

Lawson Elementary  
Johnston, Iowa

Dear Mr. David Raymond,

I read your short story "On Being Seventeen, Bright, and Unable to Read." Before I read your book, I thought that people who have dyslexia, or disabilities were scary and too different to be around. After I read your book, I was so changed because now I know that people who have disabilities can get help and be just like everybody else. One example you gave was when David said, "I was always having to do things that were 'different.' I had to go to a child psychiatrist, for instance." This stuck out to me because he seemed like he didn't want to be alike everybody else, but I believe that that was his goal, to be 'normal.'

Recently, I saw a couple of kids at school with disabilities. One of them is ornery, and distracts the class by doing inappropriate things because he wants attention. Another person is in a wheelchair and can't speak except for moans. If I hadn't read your book, I would have thought, "Whoa, they're weird," but since I read the story, I thought, "Whoa, it would be hard to live like that." I didn't think wrongly about the kids because I felt it wouldn't be very nice to tease someone about something they couldn't control. I realized then that I have such a fortunate life. I can't imagine being in a wheel chair and giving up sports and the activities that I am involved in.

I realized that if you have to get help to cure your disabilities, you shouldn't care about being different. I also realized that if you can't control something, don't worry about it. A person we know has lung cancer and it can not be cured. She doesn't complain about it because she knows that wining won't help anything. I hope all of my classmates will realize that people with disabilities are no different than us and that my classmates will change their minds about people who are different.

Sincerely,

Logan Walkup