



**Special
Olympics**
Washington



Empowering Young Learners Through STEM, Literacy, and Sport



About the Partnership

Special Olympics and Kid Spark Education have teamed up to create a joyful, hands-on curriculum for Pre-K–1st Grade learners that helps children build STEM and literacy skills, explore inclusive sport, and develop empathy through invention and play.

Missions:

***Special
Olympics***
Washington



Special Olympics of Washington

Empowering individuals with intellectual disabilities through sport, friendship, and community.



KiD SPARK
E D U C A T I O N

Kid Spark Education

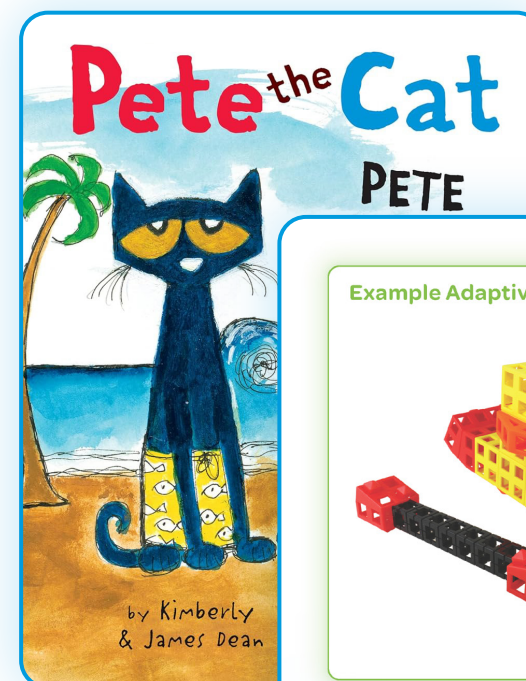
Helping all children, especially those from underserved communities, to learn and love STEM.

An Inclusive Approach to Early STEM & Literacy

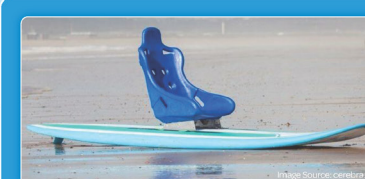
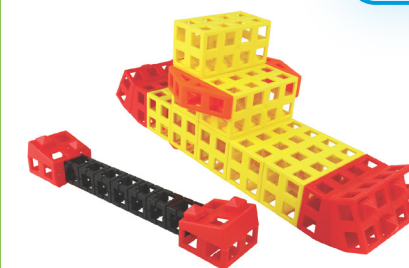
Grounded in **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)**, the curriculum ensures every child has multiple ways to learn, communicate, and participate. Lessons are adaptable, developmentally appropriate, and inclusive of diverse learning styles and settings.

UDL Promotes:

- 🔧 **Engagement** - motivating and sustaining interest.
- 🔧 **Representation** - presenting content in varied ways.
- 🔧 **Action & Expression** - offering options to demonstrate understanding.



Example Adaptive Surfboard



Adaptive Surfboard

STORYTIME INVENTING
Invent an Adaptive Surfboard KIDSPARK EDUCATION × Special Olympics Washington

PRE-K ACTIVITY GUIDE

STEP 01: READ
Pete the Cat: Pete at the Beach
by Eric Litwin



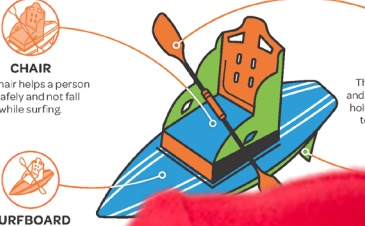
Literacy Focus

VOCABULARY
A wave is water that moves in the ocean. It gets tall, curls over, and splashes on the beach.

SOUND AWARENESS
Wave has a silent e.
The "e" makes "a" say /ā/.
Notice the words below that have a silent e.
Say each one aloud.

RAKE TAPE

STEP 02: LEARN & EXPLORE
An **adaptive surfboard** is a special board that helps someone balance, and stay safe while surfing. Learn about its different parts.



CHAIR
The chair helps a person sit safely and not fall while surfing.

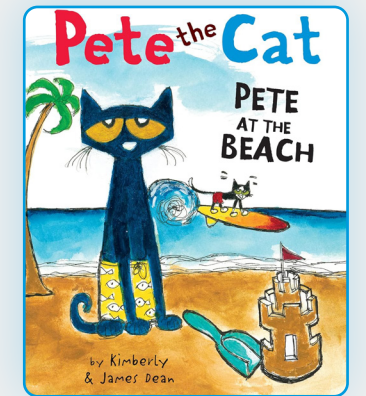
PADDLE
The paddle helps move and turn the surfboard. You hold it and push the water to go where you want.

SURFBOARD
The board is the big, flat part that floats on the water. It holds the person and the chair.

How It Works

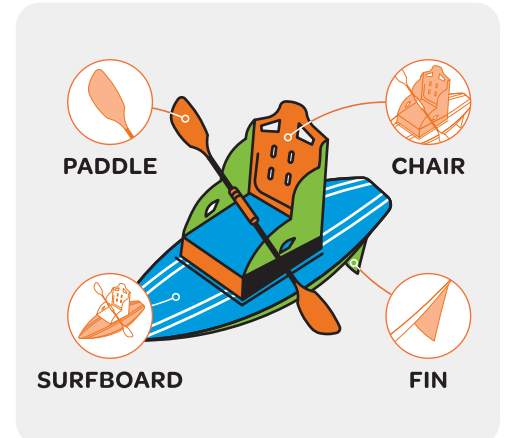
Step 1 - Read

Educators begin with a read-aloud of a children's book that introduces a sport-related or inclusion-based theme. These stories help build early literacy skills, spark curiosity, and set the stage for deeper exploration.



Step 2 - Learn & Explore

Students are introduced to a foundational STEM concept alongside a real-world technology or innovation that makes sport more inclusive—for example, adapted equipment, accessible tools, or thoughtful design features. This helps students make connections between STEM and the world around them.



Step 3 - Invent

Using materials from Kid Spark Education's Early Inventors STEM Lab, students design and build an invention inspired by the book and STEM concept. Educators guide students through the engineering process, encouraging collaboration, creativity, and reflection as they share their ideas and solutions.



Built on the Young Readers Program

This curriculum extends the foundation of Special Olympics' **Young Readers program**, which uses children's books to promote social-emotional learning and inclusive values.

Each lesson begins with a story and builds toward a hands-on invention experience that supports communication, creativity, and connection.



Supporting Social-Emotional Learning (CASEL-Aligned)

The curriculum supports all five CASEL competencies through storytelling, collaboration, and invention:

- Self-Awareness
- Social Awareness
- Relationship Skills
- Responsible Decision-Making
- Self-Management

These skills are embedded in classroom conversations, invention challenges, and group sharing.



The Power of STEM + Literacy

This curriculum promotes both academic and personal growth by:

- ⚙ Building vocabulary and comprehension
- ⚙ Strengthening problem-solving and design thinking
- ⚙ Supporting spatial awareness and fine motor development
- ⚙ Encouraging perseverance and collaboration
- ⚙ Fostering early STEM identity and confidence



Getting Started

To implement the curriculum, educators will need a few key components—each designed to support hands-on, inclusive learning.



Kid Spark Education's Early Inventors STEM Lab

A hands-on set of building materials for early engineering & invention.

Curated Book List

Storybooks selected to spark curiosity & support SEL.

Lesson Plans

Simple, flexible guides with step-by-step activities.

Training & Support

Onboarding and ongoing support to help educators launch & sustain the program.

Contact & Program Info

Ready to bring inclusive STEM learning to your school or afterschool program?

kidsparkeducation.org/contact



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