

Special Olympics Washington

Young Readers

March Madness

Challenge



**Special  
Olympics**  
Washington



Special Olympics  
**Unified Champion  
Schools®**

# What is the Young Readers March Madness Challenge?

The Young Readers March Madness Challenge is a month-long reading competition featuring eight books that center around diversity, equity, and inclusion. This challenge supports the purpose behind the Unified Young Readers club.

Elementary Schools across the state of Washington will complete various activities associated with each book in order to gain points and be named the Champion of the Young Readers March Madness Challenge!

# How to Register

- **Fill out the registration form that was sent to your email!**
- **Indicate how many classrooms in your school will be participating in the challenge**
- **Provide a name and shipping address to receive the March Madness books**

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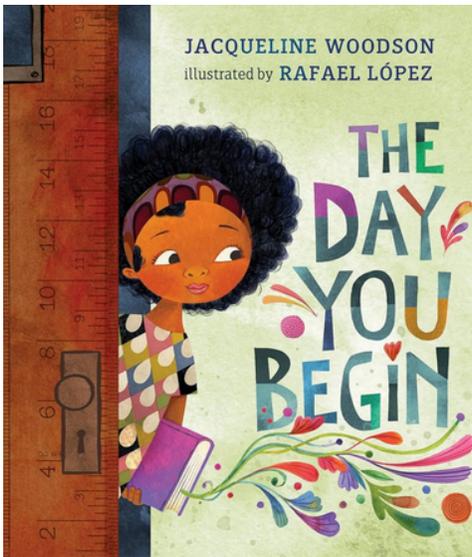
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# March Madness Matchups

## Week 1



### **The Day you Begin**

By: Jacqueline Woodson

vs.



### **Be Kind**

By: Pat Zietlow Miller

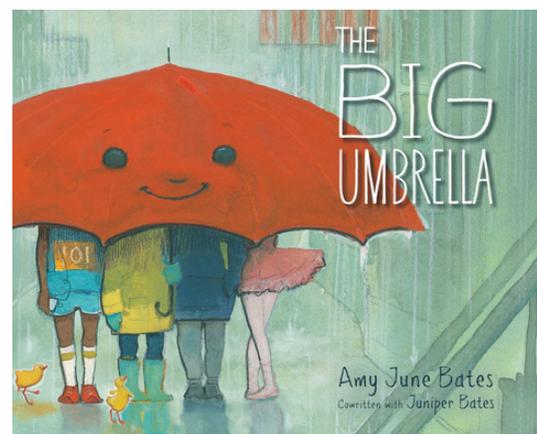
## Week 2



### **Say Something**

By: Peter H. Reynolds

vs.

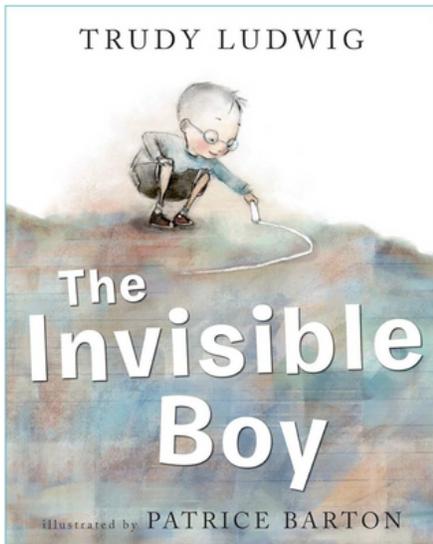


### **The Big Umbrella**

By: Amy June Bates

# March Madness Matchups

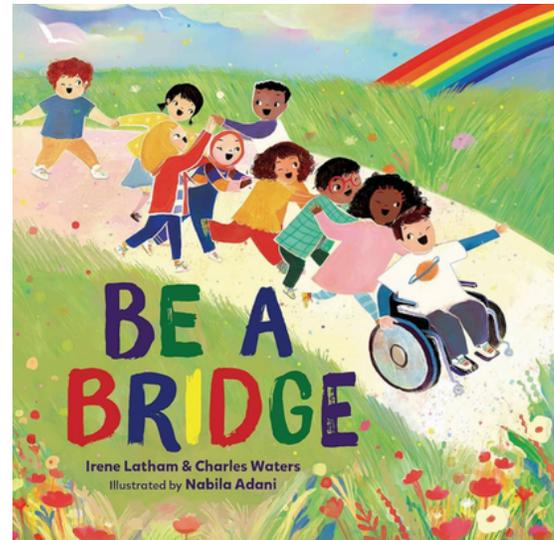
## Week 3



### **The Invisible Boy**

By: Trudy Ludwig

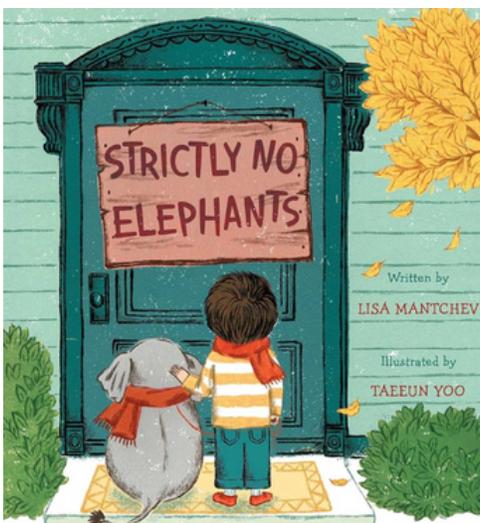
vs.



### **Be a Bridge**

By: Irene Latham and Charles Waters

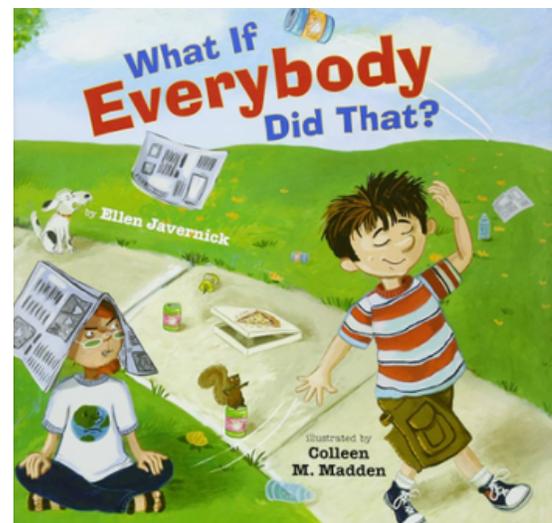
## Week 4



### **Strictly No Elephants**

By: Lisa Mantchev

vs.



### **What if Everybody Did That?**

By: Ellen Javernick

# How Books Advance Through the Bracket

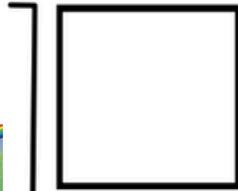
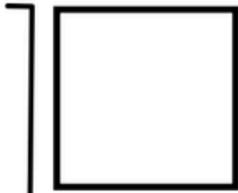
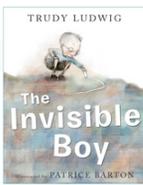
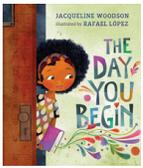
Each week, schools will read 2 books and decide on their favorite at the end of each week. Schools can vote for their favorite book of the week through the form sent out in the weekly check-in email.

The book with the most votes each week will advance through the bracket. During later weeks, schools will vote between the remaining books to reach the final round. At the end of the competition, schools will participate in the last round of voting to determine the winning book of the Young Readers March Madness Challenge!

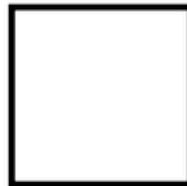
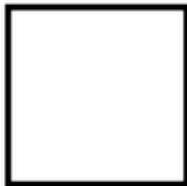
# March Madness Book Bracket

Special Olympics  
Unified Champion Schools  
March Madness  
Inclusive Youth Leadership Edition

1

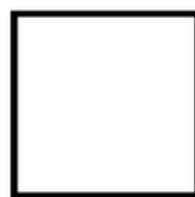
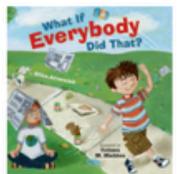


3



Winner!

2

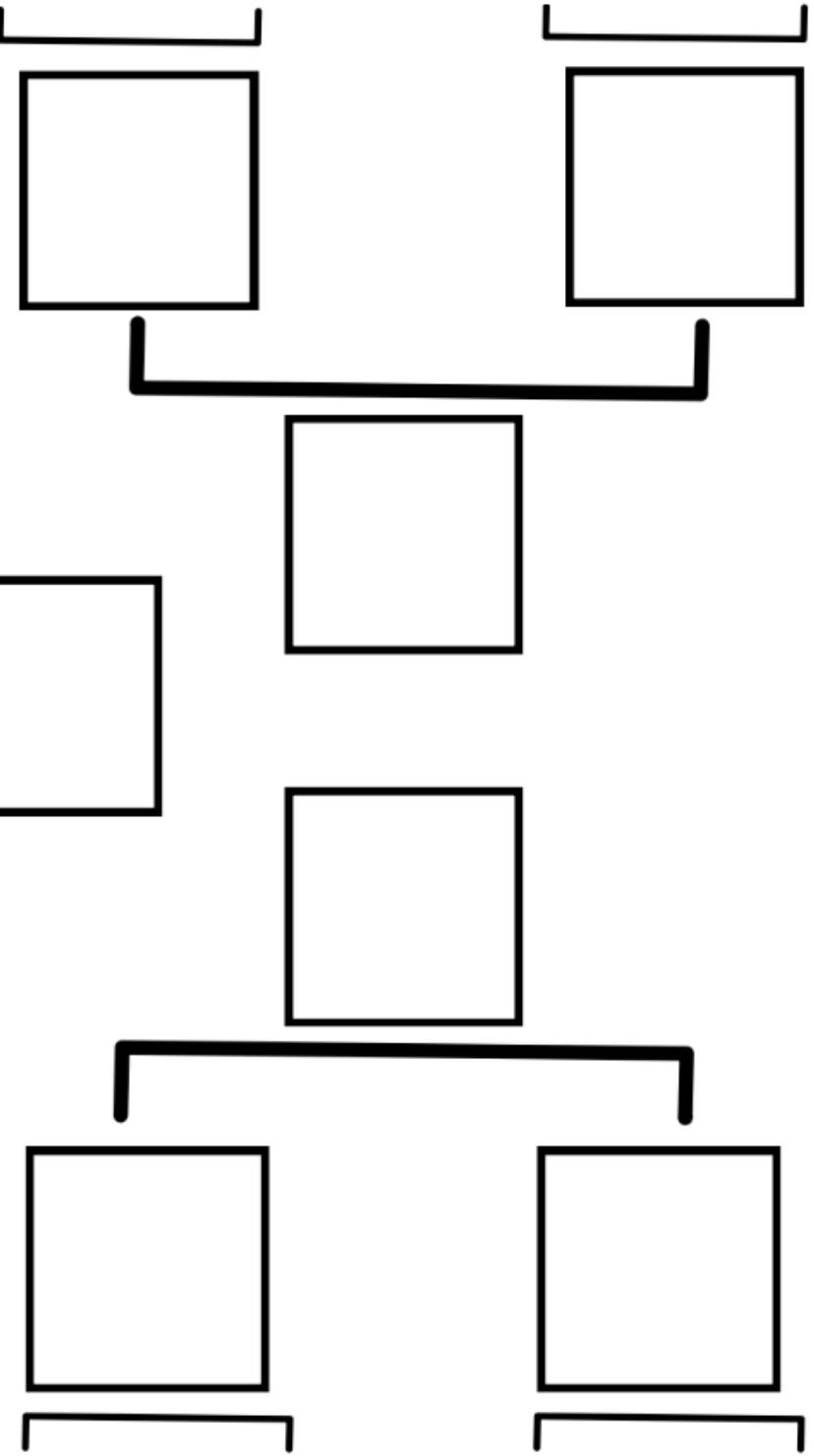


4



# Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools March Madness Inclusive Youth Leadership Edition

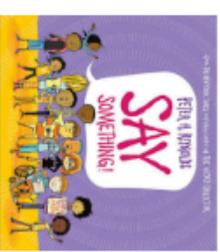
1



3

Winner!

2



4

# Point System

- **+3 points for each “Classroom Activity” completed**
  - Each book has 2 Classroom Activities
- **+5 points for each “Whole School Engagement” activity completed**
  - Each book has 1 Whole School Engagement Activity
- **+1 point for participating in book voting each week**
  - Voting will be available through a form sent out each week via email
- **+1 point for each picture of classes completing activities (limit 5 pictures per week)**
  - Send photos to [unifiedschools@sowa.org](mailto:unifiedschools@sowa.org)
- **Bonus Points for participating in extra activities**
  - See “Bonus Points” page for details

# Week 1 Activities

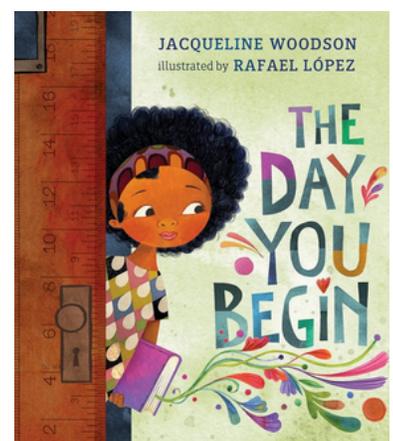
## Be Kind by Pat Zietlow Miller

- Classroom Activities (3 points per activity)
  - Kindness Web
  - Kindness Compliment Cards
- Whole School Engagement (5 points)
  - “Kindness Connects Us All”



## The Day You Begin by Jacqueline Woodson

- Classroom Activities (3 points per activity)
  - “My Story Matters” Mini Book
  - “Courage to Begin” Partner Interviews
- Whole School Engagement (5 points)
  - “Story Portraits” Wall



# Week 2 Activities

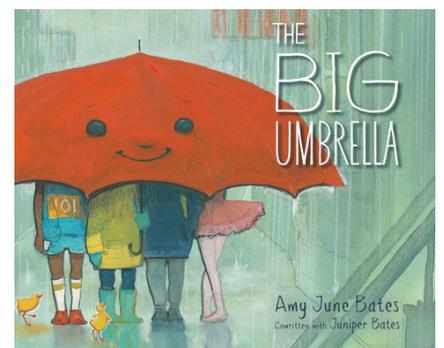
## Say Something by Peter H. Reynolds

- Classroom Activities (3 points per activity)
  - Poster Project: “My Voice Matters”
  - Silent Scene Role-Play
- Whole School Engagement (5 points)
  - “Voices of Our School” Wall



## The Big Umbrella by Amy June Bates

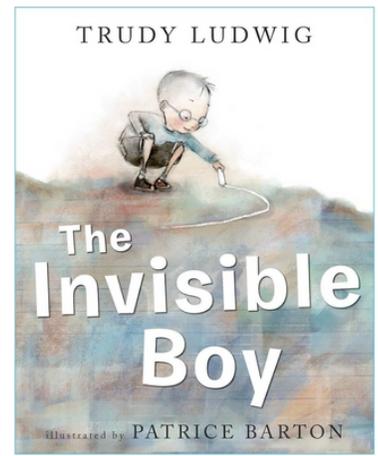
- Classroom Activities (3 points per activity)
  - “Umbrella of Support” Skits
  - “Inclusion Interview” Partners
- Whole School Engagement (5 points)
  - “Under Our Big Umbrella” School Display



# Week 3 Activities

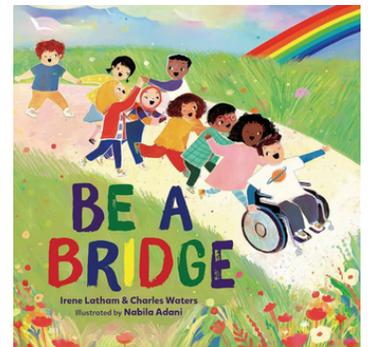
## The Invisible Boy by Trudy Ludwig

- Classroom Activities (3 points per activity)
  - “Invisible to Included” Game
  - “You’re Seen!” Drawings
- Whole School Engagement (5 points)
  - “You Belong Here” Wall of Friendship



## Be a Bridge by Irene Latham and Charles Waters

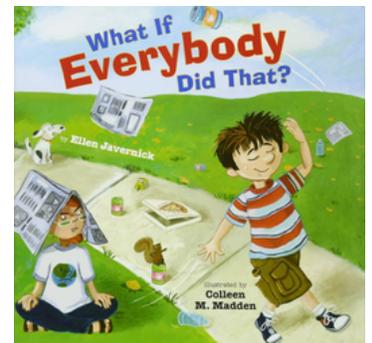
- Classroom Activities (3 points per activity)
  - “Bridge Builders” Craft
  - “Bridge Buddies” Challenge
- Whole School Engagement (5 points)
  - “Building Bridges of Kindness” Mural



# Week 4 Activities

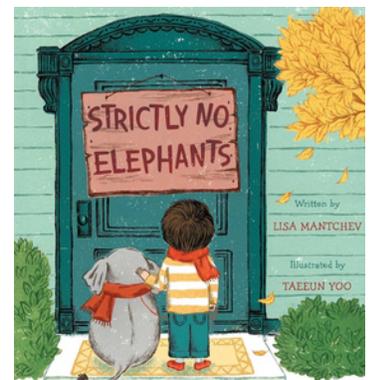
## What if Everybody Did That? by Ellen Javernick

- Classroom Activities (3 points per activity)
  - “What if Everybody Did That?” Class Book
  - Ripple Effect Experiment
- Whole School Engagement (5 points)
  - “Imagine if Everybody Did That!” Wall



## Strictly No Elephants by Lisa Mantchev

- Classroom Activities (3 points per activity)
  - “Welcome Wheel” Circle Time
  - “All-Play Minute” Movement Breaks
- Whole School Engagement (5 points)
  - “Inclusion Passport: Every Class Visits Every Class”



# Bonus Activities

- **Participate in Spread the Word Day (March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2026)**
  - +3 bonus points
  - Reach out to [unifiedschools@sowa.org](mailto:unifiedschools@sowa.org) for more information on Spread the Word
- **Have a class discussion using the discussion questions for each book**
  - +1 bonus point for each book
- **Create a fun video about your favorite book (and send to [unifiedschools@sowa.org](mailto:unifiedschools@sowa.org))**
  - +5 points (Limit 1 video)



# How to Receive Points

**Keep an eye out for weekly check-in emails in order to receive points!**

There will be a check-in email sent at the end of each week with a form to submit the activities you participated in for that week.

**To earn points for taking pictures during activities, email your pictures to [UnifiedSchools@sowa.org](mailto:UnifiedSchools@sowa.org).**

Include your school's name in the email!

\*These pictures may be used on SOWA social media platforms. To protect privacy, please block out faces of individuals who do not want to appear on social media.

# Questions?

**Contact us at  
Unifiedschools@sowa.org  
if you have any questions!**



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