

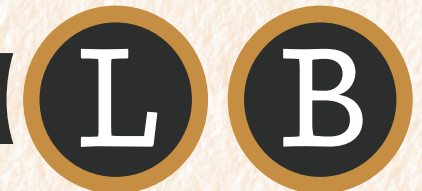
LITTLE, BROWN AND COMPANY BOOKS FOR YOUNG READERS
Educator's Guide | Grade Level: PreK to 3

You're SO Amazing!

He doesn't want to be amazing—he's just Joe.



By James & Lucy Catchpole • Illustrated by Karen George



**READING GUIDE & FOLLOW-UP
LESSON PLAN**

Duration: 1-2 days lessons: 40 min each

Grade Level: PreK to 3

Topic: Disability and Disabled Children

Focus: Normalizing Disability

TEACHER'S NOTES

Not to expect or pressure any disabled children in the classroom to share their experiences for the class during this lesson. Also, some children may not choose to identify as "disabled," and that's up to them.

**SPECIFIC LEARNING POINTS THAT MAY NATURALLY ARISE
DURING READING AND FOLLOW UP LESSON**

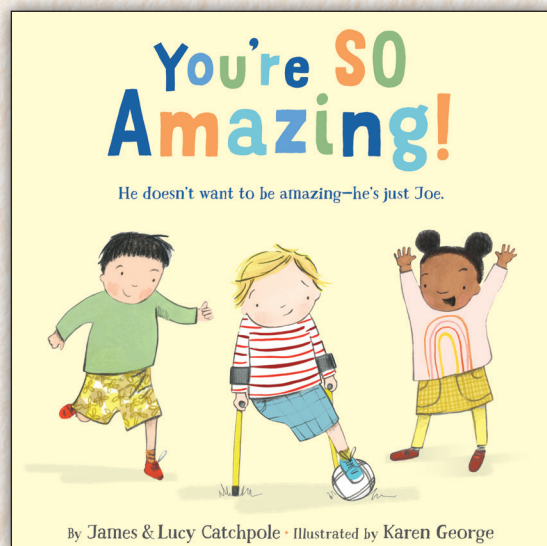
- Disabled children and adults should be given space to go about their business without having people stare at them, ask them questions, or make a fuss about them participating.
- It is normal to have questions and be curious when you see someone who looks different from you but save those questions for later and ask a trusted adult to help you learn more.
- This story functions as a window for non-disabled students to empathize with what their peers may be experiencing and consider how they might be more inclusive and welcoming on the playground.
- This story functions as a mirror for disabled students to see their own experience and lets them know that their challenges are valid and shared by others.

ESSENTIAL BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

- There are many kinds of disabilities. Some are visible, which means that we can see them when we look at the person, and some are invisible, which means that we can't see their disability. Either way, a disabled person's disability is normal for them.

ACCOMMODATIONS & MODIFICATIONS

- Partially sighted or d/Deaf students should be given a spot closer to the book.
- Students who require a stimming aid should have access.
- Students should be given the opportunity to look at the book independently later.



BEFORE READING

- What do you see on the cover?
- What is the name of the book?
- Who are the authors and illustrator?
- What/who do you think is going to be amazing in this book? Why?

**MAKING INFERENCES/ACTIVATE PRIOR
KNOWLEDGE**

For PreK to K:

- What do you think this book will be about? Why do you think so?

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You're SO Amazing!

- What does the word “amazing” mean? (Definition: excellent, impressive, surprising)
- Can you give examples of things or people that are amazing?

For 1st to 3rd Grade:

- Minds on: Ask students in their journals to write out what they think the word “amazing” means, and examples of “amazing” things that people can do. This can be done in partners or small groups.
- Make predictions: What do you think this book is about? Why?

PROMPT:

As I read *You're SO Amazing*, I want you to decide if the boy on the cover is indeed amazing. Make sure you are able to explain why.

SUCCESS CRITERIA CAN LOOK LIKE:

- Students participating and sharing respectfully in discussion.
- Students asking relevant questions.
- Students coming back to look at the book later.

DURING READING

As you read, stop and discuss the illustrations and what is happening on each page. And as the story goes on, encourage empathy by asking students if and how their own experiences relate to Joe's.

Activate prior knowledge/build background knowledge

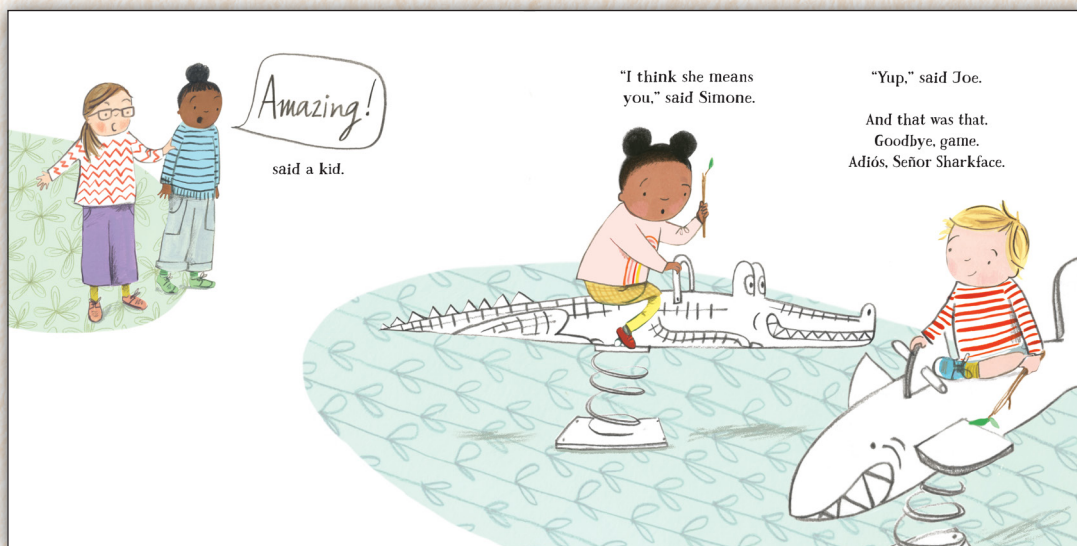
- Joe and Simone play “Doctor Crokchops vs Señor Sharkface Pirate Grudge Fight”. Have you ever played a similar imaginary game? What was it?



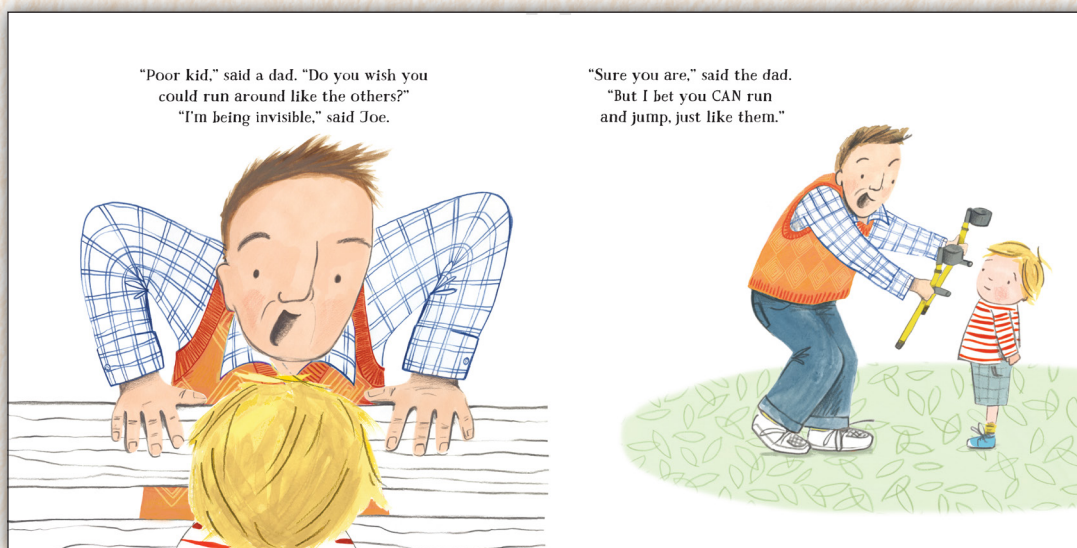
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You're SO Amazing!

- Joe stops playing his game with Simone. Why? (people keep interrupting to tell him he is amazing)



- Have you ever been called amazing? How did you feel about it? (likely answer: it felt GOOD!)
- But how does Joe feel about being called amazing? Why? (he's just doing ordinary things and can't understand why everyone thinks he's being amazing—so he feels uncomfortable)
- Has anyone ever said something about you that sounded like a good thing, but made you feel uncomfortable? What was it? (a good example might be if kids have been called "cute")
- Later, when Joe is hiding, an adult calls him something different. What does he say? ("Poor kid") Why does he say that? (he thinks Joe must be feeling left out and he feels sorry for him)

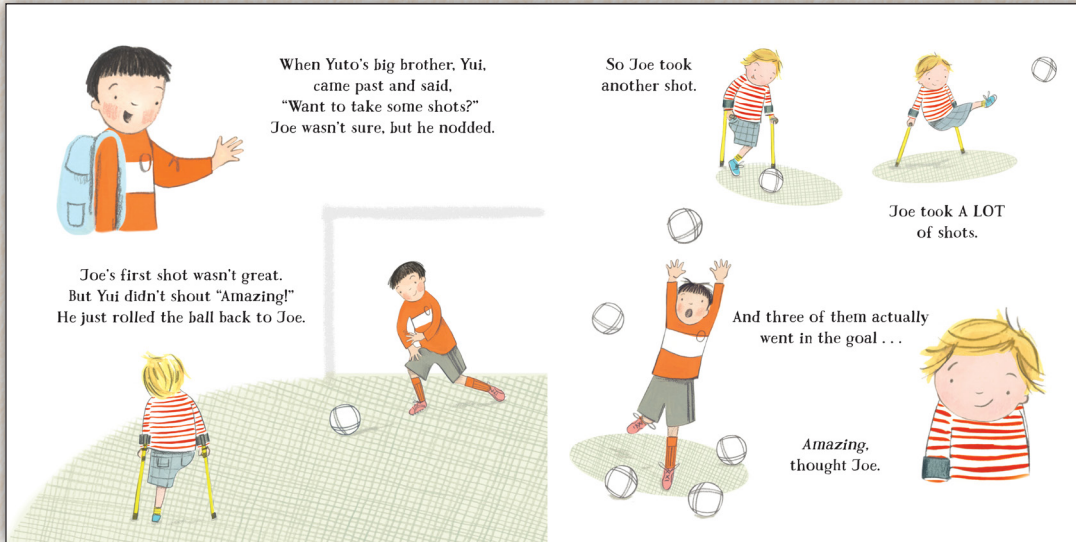


- Is he right? (NO! Joe was just hiding and it was his game.)
- So, Joe's game gets interrupted again, first by people telling him he's amazing, and then by someone feeling sorry for him. And what do these interrupting people have in common? (they all treat him differently and single him out from the other kids, because he has one leg—because he has a disability)

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You're SO Amazing!

- But here's the thing. Joe is just like all the other children—he's just like you (students). The only difference is that he has one leg.
- We all have things that make us different. You can give examples of things that make you different or made you different as a child, perhaps something you felt self-conscious about. Then you can ask students for examples from their own experience.
- You can explain to the class that just like Joe, you felt bad, embarrassed, angry when people pointed out that difference.
- Then Yui comes along and invites Joe to play soccer. Why does he start to feel happy again? (because Yui doesn't call him amazing—he just plays with him just the same as with any other kid)



- And finally, why is Joe happiest with his friends? (for them, he is normal: he's not Amazing Joe or Poor Joe—he's just Joe)



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AFTER READING

Comprehension: Summarizing/identifying the main ideas

- Students complete Story Map and answer questions: (Students, independently, draw and then describe in writing what happens in the beginning, middle and end of the story. You need to create your own graphic organizer or find one you can copy. Most include Characters and Setting as well.) Use this example map template, or create your own:
<https://www.readnaturally.com/userfiles/ckfiles/files/story-map.pdf>
- Ask and discuss with the class, “why did Joe not like being called ‘amazing?’ How can this story affect how we treat other kids we meet on the playground who are disabled?”

Sharing ideas and follow-up discussion

- Students who wish can share their story maps with the class.

Success criteria

- Students demonstrate an understanding of the story, through writing, drawing, or speaking to the class.

Reflecting on our learning/conclusion

- Share the letter and picture of James and Lucy at the back of the book with students.
- Ask: Why do you think James and Lucy wrote this book? What did they want you to understand?

Further resources to support this discussion:

- thecatchpoles.net Article: ‘How to Talk to Your Child About Disability’
<https://thecatchpoles.net/2021/04/12/how-to-talk-to-your-child-about-disability/>
- For more recommended books with disability representation, see James and Lucy Catchpole’s selective list: <https://thecatchpoles.net/2020/08/10/disability-in-kids-books-a-list-by-two-disabled-people-in-publishing/>