

2018 International Essay Contest for Young People

[Children's Category – Honorable Mention]

Disability or opportunity?

(Original)

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„Don't judge a book by its cover.“ – George Eliot

The gift of life is truly amazing, even though a lot of people are not given a chance to experience it. Maybe because of the decision of potential parents or because they get very sick in the earliest stage of their lives. Of course, when science and medicine started evolving gradually, many people were given the chance to breathe, play, go to school, find love and have a family the way they deserved. Even though those things do sound like a perfect chance for those individuals to live a perfect life, they surely still suffer. Maybe they decided to stay strong for us, maybe they want to prove that they are fighters so we don't see that they are still vulnerable.

So, what is that change that I want to make? What I am planning to do is to make people aware that we are all the same, even if there is a scar that's decorating our beautiful face, even if we have to stay in the wheelchair for the rest of our lives...

I want to make people aware that there are no differences between us. It doesn't matter if the person has some kind of a disability, he or she deserves as much attention and love as any other person gets.

I remember how I used to avoid people that have any kind of a disability during first and second grade. I was running away from the fact that people like them have a bigger heart than others, that they are more honest and that they deserve so much. Now, I'm more than disappointed with myself because of that, because now I am aware that those people are the ones that mean the most to you.

What changed my mind?

It happened six years ago. I was sitting with my friends in a small room where, once a week, we had a religion class. I don't exactly remember what we were talking about, but I know that that we were very confused when the door suddenly opened. A small girl in a

wheelchair was pushed in.

The girl was sitting in a wheelchair. She was very thin and pale. She looked very weak. She had a cannula that day. We were all staring at her, she was something very weird in our eyes. The girl was sitting in the back of the class and was shyly staring at the table. I am sure that she could feel our stares on her.

No one dared to approach her for a long time because she was "different". We avoided her at all costs. But one day, when the whole class was running around on the playground, I remember how I saw her sitting alone, watching us with tears in her eyes.

Being the only "social butterfly" of my class, I soon became friends with the girl. The two of us were best friends and other kids soon decided to hang out with us. I remember how I liked to push her around in her wheelchair while running. I remember how her golden hair would always fly around and how loud she could laugh. I will never forget that...

Unfortunately, all beautiful moments must come to an end. That cheerful sunshine got even more sick and we didn't see her for a long time. She spent her days laying in hospital bed.

Soon enough, that little sunshine left us. I am sure she's in a better world now. I am sure that she's not sad anymore and I am sure that she's running around without any cares happily, like she deserved. I will never forget her...

I want people to realize that you should never judge a book by its cover. Everyone has a beautiful heart. You shouldn't judge people that are different in any way. They don't deserve to be excluded from socializing. You learn from your mistakes.

Take me and that girl as an example.

My resources:

Eliot, George. „Don't judge a book by its cover.“