

Massachusetts Letters About Literature 2016

Massachusetts Center for the Book

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Level I Honors Award

Dear Sharon Draper,

My name is Erin ____, I'm in 6th grade, and I go to High Rock Middle School. My favorite book I have ever read is your wonderfully written novel, *Out of my Mind*. This book truly means a lot to me because my younger sister, Maeve, too, has been diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy. She is 9-years-old. She recently had a major hip surgery and is recovering now. Maeve and I have a very close relationship. Having this surgery has made me very emotional and has brought me to tears. I think it made both of us even closer to each other. I am very proud of Maeve for being such a trooper and surviving through this tough time.

I believe Maeve is as smart as Melody. She uses a computer to communicate, but instead of her hands, she uses her eyes. She is very quick and accurate with her words. She rarely makes a mistake unless she's distracted. She knows all the right words and when to say them, just like Melody.

This book has impacted my life so much by showing me how mean some people can be. I remember this one time when I was at her Girl Scout meeting, and I overheard one of the girls whispering to another, "Ewww, look at that girl, she's drooling!" I wanted to go over to her and scream at her face "SO WHAT?! SOME PEOPLE DROOL! IS THERE A PROBLEM WITH THAT?!" But I didn't. I kept all my feelings bottled up no matter how hard it was. Melody had her own experiences when she wanted to yell at Claire and Molly, but she couldn't. I find other ways to stand by my sister.

I also learned how smart people can be. My sister is so smart. She talks to everyone just how regular people would talk to each other (not that she isn't a regular person). She understands everything everyone is saying, but some people don't know that. And that's what bothers me the most. Take a waiter for instance. Even when she has her computer right in front of her, the waiter looks directly into my mom or dad's eyes and asks, "What can I get for *her*". It bothers me so much, and I hope that soon they will figure out why when they take my order, there is a scowl upon my face.

Because of this major hip surgery Maeve had, she has been recovering at Spaulding Rehabilitation. I have had the chance to meet so many new people and work with all of them. I've heard so many different stories and how everyone has been recovering. There are so many amazing people and it changed my life meeting all of them.

I am working on reading this book with Maeve, and she is really enjoying it so far! I hope she likes it as much as I did!

Thank you very much!

Erin

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