

Grades 6–8 **April** Sport of the Month



golf

Golf is one of the oldest sports in the world—it was originally played by Scottish kings and noblemen. Unlike most sports, you do not have to be big, strong, or fast to play golf, nor do you need to be a member of a team. Each stroke motivates the individual golfer to continue in pursuit of better shots and lower scores. Currently there are approximately 8,000 Special Olympics golfers participating in 14 nations.

Dear Family,

April means spring, and spring means a renewed energy and spirit. With this in mind, we are taking this opportunity to better understand the idea of encouragement. Just as the spring sunshine encourages us to get outside, our family, friends, and classmates encourage us to do our best and stay positive, even when things are difficult.

This month we'll discuss how Special Olympics athletes find encouragement from their family, coaches, teammates, and fans. Then we'll also discover words we can use to encourage each other. Our goal is to put this all together and make it a part of our everyday lives.

teacher signature

This month's theme: **encouragement**

Our first task this month will be to create a richer definition of the term *intellectual disability*. Then we'll go more deeply into the topic of encouragement, brainstorming ways to encourage one another and even to encourage ourselves. Finally, we'll discuss the concept of "social justice." As a class, we'll ask ourselves whether those with intellectual disabilities are treated fairly and justly within our society. We'll finish up by undertaking projects inspired by quotes from Special Olympics athletes, coaches, and public figures, and turn them into works of art from which everyone in the community can draw encouragement.



What you can do:



Not everything in life is easy. But with encouraging words, even the most difficult tasks seem a bit more doable. Take a few minutes out for family fun—and to practice using words of encouragement—with a round of Living Room Goofy Golf. Gather a few plastic cups of varying sizes; a golf ball, Ping-Pong ball, or wad of paper; and a golf club or yardstick. Have one family member put two different-sized cups behind his back, holding one in his left hand and the other in his right. The first golfer picks a hand, left or right, and then takes a turn to try to hit the ball into the cup. Alternate until each player has had several turns. As you play, words of encouragement are the rule.