

LITTLE
BIG
LESSONS

Rick Hansen
Foundation 
School Program

PRESENTED BY



FUTURE PROSPECTS

Scotiabank®

WHAT IS A DIFFERENCE MAKER?

RECOMMENDED FOR GRADES 4–8

WHAT IS A DIFFERENCE MAKER?

A Difference Maker is an ordinary person who accomplishes extraordinary things by creating positive change in his or her community and in the lives of others. Difference Makers do not have to be famous. Difference Makers can be parents, coaches, or good friends. Qualities that can make someone a Difference Maker include determination, leadership, teamwork, inspiration, courage, excellence, integrity, generosity, compassion, etc.

Get to know Rick Hansen and how he is a Difference Maker by reading [his biography](#) (at the end of this lesson) and/or watching [this video](#).

Rick Hansen believes in using his skills and energy to make the world more accessible and inclusive. For Rick, this means raising money to find a cure for spinal cord injury and advocating for accessible places that can be used and enjoyed by everyone, including people with disabilities.

DIFFERENCE MAKER SURVEY

Please read the following questions and put a check mark in the appropriate box, to indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I want to make a difference					
I believe I can make a difference					
I want to volunteer					
I plan to volunteer in the future					
I feel a personal responsibility to make positive changes in my school and community					

DIFFERENCE MAKER MISSION 1

Create Difference Maker medals using the template on the next page and give them to Difference Makers in your life!

In the space below, record the following information:

- The names of people you gave a Difference Maker medal to
- The reason you feel each person is a Difference Maker

My Difference Makers are...

Example: My basketball coach is a Difference Maker because she includes everyone on the team.

1. _____ is a Difference Maker
because _____

2. _____ is a Difference Maker
because _____

3. _____ is a Difference Maker
because _____

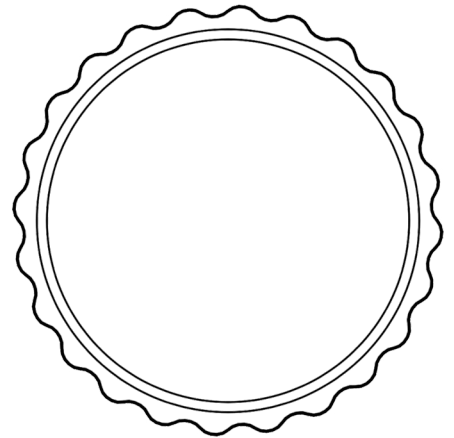
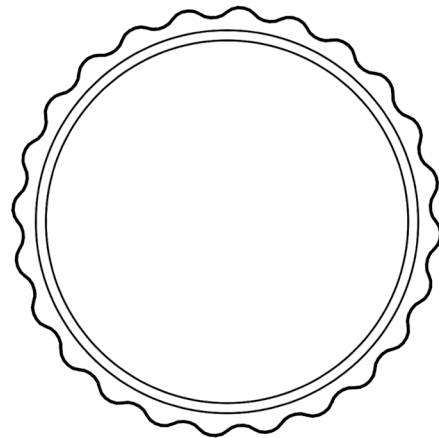
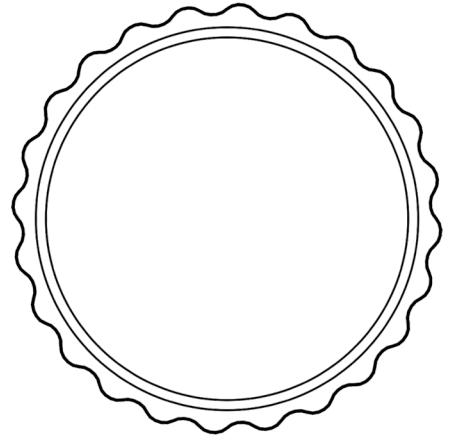
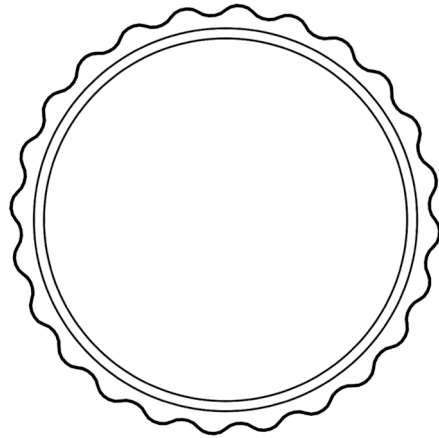
4. _____ is a Difference Maker
because _____

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What is one way that you would like to be recognized as a Difference Maker, either now or in the future?

What is one specific action you can take to become a Difference Maker?

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BIOGRAPHY OF RICK HANSEN, C.C., O.B.C.

The Early Years — A ‘Boy in Motion’

Rick Hansen was born on August 26th, 1957 in Port Alberni and grew up in Fort St. John, Abbotsford and Williams Lake (which are all towns in British Columbia). Rick was a regular kid who loved playing outside every chance he got!

Growing up in British Columbia, he had loads of outdoor space to explore; mountains, forests, rivers, and lakes. In fact, Rick loved being outside so much that his mom would often have to insist that he come in for dinner! He was truly a “boy in motion.”

Rick loved exploring and learning about his environment. He really liked fishing, so he learned all he could about the fish that lived in local waters near his town. Like a lot of kids, Rick also loved sports – any kind of sport but especially those that involved dribbling, throwing, hitting or kicking a ball around.

When he was 15 he went on a fishing trip with his friend Don Alder. After having a great time and catching lots of fish, the boys rode on the back of a pickup truck to get home. Suddenly the truck crashed and toppled over on the side of the road. During the crash, Rick was hurt and Don was not. Rick was paralyzed from the waist down. He had a spinal cord injury and he would never be able to walk again.

Rick didn’t give up! He was in the hospital for seven months. While he was in there, he learned how to use a wheelchair.

This was a very hard time for Rick, but he continued to believe in himself.

After a lot of hard work and determination, Rick returned home to be with his family. There, with the encouragement of his friends, family and coach, he learned that he could still enjoy the things he loved—like fishing and sports—just in a different way.

Sports Career

When Rick finished high school, he went to university. Because he wanted to help kids be active and live healthy lives, Rick decided to study to become a Physical Education teacher. Some people thought that he couldn't do it because he used a wheelchair. Rick didn't let that stop him one bit! During university, Rick continued to play sports and even tried a bunch of new sports he had never played before. He joined a wheelchair basketball team at his school and that's where he met his good friend—Terry Fox.

Rick also really liked racing his wheelchair. He started entering different racing competitions and won many championships around the world. Rick trained very hard and eventually he participated in both the Paralympic and Olympic Games.

Making a Difference in the Lives of Others Rick wanted to help others.

He had big dreams. One dream was to raise money to help find a cure for spinal cord injuries. The other dream was to help the world understand what people who use wheelchairs are capable of. So what did he do?

He decided to wheel his wheelchair around the world! Can you imagine how hard that would be? He wheeled through rain and snow and hot deserts. He wheeled uphill, downhill, and over bridges. His hands were sore and his muscles were too. It took him two years, two months, and two days. His trip around the world was

called the Man In Motion World Tour. When he arrived home to Vancouver, thousands of people welcomed him. His trip was over and had been very successful. Rick and his team of helpers raised 26 million dollars and showed people around the world what a person with a disability could achieve. Rick and his team used that money to help other people living with spinal cord injuries, to support research for a cure for spinal cord injury, and to help everyone live healthier lives. His journey inspired many people.

The End was Just the Beginning

Today Rick lives in Richmond, BC, with his family. His wife's name is Amanda and he has three daughters—Emma, Alana, and Rebecca. Rick is a great dad. He loves to spend time with his family and play sports with his girls. He even coached his girls when they played softball and volleyball.

Rick also enjoys coaching other teams. He has coached many teams, including wheelchair volleyball, wheelchair basketball, volleyball, basketball, and softball.

Even as a grown-up, Rick still enjoys fishing—it is one of his favourite hobbies! Rick likes fishing so much that he even volunteers with organizations that help protect fish that are in danger—like sturgeon and salmon.

It has been more than 25 years since Rick started his journey to help people be healthy and to create a world where everyone counts. He is still working on his dreams and he has never given up. Since he started, he and his team have raised over 280 million dollars. As he says, “The best work is in front of us.” But he can't do it alone—he needs your help to make a difference!

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