is critically important and often challenging to ensure it for students with special needs.

<https://www.naeyc.org/>

Inclusion and Disability Awareness Training for Educators

<http://inclusiveschools.org/the-importance-of-inclusion-in-play-for-children-with-cerebral-palsy/>

The importance of inclusion in play for children with cerebral palsy: www.cerebralpalsyguidance.com
View a variety of experts providing families and individuals with cerebral palsy the resources they need. With medical experts, lawyers, and even people who live with this condition, the latest information is gathered about everything that impacts children with cerebral palsy, including the important topic of inclusion. When people think of inclusion, they tend to think of school and academics, integrating special needs children into general education classrooms, but inclusion is important in play and recreation too. Children with physical disabilities, like cerebral palsy, too often get left out. This doesn't necessarily happen intentionally, but people make quick judgments about what they think a disabled child can do, and those are often wrong. With encouragement and some adaptive equipment, every child can get involved.

<https://shanesinspiration.org/inclusion-curriculum/>

Together We Are Able® - Social Inclusion Education Program: The curriculum fulfills key social-emotional learning goals. The 60-minute modular social inclusion video training is a companion to the curriculum. The combination of tips and visual demonstrations is a powerful resource that can help create an inclusive social setting on a school campus.

<https://inclusiveschools.org/the-nora-project/>

The Nora Project's mission is to teach empathy by sparking friendships between students and their peers with disabilities. The program is laid out over the four quarters of a school year and delivered in general education classrooms in grades 2-12.

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https://inclusiveschools.org/Course%20HTML%20Files/InclusionBasics/story_html5.html

Inclusion Basics – PowerPoint Presentations

<https://inclusiveschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/2018-Celebration-Activities-for-ISW.pdf>

Lessons and Plans for Educators

<https://www.nprinc.com/categories/special-education/inclusion.html>

NPR (National Professional Resources) - source for educators of an extensive variety of classroom and professional development resources

<https://www.embracingourdifferences.org/>

Embracing our Differences is a not-for-profit organization based in Florida, that uses the power of art and education to expand consciousness and open the heart to celebrate the diversity of the human family. It accomplishes this through a comprehensive series of educational initiatives, programs and resources designed for teachers and students. Through the transformative power of the arts, we educate and inspire to create a better world.

<https://www.brighthouseeducation.com>

Lesson plans, teaching units, classroom management techniques, student assessment tools, special education information, and more... ideas for kindergarten through senior high school

<https://www.thoughtco.com/an-inclusion-toolbox-3111034>

An Inclusion Toolbox – Resources to help special educators succeed in inclusive classrooms

<https://www.kaplanco.com/ii/creating-inclusive-lesson-plans>

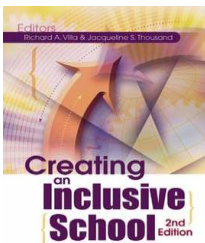
Creating inclusive lesson plans... improving outcomes for all children by providing products and services that enhance early learning and help children reach their full potential

<https://marylandlearninglinks.org/about-us/>

Maryland Learning Links is used in conjunction with the Maryland State Department of Education and Johns Hopkins School of Education to provide current information and resources about Special Education

<http://www.ascd.org/research-a-topic/inclusion-and-special-education-resources.aspx>

ASCD empowers educators to achieve excellence in learning, teaching, and leading so that every child is healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged. Inclusion and Special Education Resources include books, lesson plans, webinars, online learning, teacher leadership



Book example -

Edited by Richard A. Villa and Jacqueline S. Thousand

There is only one child in the world and that child's name is ALL children. —Carl Sandburg

VIDEOS

<https://www.facebook.com/BittyandBeausCoffee/videos/be-the-one/1954113561378380/>

Step off the sidelines and be the one who makes a difference in someone's life – 4-minutes (grades 4 – 12)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CL8GMxRW_5Y

Talk to Me-Physical Disability Awareness (Phoebe) – 3-minutes (grades 3 – 8)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gv1aDEFIXq8>

Disability Sensitivity Training - 4-minutes (grades 7 – 12)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B4frsp-rR6c&list=PLAJFhAOG3SCd4XvNshmlvesc7i1sHlr55>

Tamara is a film about how a child’s dream will overcome all circumstances – 4-minutes (grades K – 3)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mtRYKjucDHk&list=PLAJFhAOG3SCd4XvNshmlvesc7i1sHlr55&index=2>

What’s Up With Nick? In an effort to promote a more inclusive classroom environment, this short video uses animation and sound to teach students about their peers with autism – 3-minutes (grades 2 – 7)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ekLpn4zKiNU>

The Inspirational Story of 9-Year-Old Ezra Frech, who has physical disabilities – 4-minutes (grades 3 -8)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hz_d-cikWml

Academy Award-eligible, “Ian” tells the story of a boy with Cerebral Palsy whose fierce determination to be included on his local playground changes the beliefs and actions of his community – 9-minutes (grades 2 – 5)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5BZlyxS37Kk>

“It’s you I like” - Mr. Rogers talks with a boy in a motorized wheelchair - 6 minutes (grades K - 4) and 2nd clip is when Mr. Rogers is inducted into the TV Hall of Fame - He receives his award from the same boy, now an adult...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TcNxY4TudXo> - 4-minutes (all grades)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tJnJ_fTYofQ

Inspiring man born without arms or legs - Nick Vujicic | 60 Minutes Australia – 14-minutes (grades 5 - 12)

<http://imtyler.org/index.php/video/>

I am Tyler – 12-minutes (grades 6 – 10)

A catalyst for students to talk about assumptions they make about people with disabilities—and about their peers.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7EJqX9JbMPg>

General Disability Awareness: Using Person-First Language – 3-minutes (grades 5 – 9)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l-gQLqv9f4o&list=PLdERLjd8WMLznxnxz5qYBrMinq-dyKvJoY>

Pep Talk from Kid President to You – 3-minutes (grades 4 – 8)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gM96e0yWjhl&list=FLhr7RGyPqO6Rx-gRAnAJBRg&index=7>

Respect- 1-minute (grades 3 – 8)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fkdtEOrrkPs>

End the “R” word- 2-minutes (grades 1 – 5)

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S0fs9650Vz8>

Katie’s Disability Video – 3-minutes (grades 2 – 5)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=brVxm8tqsC4>

“Friendship Adventures: Invisible Disabilities”

Sometimes disabilities are inside of our bodies, not on the outside. Learn how to be a good friend to someone who has diabetes, an invisible disability – 5-minutes (grades 4 – 8)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kTGo_dp_S-k

I am a person- 1-minute (grades 5 - 9)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bwW6mYdJ7Xc>

Disability-How you see me – 3-minutes (grades 7 - 10)

<https://www.nbcnews.com/nightly-news/video/this-pizzeria-serves-up-pies-all-while-catering-to-the-deaf-767614019704>

There’s a pizzeria where you can order without saying a word all thanks to new technology that’s made it possible for deaf owners and the staff to succeed – 2-minutes (grades 6 – 12)

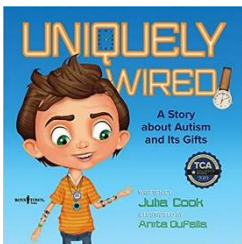
BOOKS



We All Have Different Abilities - Melissa Higgins

(Grades K – 2)

What can you do? Tie your shoes? Play piano? Everyone has different talents and abilities. Let’s share and celebrate our many talents!

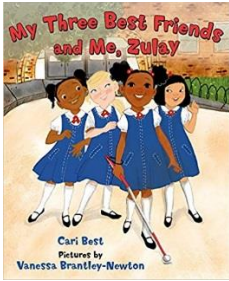


Uniquely Wired: A Story About Autism and Its Gifts – Julia Cook

(Grades 1 – 5)

Zak is obsessed with watches. He owns hundreds of watches and is quick to tell everyone everything about them. Zak also has autism, so he sometimes responds to the world around him in unconventional ways. As Zak describes his point of view, young readers gain a better understanding of his behaviors and learn valuable lessons about patience, tolerance, and understanding.

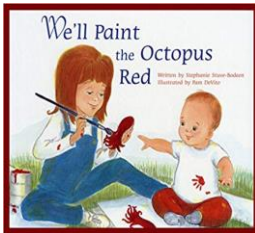
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My Three Best Friends and Me, Zulay – Cari Best

(Grades K – 3)

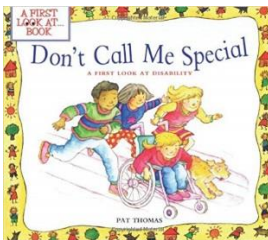
Zulay and her three best friends are all in the same first grade class and study the same things, even though Zulay is blind. When their teacher asks her students what activity they want to do on Field Day, Zulay surprises everyone when she says she wants to run a race. With the help of a special aide and the support of her friends, Zulay does just that.



We'll Paint the Octopus Red – Stephanie Stuve-Bodeen

(Grades K – 3)

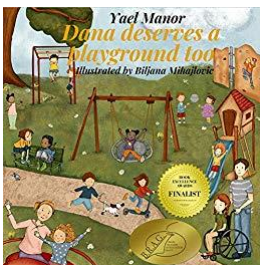
As six-year-old Emma anticipates the birth of her new baby brother or sister, she vividly imagines all of the things they can do together. When the baby is born, her dad tells her that it's a boy and he has something called Down syndrome. She asks, "If Isaac has this Down thing, then what can't he do?". Her dad tells her that as long as they are patient with him, and help him when he needs it, there probably isn't anything Isaac can't do. Emma helps her father as much as he helps her to realize that Isaac is the baby they dreamed of.



Don't Call Me Special: A First Look at Disability – Pat Thomas

(Grades K – 2)

This delightful picture book explores questions and concerns about physical disabilities in a simple and reassuring way. Children can find out about individual disabilities, special equipment that is available to help their friends who have disabilities, and how people of all ages can live happy and full lives.

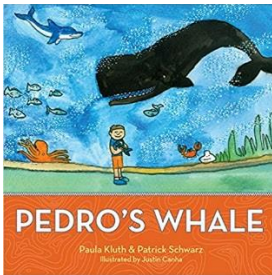


Dana Deserves a Playground Too – Yael Manor

(Grades K – 3)

I couldn't imagine that this would happen... I heard about a woman who met a father and daughter at the playground. Due to a disability, the girl used a wheelchair and was unable to enjoy any of the playground facilities. All she could do was put her doll in the swing and push it, which caused great sorrow for her and her father. This story gave me a lot of inspiration to write this book.

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Pedro's Whale – Paula Kluth and Patrick Schwarz, Ph.D.

(Grades 1-2)

This story introduces educators to one of the most effective inclusion strategies: using students' fascinations to help them learn. Pedro, is heartbroken when he's told to put away his favorite toy whale on the first day of school. But then Pedro's teacher discovers the secret to helping him do his best work: not only giving him his whale, but incorporating his special interest into the whole curriculum. Soon, Pedro's whale is helping all the children learn, as the teacher works whales into math lessons, science experiments, and more! Pedro's whale helps him make friends, as the other children start to share his special interest. This story helps teachers ensure that students with and without disabilities reach their full potential.



Thank You, Mr. Falker – Patricia Polacco

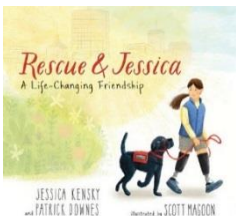
(Grades K – 3)

The real-life story of girl with dyslexia and the teacher who would not let her fail.

Days With Dad - Nari Hong

(Grades K – 2)

A young girl comforts her father, who uses a wheelchair, as they talk about all the fun things they can still do together.



Rescue & Jessica - Jessica Kensky

(Grades 1 – 3)

Rescue; the service dog's journey is brought into the life of Jessica, and how they have saved each other.

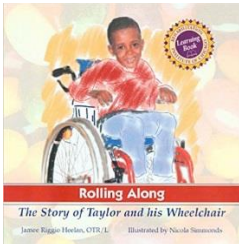
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The Princess Panda Tea Party: A Cerebral Palsy Fairy Tale – Jewel Kats (Grades 1-3)

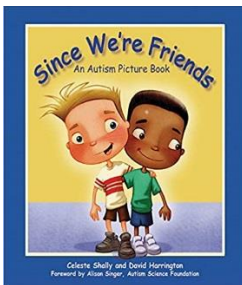
An enchanting story which shows girls that grace and courage come from within. Readers of this story will:

- Gain an appreciation for people with disabilities
- Discover the courage to go after their dreams
- Learn how to treat guests with courtesy and warmth
- See how preparation and practice are the keys to success
- Learn the power of affirmations
- Understand how generosity can change the world



Rolling Along: The Story of Taylor and his Wheelchair - Jamee Heelan

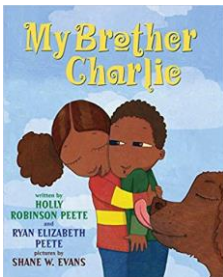
Explains how having cerebral palsy affects Taylor, and how getting a wheelchair makes a big difference in helping him get around, do things by himself, and even play basketball with his twin Tyler.



Since We're Friends – Celeste Shally

(Grades K – 3)

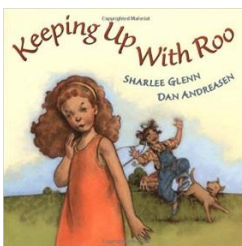
Matt's autism doesn't keep him from having fun! Even when he struggles in social situations, his friend is there to help him out. The two boys love playing sports watching movies, reading books, and talking about animals. By working together, a best friend's understanding and compassion change Matt's frustration into excitement. This book is the perfect guide to better understand people with autism spectrum disorders.



My Brother Charlie – Holly Robinson Peete and Ryan Elizabeth Peete

(Grades K – 4)

Charlie has autism. His brain works in a special way. It's harder for him to make friends. Or show his true feelings. Or stay safe." But as his big sister tells us, for everything that Charlie can't do well, there are plenty more things that he's good at. Actress and national autism spokesperson Holly Robinson Peete collaborates with her daughter on this book based on Holly's 10-year-old son, who has autism.

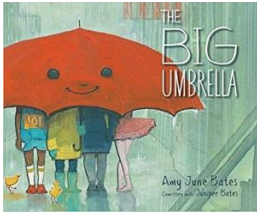


Keeping Up With Roo – Sharlee Glenn

(Grades 1 – 3)

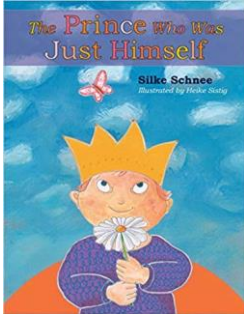
Having always been best friends with her Aunt Roo, who has disabilities, Gracie is suddenly experiencing a shift in their relationship. As Gracie gets older, she finds new friends, and discovers the differences between the two worlds in which they live.

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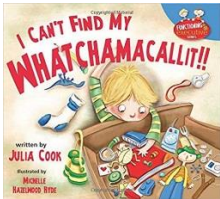
The Big Umbrella – Amy June Bates and Juniper Bates (Grades K – 3)

A simple book about inclusion, hospitality, and welcoming others. By the door there is an umbrella. It is big. It is so big that when it starts to rain there is room for *everyone* underneath. It doesn't matter if you are tall. Or plaid. Or hairy. It doesn't matter how many legs you have. There will always be enough room under the umbrella for everyone.



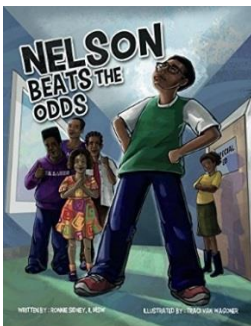
The Prince Who Was Just Himself (A Prince Noah Book) – Silke Schnee (Grades K – 3)

The royal couple is looking forward to their third child. “He looks a little different,” muses the king at Prince Noah’s arrival. “He is not like the others,” agrees the queen. Soon they notice what a very special person he is. When the youngest prince disarms the cruel knight Scarface, the nation’s most dreaded enemy, with an act of compassion, everyone finally realizes how good it is that each person is unique. This book instills appreciation for children with Down syndrome and other developmental disabilities, making it a valuable aid for teaching inclusion in the classroom.



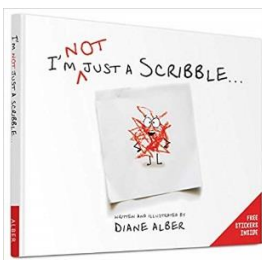
I Can't Find My Whatchamacallit – Julia Cook (Grades 3 – 5)

This book highlights the importance of being organized in a creative, applicable way. It also spotlights the unique differences and strengths that live in all of us and how we can all help each other.



Nelson Beats the Odds – Ronnie Sidney, II (Grades 3 – 7)

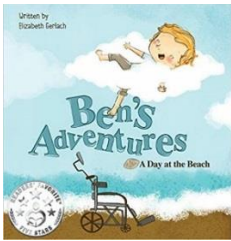
Nelson used to think school was all about playing around and talking with his friends. When Nelson learns that he has been placed in Special Education, he fears being teased. Consequently, he keeps his learning disability and ADHD diagnosis a secret. With the encouragement of his parents and assistance from Mrs. T., his Special Education teacher, Nelson pushes the boundaries and discovers his potential. “Nelson Beats The Odds” is an inspiring story that celebrates friendship, resilience and empowerment.



I'm NOT Just a Scribble – Diane Alber (Grades K – 3)

A story about kindness and inclusion. Scribble, the book's main character, never thought he was different until he met his first drawing. After being left out because he didn't look like everyone else. Scribble teaches the drawings how to accept each other for who they are, which enables them to create amazing art. This book not only has illustrations that any child can personally recognize but it also addresses inclusion without boundaries so that anyone can relate to it.

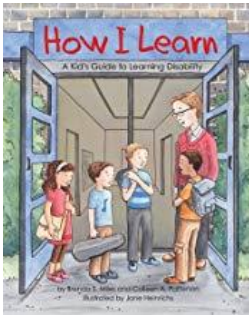
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Ben's Adventures: Day at the Beach – Elizabeth Gerlach

(Grades K – 3)

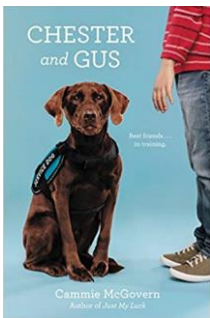
Ben loves to imagine some big adventures. He'll make you smile as you follow him to the beach for a fun day of sand, sun, castles, and crabs! It's a sweet story inspired by the author's son and has subtle themes of inclusion, friendship and joy. Ben shows us that ALL kids can play and dream.



How I Learn: A Kid's Guide to Learning Disability – Brenda S. Miles and Colleen Patterson

(Grades 1 – 4)

When a child struggles in school, it is difficult to find the words to help. Once a child is diagnosed with a learning disability, another journey begins. How do you explain learning difficulties to a child? *How I Learn* provides a simple explanation of why some children struggle. It introduces learning disability in concrete terms for younger students, emphasizing that they are capable of learning, but they may do so in a different way.



Chester and Gus – Cammie McGovern

(Grades 4 - 8)

A heartwarming and humorous novel about the remarkable bond that forms between an aspiring service dog and a boy with autism who is in need of a friend. Chester always wanted to become a service dog. When he fails his certification test, it seems like that dream will never come true—until a family adopts him. They want him to be a companion for their ten-year-old son, Gus, who has autism. Gus never wants to pet Chester, and he doesn't want Chester in the room. Chester's not sure how to help Gus since this isn't the job he trained for—but he's determined to figure it out, since Gus is now *his* person.

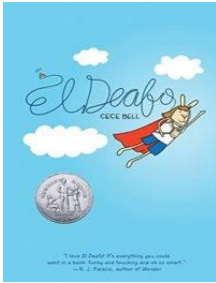


Wonder – R.J. Palacio

(Grades 4 - 7)

I won't describe what I look like. Whatever you're thinking, it's probably worse. August Pullman was born with a facial difference that, up until now, has prevented him from going to a mainstream school. Starting 5th grade at Beecher Prep, he wants nothing more than to be treated as an ordinary kid—but his new classmates can't get past Auggie's extraordinary face. It's a portrait of one community's struggle with empathy, compassion, and acceptance. In a world where bullying among young people is an epidemic, this is a refreshing new narrative full of heart and hope.

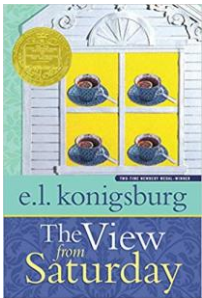
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El Deafo – Cece Bell

(Grades 5 - 8)

Reframing her bulky hearing aid as a superpower, Bell illustrates her desire to fit in with her classmates, losing her hearing, and trying to make friends. The result is a funny and touching story of living with a disability and embracing differences.



The View From Saturday – E. L. Konigsburg

(Grades 4 - 7)

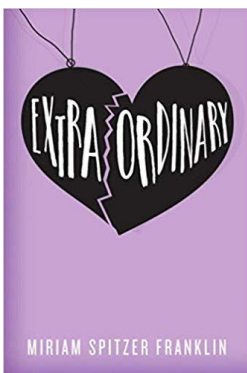
How had Mrs. Olinski chosen her sixth-grade Academic Bowl team? She had a number of answers. But were any of them true? Mrs. Olinski, returning to teaching after having been injured in an automobile accident, found that her Academic Bowl team became her answer to finding confidence and success. What she did not know, was that her team knew more than she did the answer to why they had been chosen. This is a tale about a team, a class, a school, a series of contests and, set in the midst of this, four jewel-like short stories—one for each of the team members-- that ask questions and demonstrates surprising answers.



No One Needed to Know – D. G. Driver

(Grades 4 - 7)

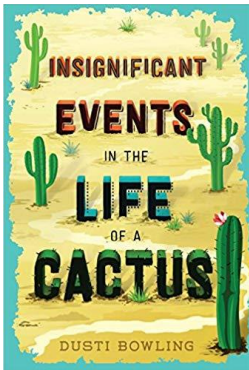
Heidi's older brother, Donald, is 16 and has autism. She has always loved playing with him, but now she's 11 and her life is changing. She's embarrassed to have her brother around and doesn't want her friends to know about him. High school boys bully him. When the kids at her school find out about him, she gets bullied too. It's not fair. No one seems to understand what she's going through. But Heidi also needs to learn some things. She can't change her brother, but she can change how she feels about him. And she can get people to see why her brother is special.



Extraordinary – Miriam Spitzer Franklin

(Grades 4 - 8)

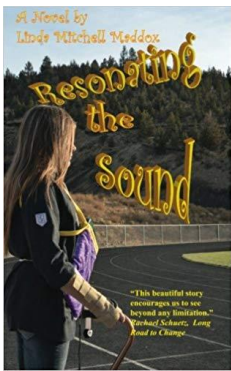
Pansy chickened out right before going to spring break camp, even though she'd promised her best friend, Anna, they'd go together. It was just like when they went to get their hair cut for Locks of Love, and only one of them walked out with a new hairstyle. But Pansy never got the chance to make it up to Anna. At camp, Anna contracted meningitis and a high fever, and she hasn't been the same since. Now all Pansy wants is her daring best friend back—not the silent girl in the wheelchair who now goes to a different school. What lies at the end of Pansy's journey might not be exactly what she had expected—or wanted.



Insignificant Events in the Life of a Cactus – Dusti Bowling

(Grades 5 - 8)

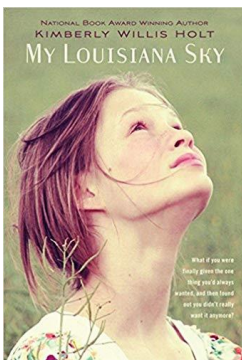
Aven Green loves to tell people that she lost her arms in an alligator wrestling match, or a wildfire in Tanzania, but the truth is she was born without them. When her parents take a job running Stagecoach Pass, a rundown western theme park in Arizona, Aven moves with them. Her new life takes an unexpected turn when she bonds with Connor, a classmate who also feels isolated because of his own disability, and they discover a room at Stagecoach Pass that holds bigger secrets than Aven ever could have imagined. It's hard to solve a mystery, help a friend, and face your worst fears. But Aven's about to discover she can do it all, even without arms.



Resonating the Sound – Linda Mitchell Maddox

(Grades 5 - 8)

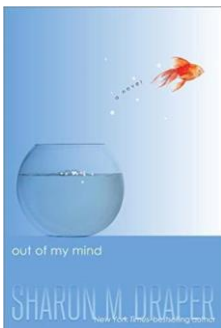
The novel that takes place during the eighth-grade year of a girl who has suffered a Traumatic Brain Injury during sixth grade and finally agrees to use an augmentative communication device after not regaining any of her vocal abilities. A special relationship develops between her and a boy in her class who has Gifted Asperger Syndrome. He plays a major role in altering the device, which gives the main character access to pieces of a dream she thought were lost forever.



My Louisiana Sky – Kimberly Willis Holt

(Grades 6 - 8)

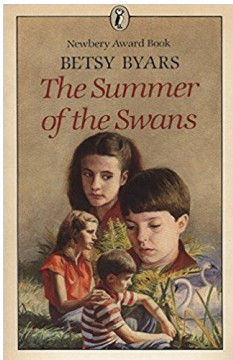
Tiger Ann Parker is smart in school and good at baseball, but she's forever teased about her family by the girls in class. Tiger Ann knows her folks are different from others in their small town of Saitter, Louisiana. They have intellectual disabilities, and Tiger Ann keeps her pain and embarrassment hidden as long as her strong and smart Granny runs the household. Then Granny dies suddenly and Aunt Dorie Kay arrives, offering Tiger Ann a way out. Now Tiger Ann must make the most important decision of her life.



Out of My Mind – Sharon M. Draper

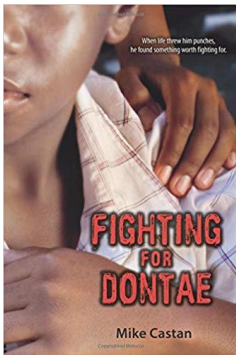
(Grades 5 - 8)

Eleven-year-old Melody is not like most people. She doesn't walk. She doesn't talk. She can't write. All because she has cerebral palsy. But she also has a photographic memory; she can remember every detail of everything she has ever experienced. She's the smartest kid in her whole school, but NO ONE knows it. Most people—her teachers, her doctors, her classmates—dismiss her as someone who has severe disabilities because she can't tell them otherwise. But Melody is determined to show everyone just how much she does really know.



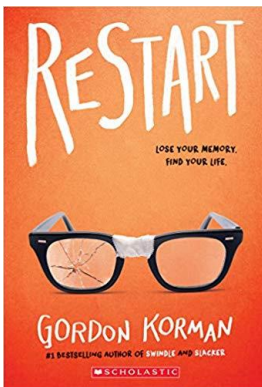
The Summer of the Swans – Betsy Byars
(Grades 6 - 8)

Sara Godfrey has fretted over herself, her impossible body, her terrible new haircut. One moment she's elated, the next, she's in tears. Maybe her wildly changing moods are tied to the sudden and unaccountable appearance of the swans, which hold the attention of Charlie, Sara's brother who has an intellectual disability, who she loves far more than herself. In fact, it will be the sudden disappearance of Charlie that will compel Sara to abandon her own small, annoying miseries, and lose herself in searching for him. In her anguish, Sara turns to Joe Melby, and together they search through the dense woods and rough fields to find him.



Fighting for Dontae – Mike Castan
(Grades 6 - 8)

Javier's life is going nowhere fast. He hates seventh grade, his father's locked up, and his mother can't be relied on. He and his friends are in a gang; but he doesn't even know why he joined the Playaz in the first place, since hanging with them is like asking for trouble from the police. When he is assigned to work with the special education class, Javier thinks that the one thing he had going for him in middle school--his social life--is over. Little by little, though, Javier realizes that he enjoys reading to Dontae, a boy his age, who has severe disabilities. When everything else around him is falling apart, working with Dontae becomes the one thing worth fighting for.



Restart – Gordon Korman
(Grades 4-8)

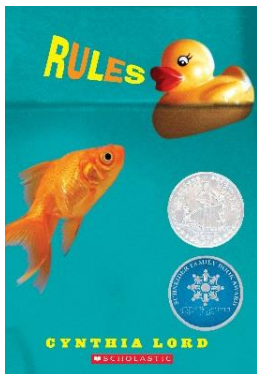
Chase's memory just went out the window. Chase doesn't remember falling off the roof. He doesn't remember hitting his head. He doesn't, remember *anything*. He wakes up in a hospital room and suddenly has to learn his whole life all over again . . . starting with his own name. Who *is* Chase? When he gets back to school, he sees that different kids have very different reactions to his return. Some kids treat him like a hero. Some kids are clearly afraid of him. One girl in particular is so angry with him that she pours her frozen yogurt on his head the first chance she gets. Pretty soon, it's not only a question of who Chase is--it's a question of who he *was* . . . and who he's going to be.



The Running Dream – Wendelin Van Draanen

(Grades 7 - 12)

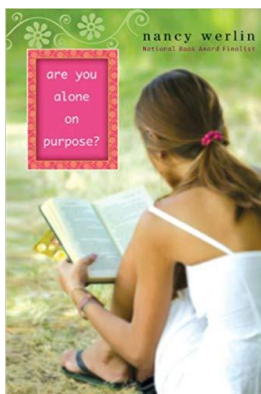
When Jessica is told she'll never run again, she puts herself back together—and learns to dream bigger than ever before. Jessica thinks her life is over when she loses a leg in a car accident. She's not comforted by the news that she'll be able to walk with the help of a prosthetic leg. Who cares about walking when you live to run? As she struggles to cope, Jessica feels that she's both in the spotlight and invisible. People who don't know what to say act like she's not there. Jessica's embarrassed to realize that she's done the same to a girl with cerebral palsy, named Rosa; a girl who is going to tutor her through all the math she's missed. A girl who sees right into the heart of her. With the support of family, friends, a coach, and her track teammates, Jessica may actually be able to run again. But that's not enough for her now. She doesn't just want to cross finish lines herself—she wants to take Rosa with her.



Rules – Cynthia Lord

(Grades 7 - 10)

Twelve-year-old Catherine just wants a normal life. Which is nearly impossible when you have a brother with autism and a family that revolves around his disability. She's spent years trying to teach David the rules from "a peach is not a funny-looking apple" to others, in order to head off David's behaviors that embarrass her. The story follows a brother with autism and a sister who shares a lot of responsibility for teaching her brother the rules of getting along in a world that does not always have compassion and understanding for someone with autism. Catherine creates rules to help David understand how to live in the world. Catherine also learns a few lessons about other disabilities and herself.



Are You Alone on Purpose? – Nancy Werlin

(Grades 7 - 10)

Harry Roth is the bane of Alison Shandling's existence. He's obnoxious and rude, and thinks nothing of taunting brainy Alison or making comments about her twin brother who has autism. Alison tries to ignore him, but since she sees him at school, he's hard to avoid. Then Harry is injured in a diving accident and winds up using a wheelchair. Now Harry has a disability and Alison finds herself inexplicably drawn to him. Initially cautious, these unlikely companions begin to understand each other, and their relationship grows first into a friendship and then into something more...

“Together We’re Better” Diversity Celebration Toolkit



The back cover
of *Pinned*...



Pinned – Sharon G. Flake (Grades 7 - 12)

Autumn and Adonis have nothing in common and everything in common. Autumn is outgoing and has lots of friends. Adonis is shy and not so eager to connect with people. But even with their differences, the two have one thing in common--they're each dealing with a disability. For Autumn, who has a learning disability, reading is a painful struggle that makes it hard to focus in class. But as her school's most aggressive team wrestler, Autumn can take down any problem. Adonis doesn't have legs and he uses a wheelchair. He has no legs. He can't walk or dance. But he's a strong reader who loves books. Even so, Adonis has a secret he knows someone like Autumn can heal. In time, Autumn and Adonis are forced to see that our greatest weaknesses can turn into the assets that forever change us and those we love. Issues of self-discovery, friendship, and what it means to be different are explored.

Samples from SY2018-2019 Art Contest



For more information on the “Together We’re Better” Inclusive Education Awareness Campaign and Artwork Contest for elementary and middle school students, please visit www.thearcmd.org or contact Sharon Dols, Office Manager, The Arc Maryland at (410) 571-9320 or sdols@thearcmd.org.