

Teaching News Is Elementary January 13, 2016

Each week, this lesson will share some classroom activity ideas that use the newspaper or other NIE resources. You are encouraged to modify this lesson to fit the needs of your students. For example, some classrooms may be able to use this as a worksheet and others might need to ask and answer the questions in a class discussion.

Please be sure to preview all NIE content before using it in your classroom to ensure it is appropriate for all of your students.

Materials you will need for this lesson: The Seattle Times print replica, computer or smart board, pencils or pens, paper

Article: “Goddess on the Mat”

Pages: Sports, page C1

Date: Sunday, January 8, 2017

Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.5.1

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 5 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

Objectives:

Students will discuss what it means to be blind or visually impaired, and try their own hand at the braille alphabet.

Pre- Reading Discussion Questions:

What does it mean to be blind or visually impaired? Do you know anyone who is blind or visually impaired? What skills do blind or visually impaired people need to learn in order to read, cook, work, or travel?

Vocabulary:

Read the following quotes and determine the meaning of the word based on how it's used in the sentence.

“Cole and Muraki were told before the season a visually **impaired** wrestler was turning out and Muraki was thrilled to find out she was in the upper weights — his

first in the four years of the girls program, which had been **dominated** by lighter wrestlers.”

Impaired: weakened or damaged

Dominated: have a commanding influence on; exercise control over

“Ma’alona-Faletogo, who rarely uses a white cane, requires little extra attention. She has a **keen** sense of direction and hears extremely well. She recognizes most teammates by the sound of their voice.”

Keen: sharp or penetrating, in particular

“That drew an **ovation** from the crowd and raves from Jefferson athletic director Mike Grady, who sent an email the following day to Federal Way coach Travis Mango and school district personnel, describing what he called “nothing short of ‘incredible sensitivity’ as well as ‘sportsmanship’ to the max.”

Ovation: a sustained and enthusiastic show of appreciation from an audience, especially by means of applause

“Goddess is a great **ambassador** of our sport,” he said. “She works hard and is **tenacious**. Her work ethic and competitiveness truly comes through and she has turned her ‘disability’ into her ability to compete and push through difficult situations.”

Ambassador: a person who acts as a representative or promoter of a specified activity

Tenacious: tending to keep a firm hold of something; clinging or adhering closely

Journal Writing Prompts:

“Ma’alona-Faletogo was born with Leber congenital amaurosis and can only see lights and shadows — not objects. But she sees no limits to what she can accomplish in life.”

What would it be like to only be able to see lights and shadows? What other senses would you rely on? What would you want other people to know?

Discussion Questions:

Some kids were kind and others cruel. “I used to be bullied in elementary school,” Goddess said. “They used to say, ‘Try to catch me,’ or ‘How many fingers am I holding up?’ It was really irritating.

Why do you think kids treated Goddess like that? Have you ever been bullied or teased about something you couldn't help? How did it make you feel? What are some steps you can take if you see that someone is being bullied? *

*You might want to use this as an opportunity to review your school/district bullying policy

Small group discussion and activity:

"But she is a more physical type because she has to feel — her hands are her eyes. So I thought it could be good for her, and now she loves it.

Did you know that blind people use a special alphabet to read? There are different braille versions of almost every language too! Learn more about braille by visiting the American Foundation for the Blind here: <http://www.afb.org/info/living-with-vision-loss/braille/12>. Once you understand what braille is, look up an example of the braille alphabet and practice writing your own name in braille. Next, try writing a secret message in braille. Exchange your message with a partner to see if they can figure it out!

Reflect on your experience: What did you find interesting about writing in braille? What did you find frustrating?