



New Internationalist

The people, the ideas, the action in the fight for global justice

We are able

Developing reading comprehension

New Internationalist Easier English
Ready Lesson: Intermediate /
Upper Intermediate

This lesson: different reading skills to help understand

Predicting: the more you talk about what you're going to read before you read, the more you'll understand

Skimming: read quickly to get the general idea / gist

Scanning: read quickly to pick out eg. names / numbers

Reading for detail: read more carefully to understand

Understanding new vocabulary: match to meanings

Understanding reference : what do the pronouns refer to?

Reading and grammar: correct the errors



Predict:

What do you think are the biggest problems for people with disabilities?:

- a) People looking at them and talking about them
- b) Not being able to do what they want to
- c) Fighting to convince others that they can do things

Reading: skimming

Read this article quickly (3 minutes) to find out what the author, Jody, thinks:

http://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/Rolling_towards_progress



Scanning: read the original article (quickly! – 5 minutes) to find:

- 1) What **football team** did Jody support?
- 2) What was his **cousin's** name?
- 3) **How old** is Qasim (at the mosque)?
- 4) Which year did the **DDA** (Disability Discrimination Act) start?
- 5) Which **bus** (number) did Jody take to school?
- 6) Which Mayan ruin did Jody climb in Peru?

<http://newint.org/features/2013/11/01/disability-keynote/>

Key: 1) Manchester United 2) Hamish 3) 8
4) 1995 5) 484 6) Machu Picchu

So how did a boy in a
wheelchair
climb this?

Let's look at the text in more detail



Reading for detail:



1. Why is Jody in a wheelchair?
2. Why doesn't he have time to think about what language to use to talk about people with disabilities?

Read the next slide ...

I have always been independently minded, determined to follow the path written for me in life. Sometimes we make mistakes and sometimes we fall over... especially if we have quadriplegic cerebral palsy. Even the language of disability is a political nightmare. Is a disability something you 'have', 'suffer from' or 'were born with'? Are you 'different', 'special' or exactly the same as everyone else? In fact, being a disabled person puts a swift end to these seemingly unending dilemmas. You don't have time to pontificate over how to put your level of mobility into a verbal expression when you are putting all of your effort into brushing your teeth on your own for the first time, or climbing to the top of Machu Picchu in Peru.

Key:

I have always been independently minded, determined to follow the path written for me in life. Sometimes we make mistakes and sometimes we fall over... especially if we have **quadriplegic cerebral palsy**. Even the language of disability is a political nightmare. Is a disability something you 'have', 'suffer from' or 'were born with'? Are you 'different', 'special' or exactly the same as everyone else? In fact, being a disabled person ***to put a swift end to*** these seemingly unending ***dilemmas***. **You don't have time to *pontificate* over how to *put* your level of mobility into a *verbal expression* when you are putting all of your effort into brushing your teeth on your own for the first time, or climbing to the top of Machu Picchu in Peru.**

Reading: Understanding unknown words -
look back at the text and match:

1/ to put a swift

end to

2/ dilemma

3/ pontificate

4/ to put into

verbal expression

a) to think about

b) to talk about

c) a problem

d) to finish

quickly

Reading: understanding reference: what do the red words represent?

On another day, I'm holding my dad's hand as **we** (eg. **the writer and his dad**) get on to the bus, struggling to walk in my own way, taking each step with care and keeping my eyes focused on my feet just like **he** always told me to do. 'Why don't you take your time,' the driver muttered under **his** breath, thinking that no-one would hear. But my dad did hear **him** and minutes later **he** was trying to wrestle with **him** through the plastic window by the driver seat. I can only guess that having a disabled child must bring a mixture of joy at the challenges **they** overcome, anger at the discrimination of other people, and fear that one day **they** will have to face those prejudices on **their** own.

Key:

- 1) we the writer and his Dad
- 2) he his Dad
- 3) his the driver's
- 4) him the driver
- 5) he his Dad
- 6) him the driver
- 7) they children with disabilities
- 8) they children with disabilities
- 9) their of the children with disabilities

Reading and grammar: find and correct 8 errors on each slide:

‘You weren’t *in wheelchair* in the photograph,’ said Franklin, my Peruvian host in Cuzco, when we met *at the first time*. It was the kind of reaction I liked best. I didn’t like peoples talking quietly about me and looking at me like when I am a child. When I travelled, I met people who were really surprising to see a person with my ‘condition’ so far away from home and lone. They asked me if I was Argentinean, Chilean, even Paraguayan. But anyone guessed where I was really from, probably because my disability.

A week after I arrived in South America, I went to Machu Picchu. I leaved my wheelchair at the bottom of steep steps going up to the entrance, I slowly began climb up to the ancient Mayan ruins. I haven't eaten or drunk anything that day and the hot sun made my t-shirt sweaty. Every step took a lots of effort, but I quickly got into a rhythm and only thought of get to the top. I felt so free when I get there. The fresh, clean air filled my lungs. I felt the cool breeze and looked at the beauty of the mountains. Was one more small victory in the inner struggle we all living with, if we are 'disabled' or not.

Key:

‘You weren’t in **a** wheelchair in the photograph,’ said Franklin, my Peruvian host in Cuzco, when we met **for** the first time. It was the kind of reaction I liked best. I didn’t like **people** talking quietly about me and looking at me like when I **was** a child. When I travelled, I met people who were really **surprised** to see a person with my ‘condition’ so far away from home and **alone**. They asked me if I was Argentinean, Chilean, even Paraguayan. But **no-one** guessed where I was really from, probably because **of** my disability. A week after I arrived in South America, I went to Machu Picchu. I **left** my wheelchair at the bottom of steep steps going up to the entrance, I slowly began **to** climb up to the ancient Mayan ruins. I **hadn’t** eaten or drunk anything that day and the hot sun made my t-shirt sweaty. Every step took a **lot** of effort, but I quickly got into a rhythm and only thought of **getting** to the top. I felt so free when I **got** there. The fresh, clean air filled my lungs. I felt the cool breeze and looked at the beauty of the mountains. **It** was one more small victory in the inner struggle we all **live** with, if we are ‘disabled’ or not.

Homework:

Read the article again – you will understand it a lot more – and make notes on points you find interesting. Then use the notes to write a letter to Jody, commenting on his experiences and asking him questions.

- <http://newint.org/features/2013/11/01/disability-keynote/> (original article)
- http://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/Rolling_towards_progress (easier English article)