

# LESSON 2

## What is a Disability?

Timing: 2–5 x 45  
minute blocks

**CROSS-CURRICULAR:** Language Arts, Sciences

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Sample Grade 5, see p 76

**OVERVIEW:** This lesson focuses on developing an understanding of the different types of disabilities.

**CURRICULUM SKILLS / KNOWLEDGE / VALUES:**

Students will:

- identify and understand three general categories of disabilities: intellectual, physical and sensory
- develop an in-depth understanding of some of the different types of physical disabilities

**TEACHING MATERIALS:**

- computer and internet access
- website to view athletes with disabilities:  
Petro Canada Schools Program  
– [www.paralympiceducation.ca](http://www.paralympiceducation.ca)
- website to view supporting web links  
and video:  
– [www.canadacupwcrugby.com](http://www.canadacupwcrugby.com)
- Disability Worksheet (photocopy  
1 per student) and Answer Key
- Disability Word Search (photocopy  
1 per student) and Answer Key
- Disability Crossword Puzzle  
(photocopy 1 per student)  
and Answer Key
- Glossary (see p 81) —  
refer to as needed

- 1** With the class, explain there are three general categories of disabilities: intellectual, physical and sensory. Brainstorm examples of all of them. Hand out and have the students complete the Disability Worksheet, which involves identifying and listing intellectual, physical and sensory disabilities.
- 2** In partners or small groups review the Petro Canada Paralympic Schools Program. Click on the “People with Disabilities” icon. In this section, view the multimedia lesson on Specific Disabilities. This highlights athletes with physical disabilities, visual impairments and intellectual disabilities and shows them involved in sport.

## Teaching Activities



3 Individually have the students complete the Disability Word Search and Disability Crossword Puzzle.

4 Choose one of the following topics to research and represent through a variety of mediums (e.g. oral: presentation, live interview; video; print: report, written report, brochure, newspaper article, comic book; visual/fine arts: poster; drama etc):

- one intellectual, physical or sensory disability
- life with a disability. Choose a disability and think about what things would be different in your life. In what sports would you choose to compete? Why?
- the sports in which athletes with a disability can play and compete
- the first World Stoke Mandeville Wheelchair Games, founded by Sir Ludwig Guttman, in England, in 1948
- the Paralympic Games
- an athlete with a disability. Interview an athlete and make sure you have some knowledge of who your athlete is and prepare your questions prior to the interview (see Teaching Materials for website). Share your interview.



## TEACHER BACKGROUNDER

### DISABILITIES

There are three general categories of disabilities: intellectual, physical and sensory (see Glossary p 81).

**Intellectual Disabilities** include developmental disabilities and brain trauma. Mental illness is another kind of disability often categorized under psychological disabilities. Special Olympics is an organization that provides athletes with an intellectual disability an opportunity to enhance their lives and celebrate personal achievements through positive sport experiences. The

Canadian Association for Athletes with an Intellectual Disability is an organization that represents elite athletes with an intellectual disability at events such as the Paralympic Games. There is a very significant difference between both of these organizations and the athletes they represent.

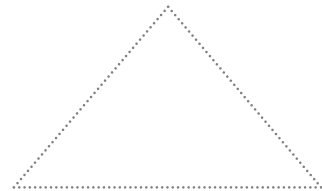
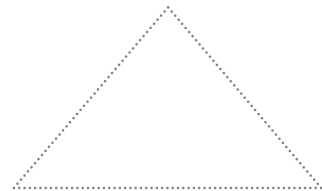
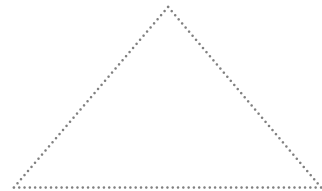
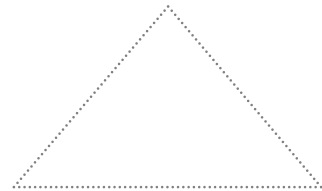
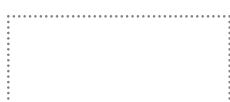
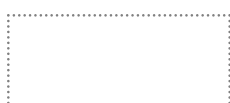
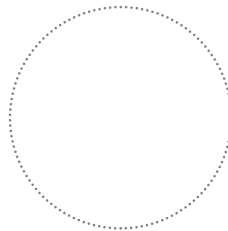
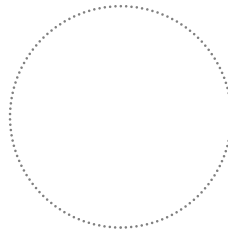
The most common **Physical Disabilities** include: spinal cord injuries (paraplegia, quadriplegia and hemiplegia), amputation, cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, spina bifida and polio. A physical disability is anything that limits a person's

mobility including upper and lower limb impairment, manual dexterity limitations or coordination problems.

A **Sensory Disability** is when an individual is unable to accurately interpret an outside stimulus. This may be in a form of blindness, deafness, severe vision impairment or severe hearing impairment. Athletes with vision impairments may participate in the Paralympic Games. There are also disability-specific games like the Deaflympics for athletes with hearing impairments.

# Disability Worksheet

List as many disabilities as possible under each category.



# Word Search



AB (able-bodied)

Ability

Amputee

Athlete

Brain Trauma

Cerebral Palsy

Classification

Disability

Hearing Impaired

Hemiplegic

Multiple Sclerosis

Muscular Dystrophy

Paralympics

Paraplegic

Polio

Quadriplegic

Rugby

Spina Bifida

Spinal Cord

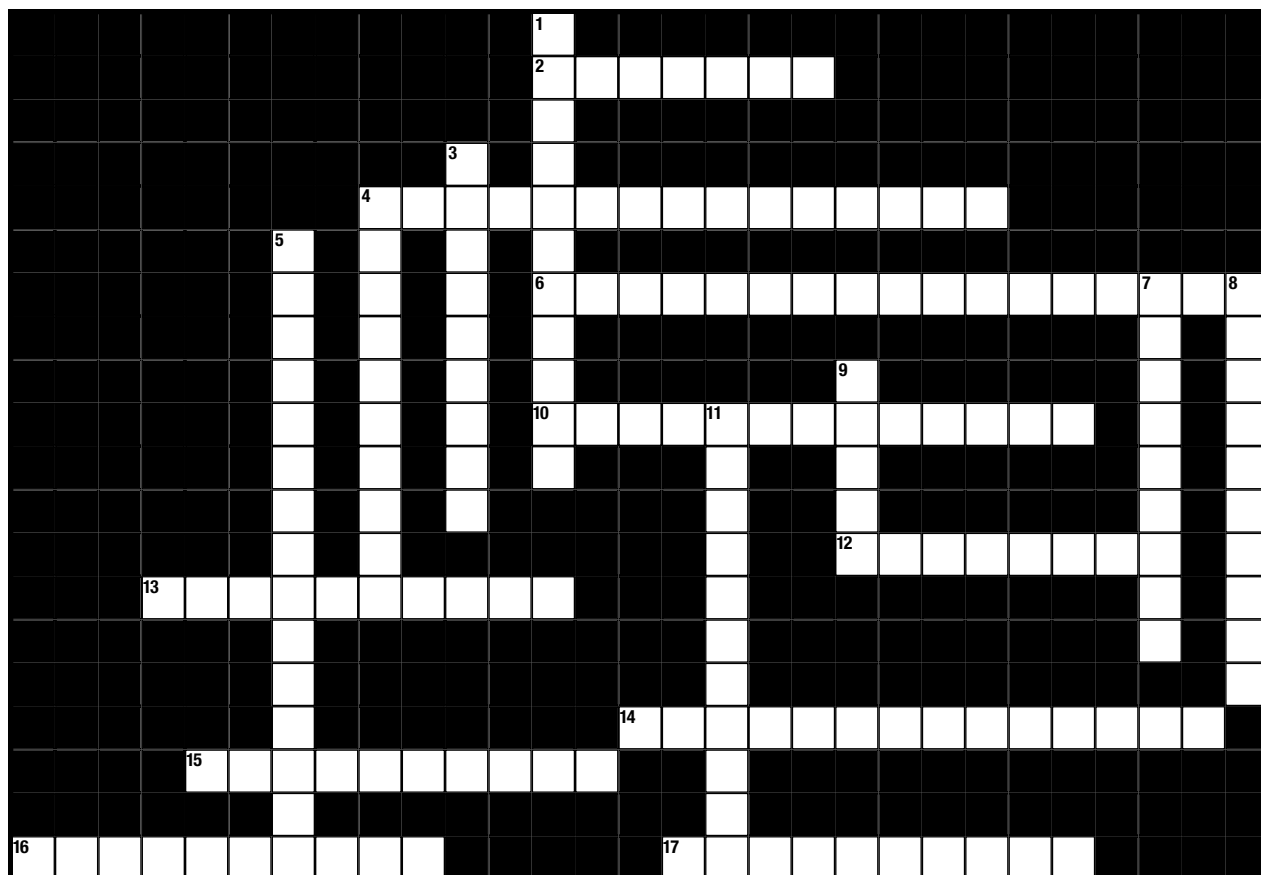
Sport

Vertebrae

Visually Impaired

Wheelchair

# Crossword



## ACROSS

- 2 missing a limb or part of a limb
- 4 team sport played by quadriplegics
- 6 slowly progressing disease of the brain, spinal cord and optic nerves
- 10 a non progressive disorder of movement or posture due to damage to the brain before, during or shortly after birth
- 12 hearing impairment
- 13 original name for Wheelchair Rugby
- 14 system used to divide athletes into groups for competition
- 15 a term used to describe persons who do not have a physical disability
- 16 manufactured artificial limb
- 17 various degrees of paralysis of the legs and trunk

## DOWN

- 1 name of the international games for athletes with disabilities
- 3 an individual bone or group of bones that make up the backbone
- 4 mode of transportation for most paraplegics/ quadriplegics
- 5 original site of the Wheelchair Games
- 7 curvature of the spine
- 8 cord within the vertebrae
- 9 visually impaired
- 11 acquired injury to the brain caused by external force, resulting in the impairment of some functional abilities of the brain

# Disability Worksheet

## INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

Brain  
Trauma

Developmental  
Disabilities

## PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

Amputation

Cerebral  
Palsy (CP)

Multiple  
Sclerosis (MS)

Muscular  
Dystrophy (MD)

Poliomyelitis  
(Polio)

Scoliosis

Spina Bifida

Spinal Cord  
Injuries  
- Paraplegia  
- Quadriplegia  
- Hemiplegia

## SENSORY DISABILITIES

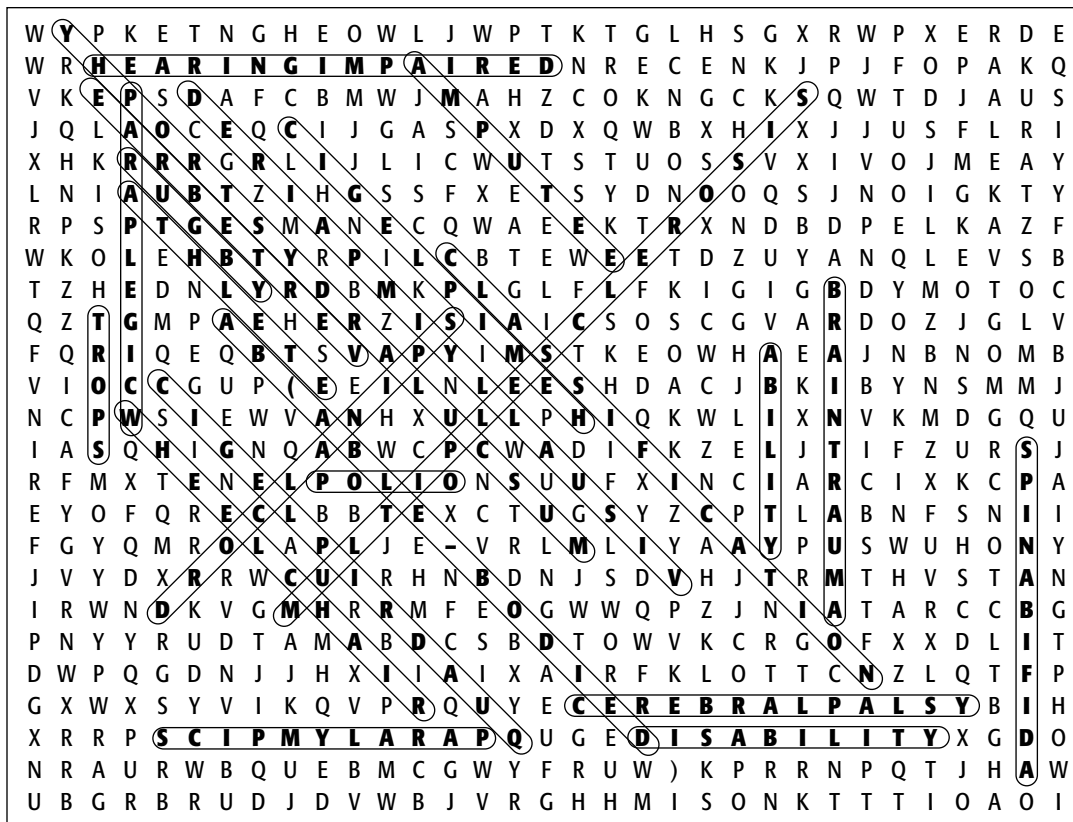
Blindness

Deafness

Severe  
Hearing  
Impairment

Severe  
Vision  
Impairment

# Word Search



# Crossword

