

LITTLE
BIG
LESSONS

Rick Hansen
Foundation 
School Program

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FUTURE PROSPECTS

Scotiabank®

FIRST IMPRESSIONS AND STEREOTYPES

RECOMMENDED FOR GRADES 4–8

LITTLE BIG LESSONS

First impressions can be misleading. We can do our part to make sure everyone is not erroneously judged and is included.

TRUE OR FALSE

Indicate below whether you believe each statement is true or false. Then, you can read explanations of the correct answers on the following page.

	True	False
1. It is always easy to see if someone has a disability.		
2. Many people who are legally blind can see light and forms.		
3. If you see someone with a disability, you should help them as much as possible.		
4. American Sign Language (ASL), the primary sign language used in Canada, is just like English, except you use your hands instead of your voice.		
5. It's okay to pet a seeing-eye dog or service dog because they are incredibly well-behaved, trained dogs that know how to interact with lots of people.		
6. The first time a person with a disability competed in the Olympics was in 1904.		
7. If you use a wheelchair you can play hockey.		
8. Even though you must have a disability to compete in the Paralympics, fully able-bodied people can join sports teams for people with disabilities, such as sledge hockey or wheelchair basketball teams.		
9. According to the United Nations, people with disabilities are the world's largest minority.		
10. Under the law, people with disabilities have the same rights and freedoms as people who do not have disabilities.		

ANSWERS AND EXPLANATIONS

1. It is always easy to see if someone has a disability.

CORRECT ANSWER: ❌ FALSE

Many disabilities cannot be seen; for example, deafness and learning disabilities. Also, someone can have a mobility disability even if they don't use a wheelchair, and someone may have a vision disability even if they don't use a white sensing cane or seeing eye-dog.

2. Many people who are legally blind can see light and forms.

CORRECT ANSWER: ✅ TRUE

Disabilities range a lot in how they are experienced. Many blind people can see light, forms, and colours. There are even blind artists!

3. If you see someone with a disability, you should help them as much as possible.

CORRECT ANSWER: ❌ FALSE

People who live with disabilities can live independent lives and do not always need help. If you ever want to help someone with a disability, treat them like you would anybody else and ask if they need your help first.

4. American Sign Language (ASL), the primary sign language used in Canada, is just like English, except you use your hands instead of your voice.

CORRECT ANSWER: ❌ FALSE

ASL is a separate language with a different structure than English. While spoken English came to Canada by way of Britain, ASL came to the United States and Canada through people from France who were Deaf or hard of hearing. ASL is therefore most closely related to French Sign Language.

5. It's okay to pet a seeing-eye dog or service dog because they are incredibly well-behaved, trained dogs that know how to interact with lots of people.

CORRECT ANSWER: ❌ FALSE

You should never pet a seeing-eye dog or service dog because you can distract them from performing important jobs for their owners. *Service dogs assist people with a range of disabilities, not just persons who are visually impaired. A seeing-eye dog is a kind of service dog.

6. The first time a person with a disability competed in the Olympics was in 1904.

CORRECT ANSWER: ✅ TRUE

In 1904 (the 3rd “modern day” Olympics), a U.S. athlete with a wooden left leg competed in several Olympic events. More recently, Marla Runyan, a U.S. runner who is legally blind, competed in several Olympic track and field events.

7. If you use a wheelchair you can play hockey.

CORRECT ANSWER: ✓ TRUE

There are many adaptive sports, such as sledge hockey, that people with disabilities can play. Sledge hockey uses specialized equipment such as a sled you sit on and a special stick that is much shorter than a regular ice hockey stick.

8. Even though you must have a disability to compete in the Paralympics, fully able-bodied people can join sports teams for people with disabilities, such as sledge hockey or wheelchair basketball teams.

CORRECT ANSWER: ✓ TRUE

Able-bodied people sometimes choose to join teams for people with disabilities; for example, because they have a family member or friend with a disability and want to enjoy playing sports with them.

9. According to the United Nations, people with disabilities are the world's largest minority.

CORRECT ANSWER: ✓ TRUE

In every country around the world, there are people with disabilities. See tie breaker question #2 for more information.

10. Under the law, people with disabilities have the same rights and freedoms as people who do not have disabilities.

CORRECT ANSWER: ✓ TRUE

People with disabilities have the same human rights and freedoms as everybody else. In some countries, like Canada, we have extra laws such as the Employment Equity Act that protect the right to work of people with disabilities. We also have accessibility guidelines that make sure schools, community centers, businesses, and workplaces are accessible to people with disabilities, meaning people with disabilities can enter and use the spaces just like everyone else. A ramp is an example of an accessibility feature.

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