

# Guide for Teachers and Parents

By reading the success stories of those with learning differences, the goal of *That's Like Me!* is to help young people learn many important lessons, such as the following:

- \* Everyone has things that they are good at and things that are hard.
- \* A challenge is something to face, not ignore.
- \* When a subject is hard, we must work harder to succeed at it.
- \* Understanding our strengths and weaknesses will make us better able to deal with hardship.
- \* To tackle a challenge, we need strategies that work.
- \* Enjoying a hobby can help to manage the frustration of a learning difference.

The stories in *That's Like Me!* reveal that when each individual understood what made learning difficult, he or she could often take action to address the challenge.

To help children become more self-aware of their learning profile, we have designed a number of activities to promote conversation and gain insight, all of which can then be used to create a "That's Like Me!" notebook.

## This is (Profile from book) Page

This activity promotes an analysis of the individuals in *That's Like Me!*. For some children, talking about what others did to succeed is a necessary step before they are able to talk about themselves.

- \* To complete the "This is" pages, the student will draw a picture of the activity that is difficult. They can also write words or sentences in that box.
- \* Following the arrows, students record exactly what is challenging about the activity, thereby helping them to be specific about an issue.
- \* Using the emojis, students record how they feel about the challenge.
- \* When a strategy to address the challenge is employed, students fill in that box.
- \* A corresponding emoji is used in association with the feeling about the strategy. When a strategy doesn't work, a student should be encouraged to honor a negative feeling, and then work to find a better strategy.

### This is Me Page

This activity is the extension of the one described above. Once children are comfortable talking about other's learning challenges and the strategies used to address them, they can begin to reflect upon their own personal situation. As children fill out the page, teachers and parents can help them to learn that it may take many rounds of action before a sense of accomplishment is achieved.

### Wow Pages

These pages are designed to help children to really focus on what they are good at and what areas require support. The Wow, Watch Me activity allows children to highlight areas in which they excel. Wow, Help Me enables children to safely reflect on activities for which they need assistance. These charts should be filled in over time. For some children, it will be helpful to have these charts filled out before completing the This is Me page. Both pages contain icons that reflect either strengths or weaknesses.

### All About Me Page

This activity serves many purposes:

- \* It can be a record of the child's various challenges and attempts to address them. As such, it can be an "empowerment" page whereby a child who needs a boost can look back upon strategies that worked and feel a sense of accomplishment.
- \* It can also be used when a child feels stuck. Reviewing old challenges and ways in which they were overcome may inspire a child regarding a new area of difficulty.
- \* Finally, this chart can be used in a fluid manner that shows a history of solving one problem; for example, the first plan of action might not work, resulting in a new challenge, that would then also be recorded.

### That's Like Me! Game

The purpose of the game is to help children talk about areas of strength and weakness in a group format. Speaking aloud about oneself in a group can help to minimize the potential shame of experiencing a learning difference. When children share their experiences with others, they learn that they are not alone or unique in facing a challenge. This awareness helps to "normalize" one's feelings, rather than keeping them bottled up.

Directions:

Using one die, roll and answer the question on the game board. When appropriate, the questions can become group discussions. When a player lands on a "star" space, he or she picks a "star" card. Those cards are action oriented, with the goal of bringing some lightness and movement to the game. In this game, finishing means you are a winner, and thus, there will be as many winners as players.

### All About You! Pages

These pages can also be found at the end of *That's Like Me!* Teachers and parents are welcome to send a child's success story to [www.jilllauren.com](http://www.jilllauren.com) if they'd like to see the story profiled on the new *That's Like Me!* Stars Page. By reading *That's Like Me!* and completing the activities, we hope your students will feel empowered to take on the challenges that their learning differences present.



Jill Lauren, MA

Learning Specialist, Author and Founder, Whole Phonics, LLC



Alexis Potkulski, MS, OG-T, CDT

Reading Specialist